



OFSTED - OFFICE FOR STANDARDS IN EDUCATION

The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools

**Standards and quality in Education
1997/98**

Laid before Parliament by the Secretary of State for Education
and Employment pursuant to Section 2(7)(a) of the School Inspections Act 1996

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OFFICE FOR STANDARDS
IN EDUCATION

The Rt Hon David Blunkett MP
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February 1999

Dear David,

I have pleasure in submitting to you my Annual Report as required by the School Inspections Act 1996.

The report is, as usual, in two sections: a commentary on some of the issues of importance and a more detailed section on the evidence from the year's inspections across the range of matters which fall within my remit.

I hope the report will be of interest to parents, teachers, headteachers, governors and policymakers, as well as contributing to the public debate on standards and quality of education.

As last year I am arranging for a copy of the report to be sent to every maintained school in England.

*Yours ever,
Chris*

CHRIS WOODHEAD

Preface



This Report draws on three sources of evidence:

- **Section 10 inspections carried out by registered inspectors;**
- **inspections carried out by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools (HMI);**
- **research reviews commissioned by OFSTED.**

The 1997/98 Section 10 inspections provide evidence on the standards, quality and efficiency of over one-sixth of secondary schools and over one-quarter of primary and special schools. This year saw the first re-inspection of secondary schools and the completion of the first inspection cycle for primary and special schools. HMI have focused their inspections on the work of local education authorities (LEAs), teacher education and training, adult education and youth work, developments such as courses leading to General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs) and important matters such as the education of pupils with special educational needs. The Report also takes into account research commissioned by OFSTED on, for example, homework in schools.

Full details of the evidence base are given in Annex 1.

The re-inspection of secondary schools enables me to identify improving schools.

The schools below stand out amongst the many that have improved their quality of education and the standards achieved by pupils since the previous inspection.

<i>School name</i>	<i>Postal town</i>	<i>LEA</i>
Alder Grange High School	RAWTENSTALL	Lancashire
Alsop High School	WALTON	Liverpool
Angley School	CRANBROOK	Kent
Barking Abbey Comprehensive School	BARKING	Barking & Dagenham
Baverstock GM School	KING'S HEATH	Birmingham
Beardwood School	BLACKBURN	Blackburn with Darwen
Bishop Barrington Comprehensive School	BISHOP AUCKLAND	Durham
Bretton Woods Community School	BRETTON	City of Peterborough
Chadwell Heath School	ROMFORD	Redbridge
Chatham Grammar School for Girls	CHATHAM	The Medway Towns
Christ Church CofE High School	ASHFORD	Kent
Erith School	ERITH	Bexley
Gable Hall GM Comprehensive School	STANFORD-LE-HOPE	Thurrock
Harlescott School	SHREWSBURY	Shropshire
Harrow (formerly Gayton) High School	HARROW	Harrow
Hurlingham and Chelsea School	FULHAM	Hammersmith & Fulham
Lady Lumley's School	PICKERING	North Yorkshire
Malbank School and Sixth Form Centre	NANTWICH	Cheshire
Morecambe High School	MORECAMBE	Lancashire
Morpeth School	TOWER HAMLETS	Tower Hamlets
North Manchester High School for Girls	MOSTON	Manchester

Poole High School	POOLE	Poole
Ruffwood School	KIRKBY	Knowsley
Southfield School	KETTERING	Northamptonshire
St Aidan's County High School	CARLISLE	Cumbria
St John Bosco High School	LIVERPOOL	Liverpool
St Thomas Aquinas Catholic School	KING'S NORTON	Birmingham
Stratford School (GM)	FOREST GATE	Newham
The Beacon School (GM)	BANSTEAD	Surrey
The Beauchamp College	OADBY	Leicestershire
The Bishop Bell CofE School	EASTBOURNE	East Sussex
The City Technology College	KINGSHURST	Solihull
The Clarendon School	TROWBRIDGE	Wiltshire
The Eastwood School	LEIGH-ON-SEA	Southend-on-Sea
The Hollins County High School	ACCRINGTON	Lancashire
The Robert Napier (GM) School	GILLINGHAM	The Medway Towns
The Robert Smyth School	MARKET HARBOROUGH	Leicestershire
Villiers High School	SOUTHALL	Ealing
Walderslade Girls' School	CHATHAM	The Medway Towns
Whitstone Community School	SHEPTON MALLET	Somerset
Wood Green School	WITNEY	Oxfordshire

As in previous years, I am identifying a number of schools which are shown by inspection to be providing a good quality of education and achieving high standards. All the secondary schools listed have received outstanding inspection reports. In addition, some have excellent General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) results which they have sustained over a number of years. Others have GCSE results which are good, given the circumstances of the particular school.

<i>School name</i>	<i>Postal town</i>	<i>LEA</i>
Bedale High School	BEDALE	North Yorkshire
Beechen Cliff School	BATH	Bath
Bingley Grammar School	BINGLEY	Bradford
Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School	HATFIELD	Hertfordshire
Borden Grammar School	SITTINGBOURNE	Kent
Bottisham Village College	BOTTISHAM	Cambridgeshire
Bournville School	BIRMINGHAM	Birmingham
Burntwood School	WANDSWORTH	Wandsworth
Chelmsford County High School for Girls	CHELMSFORD	Essex
Chipping Campden School	CHIPPING CAMPDEN	Gloucester
Clitheroe Royal Grammar School	CLITHEROE	Lancashire
Colchester Royal Grammar School	COLCHESTER	Essex
Coloma Convent Girls' School	CROYDON	Croydon
Colyton Grammar School	COLYTON	Devon
County Upper School	BURY ST EDMUNDS	Suffolk

Cox Green School	MAIDENHEAD	Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead
Fakenham High School and College	FAKENHAM	Norfolk
Fowey Community College	FOWEY	Cornwall
Graveney School	TOOTING	Wandsworth
Greenbank High School	SOUTHPORT	Sefton
Hillview School for Girls	TONBRIDGE	Kent
Ilford County High School	ILFORD	Redbridge
Keswick School (GM)	KESWICK	Cumbria
King Edward VI	KING'S HEATH	Birmingham
Camp Hill Girls' School		
Light Hall School	SHIRLEY	Solihull
Linton Village College	LINTON	Cambridgeshire
Norham Community Technology College	NORTH SHIELDS	North Tyneside
Old Swinford Hospital	STOURBRIDGE	Dudley
Oldbury Wells School	BRIDGNORTH	Shropshire
Oxted County School	OXTED	Surrey
Parliament Hill School	CAMDEN	Camden
Penrice School	ST AUSTELL	Cornwall
Plessington Catholic High School	BEBINGTON	Wirral
Robert Pattinson GM School	NORTH HYKEHAM	Lincolnshire
Sir John Lawes School	HARPENDEN	Hertfordshire
South Wilts Grammar School for Girls	SALISBURY	Wiltshire
St Anthony's Girls' School	SUNDERLAND	Sunderland
St Ivo School	ST IVES	Cambridgeshire
St John Fisher RC High School	NEWCASTLE- UNDER-LYME	Staffordshire
St Mary Redcliffe and Temple School	BRISTOL	City of Bristol
St Mary's RC High School	CHESTERFIELD	Derbyshire
St Nicholas RC High School	HARTFORD	Cheshire
St Patrick's RC High School	ECCLES	Salford
St Paul's School for Girls	EDGBASTON	Birmingham
St Peter's Collegiate School	WOLVERHAMPTON	Wolverhampton
St Peter's RC High School	ORRELL	Wigan
St Saviour's and St Olave's School	SOUTHWARK	Southwark
Standish Community High School	STANDISH	Wigan
Tewkesbury GM School	TEWKESBURY	Gloucester
The Corbet GM School	SHREWSBURY	Shropshire
The Downs School	COMPTON	Newbury
The Folkestone School for Girls	FOLKESTONE	Kent
The Greensward School	EPPING	Essex
The Henrietta Barnett School	HAMPSTEAD	Barnet
	GARDEN SUBURB	
The John Roan School	BLACKHEATH	Greenwich

The Rochester Grammar School for Girls	ROCHESTER	The Medway Towns
The Romsey School	ROMSEY	Hampshire
The Roseland Community School	TRURO	Cornwall
The Skinners' School	TUNBRIDGE WELLS	Kent
The Windsor Boys' School	WINDSOR	Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead
Varndean School	BRIGHTON	Brighton and Hove
Watford Grammar School for Girls	WATFORD	Hertfordshire
West Bridgford Comprehensive School	WEST BRIDGFORD	Nottinghamshire
Wirral County Grammar School (Girls)	BEBINGTON	Wirral
Wootton Upper School	WOOTTON	Bedfordshire
Wymondham College (GM)	WYMONDHAM	Norfolk

I am also pleased to be able to identify particularly successful primary, middle and nursery schools. In these schools pupils achieve high standards in literacy and numeracy and make an excellent start to their education.

<i>School name</i>	<i>Postal town</i>	<i>LEA</i>
Primary Schools		
Anchorsholme County Primary School	THORNTON-CLEVELEYS	Blackpool
Arnside National C of E School	ARNSIDE	Cumbria
Barugh Green Primary School	BARUGH GREEN	Barnsley
Biddick Hall County Junior Mixed School	BIDDICK HALL	South Tyneside
Billinge and Winstanley	BILLINGE	St Helens
St Mary's RC School		
Birches Green Infant School	ERDINGTON	Birmingham
Boldmere Infant School	SUTTON COLDFIELD	Birmingham
Boughton Heath County Primary School	GREAT BOUGHTON	Cheshire
Bournes Green County Junior School	SOUTHEND-ON-SEA	Southend-on-Sea
Bramcote Hills Primary School	BEESTON	Nottinghamshire
Broughton in Amounderness	BROUGHTON	Lancashire
C of E Primary School		
Charlestown County Primary School	CARLYON BAY	Cornwall
Christ Church C of E School	CHORLEYWOOD	Hertfordshire
Cockwood Primary School	STARCROSS	Devon
Darrick Wood Infant School	ORPINGTON	Bromley
English Martyrs' RC Primary School	LITHERLAND	Sefton
Episkopi Primary School	CYPRUS	
Etchingham C of E School	BURGH HILL	East Sussex
Garrick Green First School	OLD CATTON	Norfolk
Garstang County Primary School	GARSTANG	Lancashire

Gawcott First School	GAWCOTT	Buckinghamshire
Hadley Wood Primary School	HADLEY WOOD	Enfield
Hazelwood Infant School	PALMERS GREEN	Enfield
Henley School	HENLEY	Suffolk
Hiltingbury Junior School	CHANDLERS FORD	Hampshire
Holmes Chapel County Primary School	HOLMES CHAPEL	Cheshire
Humshaugh C of E First School	HUMSHAUGH	Northumberland
Kobi Nazrul Primary School	TOWER HAMLETS	Tower Hamlets
Laneshaw Bridge County School	LANESHAW BRIDGE	Lancashire
Lindal and Marton Primary School	LINDAL	Cumbria
Lyndon Green Infant School	SHELDON	Birmingham
Manor Infants' School	BARKING	Barking & Dagenham
Marlborough County Primary School	FALMOUTH	Cornwall
Mayplace Junior Mixed Infant and Nursery School	BEXLEYHEATH	Bexley
Moat Farm Junior School	OLDBURY	Sandwell
Netherthong Junior and Infant School	NETHERTHONG	Kirklees
Nunthorpe Primary School	NUNTHORPE	Redcar and Cleveland
Our Lady of Fatima Junior and Infant School	BIRMINGHAM	Birmingham
Our Lady of Grace Junior School	DOLLIS HILL	Brent
Parklands Junior School	ROMFORD	Havering
Peter's Hill Primary School	AMBLECOTE	Dudley
Priory School	SLOUGH	Slough
Ramsden Infant School	BARROW-IN- FURNESS	Cumbria
Roseacre Junior School	BEARSTED	Kent
Sandford Hill Primary School and Hearing Impaired Unit	LONGTON	Stoke-on-Trent
Scargill Infants' School	RAINHAM	Havering
Seagry C of E School	CHIPPENHAM	Wiltshire
Somerhill Junior School	HOVE	Brighton and Hove
South Farnham County Junior School	FARNHAM	Surrey
St Anne's Catholic Primary School	CHERTSEY	Surrey
St Bartholomews's C of E Primary School	SYDENHAM	Lewisham
St Benedict's RC School	GARFORTH	Leeds
St Francis de Sales Infant School	TOTTENHAM	Haringey
St Francis RC Junior and Infant School	GORTON	Manchester
St Giles' C of E (Aided) Infant School	ASHTED	Surrey
St John The Evangelist RC Primary School	BILLINGHAM	Stockton on Tees
St Joseph and St Theresa Primary School	CHASETOWN	Staffordshire

St Joseph's Junior School	REDDISH	Stockport
St Joseph's Primary School	ROSSINGTON	Doncaster
St Joseph's RC Primary School	LEEDS	Leeds
St Joseph's RC Primary School	BLAYDON-ON-TYNE	Gateshead
St Martin de Porres RC	BIRMINGHAM	Birmingham
Junior and Infant School		
St Mary's RC Junior School	NEWTON-LE- WILLOWS	St Helens
St Peter's C of E Junior School	BIRMINGHAM	Birmingham
St Peter's C of E Primary School	PADDINGTON	Westminster
St Teresa's RC Primary School	HARTLEPOOL	Hartlepool
St Vincent's RC Primary School	NORDEN	Rochdale
Stanley RC (Aided) Primary School	STANLEY	Durham
Stocksbridge Junior School	STOCKSBRIDGE	Sheffield
Stubbins County Primary School	RAMSBOTTOM	Lancashire
Sun Hill Infant School	ALRESFORD	Hampshire
The Grange Infant School	SHREWSBURY	Shropshire
The R A Butler Infant School	SAFFRON WALDEN	Essex
Trafalgar Junior School	TWICKENHAM	Richmond-Upon-Thames
Twickenham Primary School	KINGSTANDING	Birmingham
Weeley St Andrew's GM	WEELEY	Essex
C of E Primary School		
Westgate County Primary School	WESTGATE	Lancashire
Weston Coyney Infants' School	WESTON COYNEY	Stoke-on-Trent
Weston Hills C of E School	WESTON HILLS	Lincolnshire
Whiteheath Junior School	RUISLIP	Hillingdon
Willows Primary School	LICHFIELD	Staffordshire
Withnell Fold County School	WITHNELL	Lancashire
Worlds End Infant School (NC)(SU)	QUINTON	Birmingham
Wrockwardine Wood Infant School	WROCKWARDINE WOOD	Shropshire

School name

Postal town

LEA

Middle Schools

Hagley Middle School	HAGLEY	Hereford & Worcester
Hugh Sexey Middle School	WEDMORE	Somerset
Thomas A Becket Middle School	WORTHING	West Sussex
Tylers Green Middle School	HIGH WYCOMBE	Buckinghamshire

School name

Postal town

LEA

Nursery Schools

Cleator Moor Nursery School	CLEATOR MOOR	Cumbria
George Dent Nursery School	DARLINGTON	Darlington
Padgate County Nursery School	PADGATE	Warrington
Rawmarsh Nursery School	RAWMARSH	Rotherham
Stanley Nursery School	STANLEY	Wakefield
Whitnash Nursery School	LEAMINGTON SPA	Warwickshire

I am also pleased to name highly effective special schools this year. In similar terms to the schools named above, they demonstrate the best in this highly diverse and important sector of education.

<i>School name</i>	<i>Postal town</i>	<i>LEA</i>
Cambridge School	HAMMERSMITH	Hammersmith and Fulham
Clare Mount School	MORETON	Wirral
Cloughwood School	NORTHWICH	Cheshire
Crevesford School	BARNSELEY	Barnsley
Ethel Tipple School	KING'S LYNN	Norfolk
Exhall Grange School	COVENTRY	Warwickshire
Freemantles School	CHERTSEY	Surrey
Fulford Cross School	FULFORD	York
Gibfield School	COLNE	Lancashire
Glebe Special School	WHITLEY BAY	North Tyneside
Glyne Gap School	BEXHILL ON SEA	East Sussex
Greenbank Residential School	NORTHWICH	Cheshire
Heathlands School	ST ALBANS	Hertfordshire
Hinderton School	WHITBY	Cheshire
Horton Lodge School	LEEK	Staffordshire
Oaklands School	ISLEWORTH	Hounslow
Pendower Hall School	NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE	Newcastle upon Tyne
Piper Hill High School	NORTHENDEN	Manchester
Priory School	SOUTH NORWOOD	Croydon
Southfield School	HATFIELD	Hertfordshire
St Anthony's School	CHICHESTER	West Sussex
Swiss Cottage School	SWISS COTTAGE	Camden

As last year, OFSTED is delighted to recognise the very substantial improvement in schools that have been removed from special measures during the year covered by this Report.

<i>School name</i>	<i>Postal town</i>	<i>LEA</i>
Abbey Farm Middle School	THETFORD	Norfolk
Acorn Nursery (Special)	LIVERPOOL	Liverpool
Alderman Jackson School (Special)	KING'S LYNN	Norfolk
All Saints C of E First School	BRADFORD	Bradford
Ambergate School (Special)	GRANTHAM	Lincolnshire
Ashton St Peter's GM C of E Primary School	DUNSTABLE	Bedfordshire
Aylands School (Special)	ENFIELD	Enfield
Baliol (Special) School	SEDBERGH	North Yorkshire
Brancaster C of E Primary School	BRANCASTER	Norfolk
Brindale Primary School	BRINNINGTON	Stockport

Brookfield (Special) School	CHELTENHAM	Gloucester
Brooksby Primary School	NOTTINGHAM	City of Nottingham
Cawston C of E Primary School	CAWSTON	Norfolk
Christ Church C of E Primary School	BATTERSEA	Wandsworth
Clatterbridge School (Special)	BEBINGTON	Wirral
Cliffey House School (Special)	HANLEY CASTLE	Worcestershire
Colby Primary School	COLBY	Norfolk
Dalton Junior School	HUDDERSFIELD	Kirklees
David Lister School	HULL	Kingston-upon-Hull
Edinburgh Primary School	WALTHAMSTOW	Waltham Forest
Epinay (Special) School	JARROW	South Tyneside
Flamstead Primary School	FLAMSTEAD	Hertfordshire
Forest Gate Centre		Northamptonshire
Fred Nicholson Special School	DEREHAM	Norfolk
Gainsborough Primary School	NEWHAM	Newham
Garston C of E Primary School	LIVERPOOL	Liverpool
Geoffrey Chaucer Comprehensive School	SOUTHWARK	Southwark
Glenmere Primary School	WIGSTON	Leicestershire
Griffin Manor School (Special)	GREENWICH	Greenwich
Harborne Hill School	BIRMINGHAM	Birmingham
Hickling First School	HICKLING	Norfolk
Hockwold Primary School	THETFORD	Norfolk
Holmefield First School	HOMEWOOD	Bradford
Holyhead Primary School	WEDNESBURY	Sandwell
Isaac Newton School	HULL	Kingston-upon-Hull
Kemsing County Primary School	SEVENOAKS	Kent
Knighton Fields Primary School	LEICESTER	City of Leicester
Lea Green School and Centre (Special)	WALTHAM FOREST	Waltham Forest
Lea Infant School	SLOUGH	Slough
Leeds and Broomfield C of E Primary School	MAIDSTONE	Kent
Lilian Baylis School	LAMBETH	Lambeth
Little Ilford School	NEWHAM	Newham
Lowry High School	SALFORD	Salford
Luttons Primary School	WEST LUTTON	North Yorkshire
Massey Hall School (Special)	WARRINGTON	Lancashire
Meadow Wood School (Special)	WATFORD	Hertfordshire
Millbrook Community School	MAYBUSH	Southampton
Mitchell Brook Primary School	WILLESDEN	Brent
Morningside Primary School	HACKNEY	Hackney
Mortimer School (Special)	STREATHAM	Lambeth
New Hinksey First School	OXFORD	Oxfordshire
New Penshaw Primary School	HOUGHTON	Sunderland

Newnham Croft Primary School	LE SPRING	Cambridgeshire
Newport Junior School	CAMBRIDGE	Waltham Forest
Oaklands Nursery School	WALTHAM FOREST	Staffordshire
Oxhey Infants School	NEWCASTLE	Hertfordshire
Pinfold Street Primary School	BUSHEY	Walsall
Potternewton Primary School	WEDNESBURY	Leeds
Richmonds Infants School	LEEDS	Southend-on-Sea
Rodmell C of E Primary School	SHOEBURYNESSE	East Sussex
Roe Lee Park Primary School	RODMELL	Blackburn with Darwen
Rough Hay Primary School	BLACKBURN	Walsall
Rowdeford School (Special)	DARLASTON	Wiltshire
Sandgate School (Special)	ROWDE	Cumbria
Shaw Park Primary School	KENDAL	Kingston-upon-Hull
Skerton Primary School	HULL	Lancashire
Slated Row School (Special)	SKERTON	Milton Keynes
St Alfege with St Peter's Primary School	WOLVERTON	Greenwich
St Barnabus and St Paul's	GREENWICH	Blackburn with Darwen
C of E Primary School	BLACKBURN	
St Cuthbert's (VA) C of E Junior School	GATESHEAD	Gateshead
St George's C of E Primary School	BATTERSEA	Wandsworth
St Hugh's High School	GRANTHAM	Lincolnshire
St John's RC Junior School	KIRKDALE	Liverpool
St Lawrence (VA) Lower School	RUSHDEN	Bedfordshire
St Mary of the Angels	WESTMINSTER	Westminster
RC Primary School		
St Mary's and St Joseph's	BLACKBURN	Blackburn with Darwen
RC Primary School		
St Matthias' C of E Primary School	HACKNEY	Hackney
St Monica's RC Primary School	HACKNEY	Hackney
St Oswald's RC Primary School	ACCRINGTON	Lancashire
St Paul's with St Michael's	HACKNEY	Hackney
C of E Primary School		
St Stephen's C of E Primary School	LAMBETH	Lambeth
Staveley Junior School	CHESTERFIELD	Derbyshire
Sunfield Independent Special School	CLENT	Worcestershire
Sutton Manor Community	SUTTON MANOR	St Helens
Primary School		
Talbot House School	CRAMLINGTON	Northumberland
(Independent Special)		
The Pupil Referral Unit	KINGSBURY	Brent
The Sneyd High School	NEWCASTLE	Staffordshire
Three Crowns School (Special)	WALSALL	Walsall
Uffculme (Special) School	BIRMINGHAM	Birmingham

Undercliffe Middle School	BRADFORD	Bradford
Upbury Manor School (GMS)	GILLINGHAM	The Medway Towns
Upottery Primary School	HONITON	Devon
Victoria Primary School	LEEDS	Leeds
Wark C of E (Aided) First School	HEXHAM	Northumberland
Warren Hills County Primary School	COALVILLE	Leicestershire
Watergate School	LEWISHAM	Lewisham
Welshampton C of E Primary School	ELLESMERE	Shropshire
West Gate Community College	NEWCASTLE	Newcastle upon Tyne
Windmill School (Special)	BRIXTON	Lambeth
Woodseats Primary School	SHEFFIELD	Sheffield
Woodside Middle School	BRADFORD	Bradford
Woodstock Primary School	LEICESTER	City of Leicester
Worsley Mesnes Primary School	WIGAN	Wigan

Commentary

This is my fifth report as HMCI. Coinciding as it does with the completion of the inspection cycle, it offers an opportunity to review developments since the publication of my first report in 1993/94.

Three main points need to be made. The first is that the performance of teachers and pupils stands in sharp contrast to that of four years ago. Teachers are now teaching better, and pupils, as a consequence, are learning more. The re-inspection of secondary schools has highlighted the progress that some schools have made and I am pleased to identify those with a particularly good record of improvement at the beginning of this report. That said, as in every previous year, inspection shows that while some schools are outstandingly successful, others perform badly. To an extent this is inevitable, but the gap in achievement between schools serving similar communities continues to be too wide. Education remains, as I said in last year's report, "too much of a lottery". This is a second, and very significant, issue. Then, third, there is the unsurprising fact that the basic challenges are still very much those we faced when I wrote my first report. The quality of teaching has improved, but further progress is needed if, for example, the Government's literacy and numeracy targets are to be achieved. So, too, with leadership in schools. The headteacher is the critical figure in the drive to raise educational standards. We have many committed, highly effective heads. We need more. It is upon these two imperatives that the policy agenda should focus.

I have emphasised the achievements of the service in each of the reports I have published since 1993/94, and I have done so with increasing confidence. The statistics this year speak for themselves. In 1993/94 the quality of teaching was judged to be less than satisfactory in 25 per cent, 30 per cent, 19 per cent and 17 per cent of lessons in Key Stages 1, 2, 3 and 4 respectively. This year the comparable figures have fallen to 8 per cent, 8 per cent, 10 per cent and 7 per cent. Teaching is now deemed to be good in over half of the lessons observed in each key stage. Teachers are now expecting more of their pupils. They are planning and preparing more effectively and teaching in a more challenging, direct way. More headteachers (though not yet enough) are monitoring the quality of teaching in their schools. More pupils, as a consequence, are achieving their potential. In particular, more children are making better progress in mathematics and English in primary schools. The Literacy and Numeracy initiatives are enabling many teachers to teach more effectively. In a number of primary schools, some of which serve areas of severe disadvantage, we have seen spectacular improvements in reading. The task now, for most primary schools, is to build steadily on these foundations and, for those directing the strategies, to continue to improve them in the light of experience.

Pupils continue generally to have a positive attitude to learning. Behaviour of pupils is unsatisfactory in only 2 per cent of primary schools. It is unsatisfactory in 6 per cent of secondary schools, which is too high. However, relationships are generally good. Most schools provide well for social and moral development of pupils. Teachers do much to ensure that pupils have a clear grasp of what constitutes right and wrong behaviour. Attendance figures in most schools are above 90 per cent, with schools working hard to ensure regular attendance, at times despite the difficulties posed by condoned absence.

The improvements highlighted by the second round of inspections of secondary schools are encouraging. Most schools have tackled the issues identified by inspectors in the first report. Seven in ten schools have an upward trend in examination results; nine in ten have a higher proportion of good teaching. More pupils are now staying on at school and most sixth forms provide a good-quality education. GNVQs have improved. The new assessment regime is clearer and more rigorous and this has led to improved standards in the work inspected.

A worryingly high proportion (8 per cent) of special schools continues to be made subject to special measures. There have, however, been some encouraging developments in special schools. In particular, the teaching in schools for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties has improved. HMI in OFSTED have carried out a study of successful practice in these demanding schools which we shall be publishing in the near future.

Considerable improvement has, therefore, been made in a number of areas. Inspection, however, has found that there is still substantial underachievement in about one in ten primary and secondary schools. About four in ten pupils leaving primary schools did not achieve level 4 (the level expected of 11 year olds) in English and in mathematics tests, and one in ten did not even reach level 3. In Key Stage 3, where the proportion of unsatisfactory teaching is now highest, about four in ten pupils do not achieve level 5. The achievement of boys continues to cause concern. Their achievement in reading and particularly writing is significantly weaker than that of girls at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. There is still, therefore, much to do in a significant number of schools.

An encouraging number of schools are now being removed from special measures. The proportion of schools that fail their inspection remains, however, much the same as in previous years - about three per cent of primary and secondary schools, and

eight per cent of special schools. Those secondary schools that failed this year had generally made little or no improvement since their previous inspection. In one recently failing school serving a disadvantaged area, standards had spiralled downwards to a point where only 6.6 per cent of pupils achieved five or more A* to C grades. Nearly a third of the pupils registered at this school failed to gain a single GCSE pass. Attendance was well below the national average and the unauthorised absence rate was over twelve times the national figure. The quality of teaching was a serious weakness. One-third of all lessons, and half of the mathematics lessons, were less than satisfactory. The main weaknesses were that teachers lacked sufficient knowledge of their subject, planning was often poor and the work set was insufficiently challenging. The school had not addressed weaknesses identified as Key Issues in the previous report.

I am fully aware that teachers working in schools in socially disadvantaged areas can face enormous difficulties. The rich do not, however, have a monopoly on intelligence and poverty can never be an excuse for school failure. It is the children who have no books at home, whose parents cannot or will not read to them, who need school most. More privileged children are likely to be better prepared for education, but the fact that a child is eligible for a free school meal ought not to have any relevance when it comes to learning to read. This is not pious exhortation. We know from inspection and test and examination results that schools working in difficult circumstances can achieve exceptional results. In recent years there has been a clear trend of improvement in such schools. A number of secondary schools, for example, with very disadvantaged intakes have increased their examination results by over 4 GCSE points per year in the last four years, compared with a national trend of less than one point per year. Ways must be found to replicate the strengths of such schools. It is deeply depressing that some schools like the one described in the previous paragraph have deteriorated since their first inspection. The LEAs responsible must ask themselves why this has been allowed to happen. If two hundred of the schools that failed their inspection can be turned round, why cannot all? The Government has taken firm action to ensure that schools in special measures and with serious weaknesses receive proper support from their local authorities. If the LEA cannot deliver, then alternative forms of provision must be found. The drive to raise standards for the children who need education most must not be allowed to grind to a halt in a mire of professional incompetence and political indecision within the LEA.

The key to raising standards in schools where achievement is currently too low is obviously to improve the quality of teaching and the strength of leadership provided by the headteacher. We have now inspected every school in the country. We know what makes a good teacher and headteacher. It is not, therefore, research into the nature of teaching and school leadership that is needed, so much as new thinking about how we can use our current knowledge better.

Good teachers have a secure understanding of the subjects they teach. The evaluation, for example, of the literacy initiative has revealed that the problem in schools where standards in reading are low is that teachers simply do not know what to do. Their initial training may have given them a vague sense of different methods, but they lack the specific, day-to-day understanding of what knowledge and skills need to be taught when. It is exactly the same at A level: students who are taught by teachers who do not have a firm intellectual grip upon (and, indeed, a personal enthusiasm for) their subject-matter are unlikely to make good progress. Good teachers have, moreover, high expectations of their pupils. They plan effectively. They deploy a variety of different teaching methods in a skilful and pragmatic fashion. They achieve high standards of discipline. They both plan and assess pupils' work thoroughly, using assessment to inform planning for future lessons. There is, of course, nothing new in this account. There is nothing, moreover, that is problematic theoretically. The challenge for the teacher is, as it always has been, to turn the words that are so easy to write on the page into the difficult reality of day-to-day action. For the policymaker, it is to rethink current approaches to the training and support of teachers so that more teachers teach more effectively.

So, too, with leadership. Successful schools are invariably led by men and women who are aware of the gap between what should be, and what is, happening, who have the determination to tackle problems, and, more generally, the determination to develop a culture which takes nothing for granted. They recognise that only so much can be done at once and they have the courage, whatever the pressures, external and internal, to prioritise. They deal with decisions with down-to-earth management efficiency, and, most important of all, they themselves know what constitutes high-quality teaching and educational excellence. We do not have enough such headteachers. Indeed, educational leadership is judged to be weak in one in eight primary and one in seven secondary schools. These are disturbing figures. Too many headteachers do not really know what is happening in the classrooms of their schools. They do not know because they do not have a rigorous and systematic approach to monitoring standards and evaluating the quality of teaching. This is a fundamental weakness, for, without this, development planning is clearly impossible and target setting little more than a pious aspiration. The key challenge for school management over the next few years is to exploit the potential of appraisal and self-evaluation. Appraisal in many schools has lacked rigour. The conclusions of the appraisal process have not been followed through into management action which benefits the appraisee and the school. The situation with self-evaluation has become similar. A minority of schools have, as indicated above, had the courage to cut through the obstacles to an honest identification of the really important issues. Too many have not.

What, then, can be done to increase the number of good teachers and good headteachers? The contribution of initial teacher training (ITT) is clearly vital. Inspection shows that ITT for primary schoolteachers has focused more sharply on the teaching

of number and reading. There have been some marked improvements in key areas such as the attention given to mental arithmetic and phonics. The Primary Follow-up Survey nevertheless identified some key weaknesses. The majority of trainees are still uncertain about how to plan for and use phonics appropriately in the teaching of reading over a period of time. Many trainees have difficulty in planning and pacing a structured sequence of lessons for reading and number. The assessment of trainees has improved, but it is not always sufficiently rigorous or accurate and does not always cover fully the standards for qualified teacher status. Rigorous inspection of ITT must therefore continue so that institutions of higher education can remedy the weaknesses that remain. Each and every student who leaves a training institution must, as a minimum, feel confident in dealing with the day-to-day practicalities of classroom teaching. This is not yet the case.

LEAs now have the opportunity to make a real contribution to the improvement of teaching and leadership in schools. In that the cycle of LEA inspection only began in 1997/98, this Annual Report does not draw upon a balanced sample of LEAs. Some interesting conclusions nevertheless emerge. Good LEAs meet their statutory obligations. They neither seek to replicate the work of OFSTED nor do they second-guess the management decisions of headteachers and governing bodies. They devolve a high proportion of the resources available for education to schools. They target intervention in those schools which cannot manage their own destiny, and, having listened to the views of headteachers, ensure that the majority of schools have access to high-quality, value-for-money support which from time to time most headteachers will want. It is an important but sensibly minimalist role.

The weakest LEAs inspected in this sample had no clear concept of their role. They had failed to listen to headteachers, to define the respective roles of school and authority, or to establish how and when intervention would occur when schools failed to deliver acceptable standards. They retained too much money and had no clear idea of whether the services they provided represented good value for money. They tried, typically, to do too much, in the process confusing schools and dissipating energy. They failed to meet their own statutory responsibilities. Such LEAs, and next year's Report will give a clearer idea of their number, have some way to go if they are to deliver what the Government now expects from them. At present they are making little or no contribution to the standards agenda. Indeed, they are damaging schools because they are wasting resources and managing change badly.

Traditionally, the only strategy beyond the work of ITT institutions and LEAs to improve the quality of teaching and leadership has been the publication of good practice in the hope that it will seep through the system. Some such publications have had some effect, but most have not. The Government is right, therefore, to look for new solutions. The Green Paper *Teachers Meeting the Challenge of Change* proposes fundamental changes for the longer term, including incentives for excellence in leadership and in training, more flexible models of initial teacher training and a systematic approach to professional development.

The most dramatic innovations thus far are the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. These strategies are unique in that, for the first time, the Government has offered firm guidance not only on what should be taught but also on how children should be taught to read, write and calculate. Those who believe telling teachers how to teach is an affront to their professional dignity because it treats them as "technicians" rather than professionals are seriously misguided. The overwhelming majority of teachers involved with the Literacy and Numeracy Projects have welcomed the way in which the Frameworks for Literacy and Numeracy have brought together up-to-date knowledge of what needs to be taught and the best methods of teaching it. Teachers' confidence and competence in teaching fundamentally important areas of work, notably phonics and mental mathematics, which had suffered much from weak teaching in the past, have been enormously strengthened. However, the National Literacy Strategy has huge in-service training implications. Not surprisingly, while the picture is broadly positive, there have been problems maintaining the quality of this training in some local authorities. It has not been easy to keep the focus on phonics because of the reluctance of a minority of LEAs and schools to recognise its importance.

The next stage in the Government's drive to improve teaching will focus on the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) to raise educational standards and equip teachers and pupils with the skills they will need in the twenty-first century. The Government is right to find very substantial extra funding for this initiative. Information technology is the subject taught least well in primary and in secondary schools. About one-third of schools in both sectors show substantial underachievement. There is a huge gap between those schools which teach the National Curriculum requirements for information technology effectively and those which, for various reasons, do not. A small amount of work involving communication and data handling is very good, but there is much that is mediocre or poor and makes only trivial use of expensive facilities and information sources. Much of the existing investment is, therefore, wasted, largely because in many schools teachers lack confidence and training to teach the subject well and other teachers are unable to apply ICT to the subjects they teach. In taking advantage of the new funding for ICT, schools must establish clear priorities for training and for monitoring the quality of training. They should also make full use of the ideas and guidance in the scheme of work for Key Stages 1 and 2 recently published by the DfEE and QCA. OFSTED will continue to monitor closely and report on the impact of the Government's initiative in ICT.

The Beacon school initiative is a further example of new government thinking in the drive to improve the quality of teaching and leadership. It is too early to comment from inspection evidence, but in principle this seems a highly promising development. We now know which schools are the most successful and we are therefore for the first time in a position to draw upon their expertise in a systematic way. Such schools have the potential to make a very significant contribution to initial and in-service training and to the training of prospective headteachers. Teachers and headteachers who are themselves doing the job have an expertise and credibility that nobody outside schools can possibly claim. It is worth therefore seeing how a bottom-up approach can complement the traditional dissemination of good practice from on high.

It is clear that we have reached a critical point in the Government's drive to raise educational standards. Significant progress has been made in recent years. Much, nevertheless, needs to be done if the Government's vision of a world-class education service is to be realised. We must, in particular, continue to focus on raising standards in the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and IT. These are the foundations upon which a culture of lifelong learning must be built, and, at present, standards are simply too low for us to be confident that the foundations are secure. There is, however, every reason for optimism. Nobody now questions the need to raise standards. Fewer take refuge in socio-economic explanations of school failure. Most within the profession accept that the beliefs about education and teaching which have dominated practice for the last forty years must be, at the least, questioned. The culture is now less self-indulgent. We have a new and rigorous focus on what actually works. As a consequence, teachers will be able to achieve more at less personal cost. More pupils will realise their potential, and, as a nation, we can contemplate the likelihood of a more socially cohesive and economically prosperous future.

Primary schools

Educational standards achieved

1. The Annual Report for 1996/97 identified three key issues to be addressed in order to maintain the improvement in standards in primary schools.

These were:

- the need to improve standards of literacy and numeracy;
- urgent action in the one in ten schools at Key Stage 1 and one in eight at Key Stage 2 where there was substantial underachievement;
- particular attention to be given to Years 3 and 4, where progress was weakest.

2. Inspection shows that overall standards achieved by pupils in primary schools have continued to improve and that progress is being made in addressing these three issues. These gains reflect the continued improvement in the quality of the teaching in primary schools, particularly the move towards the more systematic and intensive teaching of literacy and numeracy. National Curriculum test results have improved at Key Stage 1 and English results have improved slightly at Key Stage 2. The mathematics results have declined slightly at Key Stage 2, in part because of the added demand of the new mental arithmetic test.

3. In both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 inspectors report that pupils generally make greater gains in knowledge, understanding and skills than in previous years. In every year group more lessons were seen this year where progress was good or very good and fewer where it was unsatisfactory. The greatest improvement has taken place at Key Stage 2. Nevertheless, there is substantial underachievement in one in ten schools at Key Stage 2 and one in 14 at Key Stage 1¹.

4. The chart opposite shows inspectors' judgements of the progress made by pupils in lessons. The variations reported in previous years remain, despite the encouraging trend of rising standards. The greatest gains in knowledge, understanding and skills are still being made by pupils in Year 6 and in reception and nursery classes. The smallest gains are made by pupils in Year 3.

Chart 1 - Lessons in Primary Schools: Progress (*percentage of lessons*)

5. National Curriculum test results² for 1998 shown in Annex 4 highlight three major issues:

- the proportion of pupils gaining Level 4 has increased in English, but about four in ten pupils still fail to reach Level 4 in English and in mathematics;
- one in ten pupils fails to achieve Level 3 at Key Stage 2 in English and mathematics;
- the attainment of boys in English at both key stages is considerably worse than that of girls.

6. Boys achieve virtually the same levels as girls in mathematics and science, but the differences are marked in English. The underachievement of boys in English begins at Key Stage 1, where the proportion of boys achieving Level 2 or above in reading and writing is about ten percentage points lower than that of girls.

At Key Stage 2 only 57 per cent of boys achieve Level 4 or above compared with 73 per cent of girls. The performance of boys in writing is particularly weak with only 45 per cent achieving Level 4 or above (see the chart at the top of next page).

Inspectors report that, typically, boys use less complex sentences than girls, their presentation is poorer, and they complete less work on time. The performance of boys in English, particularly in writing, will need to improve substantially if government targets are to be achieved by the year 2002.

7. Although four-fifths of pupils achieve Level 2³ or above in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1, the range of attainment within Level 2 is very wide. It is a considerable challenge to take pupils from Level 2c at the age of 7 to Level 4 by the age of 11.

Chart 2 - 1998 Key Stage 2 test results for reading

Chart 3 - 1998 Key Stage 2 test results for writing

8. The chart below shows the average National Curriculum KS2 level per pupil and the proportion of pupils eligible for free

school meals for a large sample of primary schools. Eligibility for free school meals is the clearest single indicator of the level of disadvantage of the intake. As the level of disadvantage increases, the average attainment of pupils falls, but at any given level of eligibility for free school meals there is a wide range of achievement. This variability is confirmed by a more detailed analysis of schools' performance. For example, in a set of schools with similarly high levels of disadvantage across a range of indicators, the proportion of pupils achieving level 4 or above ranged from about 65 per cent to 15 per cent. Some schools do well against the odds, while others in similar circumstances underachieve.

9. The longstanding problem of how to overcome low attainment in areas of socio-economic disadvantage remains a major challenge facing primary education. Schools, however, recognise the importance of raising standards in literacy and numeracy, and are giving much more attention to teaching the essential knowledge, understanding and skills needed to bring this about. Inspectors report that much of the best teaching is now seen in the core subjects, and that this is reflected in the progress made by pupils and in their attitudes to their work. Nevertheless, early evidence from the National Literacy Project⁴ shows that pupils eligible for free school meals made smaller gains than pupils who were not eligible.

10. The attainment of pupils from **MINORITY ETHNIC GROUPS** is improving, with some groups, for example Black African and Chinese pupils, achieving above the national norm. Although the performance of Bangladeshi and Pakistani pupils in the early years of schooling remains depressed, their overall attainment often matches or exceeds that of English first language pupils from similar neighbourhoods, once they become proficient in spoken English. Large numbers of pupils from ethnic minorities were involved in the National Literacy Project. No ethnic minority group showed a significantly lower performance than the average. Black Caribbean pupils, who often underachieve in secondary schools, generally make a sound start in primary schools.

Chart 4 - Average National Curriculum level achieved by pupils in KS2 tests against eligibility for free school meals for a random selection of primary schools

Educational standards achieved in the National Curriculum subjects and religious education

11. The charts opposite show inspectors' judgements of pupils' progress at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. A number of points stand out:

- the greatest progress is now being made in the core subjects at both key stages;
- progress in the core subjects is good in around one-third of schools, but there is substantial underachievement in these subjects in one in ten schools at Key Stage 2;
- particular weaknesses remain in design and technology, and in information technology.

12. In **ENGLISH**, inspection provides evidence of continued gradual improvement and National Curriculum test results have risen slightly. At Key Stage 2, 65 per cent of pupils reached Level 4, still some way off the national target of 80 per cent. There have been notable improvements in standards in some of the schools involved in the National Literacy Project, especially in reading in Year 2.

13. **READING** continues to improve, albeit slowly in some schools. More pupils acquire a wide range of reading strategies, including phonic skills, and are becoming independent readers. The National Literacy Strategy shows how pupils can be taught to read well at both key stages, to go on developing as readers, and to acquire advanced reading skills as they become familiar with a wide range of books. Inspection of the National Literacy Project found that teachers gave insufficient attention to word level work and felt more confident working at text level. Greater attention still needs to be given to the systematic teaching of phonics. For this to happen, teachers need a better understanding of the key principles of phonics work and need to be able to put this into practice more confidently.

14. Achievement in **WRITING** remains weaker than in reading or speaking and listening. Boys' writing shows much greater variation in standards than that of girls. Too few boys are able to produce sustained accurate writing and their handwriting skills are weak. Many boys enter secondary schools with seriously weak writing skills. One in seven fails to reach even Level 3 in the Key Stage 2 tests. This is clearly inadequate to enable them to make good progress in Key Stage 3.

15. Children enter school with a wide range of **SPEAKING AND LISTENING** skills. Some pupils readily take part in conversations with teachers and other children and they learn to read aloud with confidence. However, pupils' listening skills are often poor. While drama often familiarises pupils with role play and improvisation, many teachers still lack confidence in teaching drama and it is underused as a way of strengthening pupils' skills in speaking and listening. The National Literacy Project is helping to ensure that pupils listen carefully to the sound patterns of words and their components as a precursor to learning to read fluently.

Chart 5 - Progress in Key Stage 1 (*percentage of schools*)

16. In **MATHEMATICS**, inspection shows that improvement has continued. National Curriculum test results are similar to last year, but the proportion of pupils achieving Level 4 or above at Key Stage 2 has fallen slightly, in part because of the increased demands of the mental arithmetic tests. During Key Stage 1, most pupils' basic numeracy skills are firmly established. They make correct use of the language and notation of number and learn basic addition and subtraction facts. However, for too many this is limited to addition and subtraction with numbers below 20.

17. In Key Stage 2, pupils' mental arithmetic skills are improving as greater attention is given to learning multiplication tables. The emphasis given to oral and mental work within the National Numeracy Project is having a positive impact on standards. However, pupils' calculation strategies, particularly their mental strategies and ability to divide, are inadequately developed. Insufficient attention is given to discussion of the relationships between the four operations and to developing efficient methods of calculation. Pupils' knowledge of and ability to manipulate decimals and fractions remain a cause for concern.

18. Attainment in shape, space and measure is higher than in other areas of mathematics. Handling data and representing data pictorially are skills pupils begin to acquire at Key Stage 1 and continue to use at Key Stage 2, over which time presentational techniques improve and are often good, but pupils' interpretative skills are generally much weaker.

19. In **SCIENCE** there has also been a small improvement on the previous year. At Key Stage 2, 69 per cent of pupils achieved Level 4 or above in the tests. At Key Stage 1, pupils' use of correct simple scientific terminology has increased, but excessive use of worksheets for recording is common. Pupils recognise the need for scientific tests to be fair, but only a minority understand the significance of this in different contexts. Progress at Key Stage 2 has improved, although it remains weaker in Year 4. Attainment at Key Stage 2 is more variable than at Key Stage 1, both between schools and between sections of the programme of study. Attainment is higher for life and living things than in other sections. The greatest variation is found in experimental and investigative science, where, in some schools, the more able pupils are given insufficient opportunity to reach the higher levels. Pupils' understanding and use of scientific terminology have improved, but their range of writing is limited, with an emphasis on description rather than explanation.

20. In **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY** there is substantial underachievement in about two-fifths of primary schools, worse than in any other subject and a deterioration on last year's inspection findings. The gap continues to widen between schools which give a high priority to information technology and the one in five schools which do not comply with National Curriculum requirements. The most ambitious information technology work in well-resourced schools has again become more sophisticated this year. For example, new equipment and facilities, including portable computers and digital cameras with the latest multimedia capabilities, enable pupils to gain worthwhile skills in desktop publishing and handling graphic images. Nevertheless, given the heavy investment nationally in this subject, standards remain disappointing. Modelling and control in particular are weak, often because these areas are neglected by schools. In some schools much time is wasted on trivial information technology activities using expensive hardware to little effect. Very few schools have good programmes for promoting basic skills in literacy and numeracy through information technology.

21. Pupils' progress in **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY** remains weaker than in most other subjects. Design and technology is still a comparatively new subject in the primary curriculum and, with minimal provision of training for teachers, development of the subject in many schools is slow. Skills in making are more highly developed than skills in designing. Competence in using constructional materials and components is often better than that with mouldable materials, textiles or food. Knowledge and understanding is patchy across the Programme of Study and is usually weak in systems and control. Pupils make a good start in their nursery and reception years, but progress slows when demands increase as they move through the key stages. At Key Stage 2 the proportion of schools where there is substantial underachievement has increased to one-quarter, mainly because of weaknesses in the teaching in Years 3 and 4.

22. In **GEOGRAPHY**, pupils' gains in knowledge skills and understanding are satisfactory in about two-thirds of schools, but good in only about one in five. Strengths are the use of appropriate geographical terms and vocabulary, the development of investigative and enquiry skills and the good field study work, which gives understanding of the local area. Pupils frequently have a sound understanding of local geography and local environmental issues, such as the effects of alterations to road systems and proposals to change open land for housing, though their knowledge of more distant places is less secure. However, geographical skills are insufficiently practised and consolidated within investigations and older pupils should be better at discussing and explaining their findings. Insufficient attention is also given to using geographical conventions in the presentation of work, for example keys and scales on maps.

23. The **HISTORY** curriculum is now well established in the great majority of schools, and the overall quality of the teaching is at least sound in all but a few. Pupils make at least satisfactory progress in the large majority of schools. In recent years

expectations have risen about what pupils can attain in history. This is reflected in a better knowledge base, a growing understanding of the nature of historical evidence and its use, and the ability to organise and communicate work with increasing depth and sophistication. However, pupils' achievement across the key elements is uneven, reflecting patchy provision. Pupils' attainment in interpretation of history and enquiry is weaker than the other Key Elements, although there are some examples where older pupils are already grasping the problems of bias, the purposes of propaganda and the advantages and disadvantages of first-hand evidence.

24. Non-compliance with the requirement to teach **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION** to all pupils is less than in previous years, and there has been a slight improvement in pupils' progress at Key Stage 2. At both key stages there is more good, and less unsatisfactory, teaching than last year. Pupils make good progress at Key Stage 2 and have elements of the knowledge, skills and understanding only expected of secondary pupils in the past. However, where lessons are mundane and lack challenge and imagination, progress is unsatisfactory, and the pupils have little knowledge of religions, especially those other than Christianity, and no understanding of religious concepts such as worship.

25. Pupils' progress in **MUSIC** compares well with most other subjects. Composing has improved and almost all schools now teach this systematically and imaginatively. Where standards are low, this is often because schools are spending too much of their time on activities not required by the National Curriculum, for example teaching all the pupils to play the descant recorder from staff notation. This leaves insufficient time for pupils to play by ear or to develop appropriate standards in composing, playing other instruments, singing and listening critically to music. It also leads to the demotivation of pupils whose progress in learning to play the recorder is slow.

26. In **ART**, pupils make good progress in about one-third of schools. The teaching in these schools focuses on progressively raising the level of basic skills of handling familiar two- and three-dimensional media. This is matched by an increasingly successful effort by teachers to raise the level of discussion about art. A feature of some of the most successful work is the use of sketchbooks to make observational drawings and to develop designs and ideas for paintings and constructions.

27. In **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**, progress is generally at least satisfactory, good in about three in ten schools and slightly better at Key Stage 2 than Key Stage 1. Most schools are able to provide a reasonably balanced programme of physical education, including swimming lessons. Where there is an imbalance it is mainly due to weaknesses in the Outdoor and Adventurous Activities element at Key Stage 2. As last year, the teaching is good in about half of schools, and pupils' response is generally enthusiastic. **DANCE** is a compulsory subject in Key Stages 1 and 2 and is generally well taught. Pupils respond well and show control, co-ordination, balance and poise appropriate for their age.

[Progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning⁵ for pupils under five in maintained schools](#)

28. In the large majority of schools most pupils under the age of five make at least satisfactory progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. Indeed, those pupils (about four in ten pupils entering reception or nursery classes) who have limited language skills and vocabulary make greater progress in the early years of primary education than later on. There are fewer schools which limit pupils' progress by working to Desirable Outcomes which have already been achieved. Nevertheless, in a small minority of mixed-age reception and Key Stage 1 classes the provision does not take full account of the needs of the youngest pupils. This is particularly problematic in small schools where the number of pupils in a year group may be small, making it difficult to provide appropriately for under fives as well as for the older pupils engaged with the programmes of study of the National Curriculum.

29. Provision for **PUPILS' PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT** is a considerable strength in the large majority of schools. The emphasis is usually on the promotion of good behaviour, co-operation and fairness, together with the promotion of self-discipline, for example by completing tasks and following essential rules of the school day. This approach is assisted in the large majority of schools by carefully organised parental support and involvement, as well as good liaison with playgroups, independent nurseries, childminders and other providers.

30. **LANGUAGE AND LITERACY** development is generally at least satisfactory, with some particular strengths. The early stages of reading are usually treated well, with most pupils developing appropriate early phonic skills and gaining familiarity with handling and enjoying books. Similarly, early writing is usually developed well; there are good examples of higher attaining reception age pupils beginning to develop independent writing. Nevertheless, in around one in ten schools the more able pupils are insufficiently challenged and either there are insufficient books or the books available are not used enough. Provision for early **MATHEMATICS** is generally satisfactory, although it does not receive such a high priority as language. The most successful work involves a good range of well-planned practical activities with teachers demonstrating and illustrating properties of number and shape and encouraging pupils to talk about their ideas. In these schools teachers also make good use of chants and songs with all of the children in the class to teach number recognition and counting.

31. The least satisfactory provision is that for **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**, although a small improvement is reported this year. Planning for the development of historical understanding and for the exploration of the physical world needs to be more thorough. Construction activities often provide good opportunities to develop practical making skills. Early scientific experiences often involve observing and describing familiar objects and materials and predicting how they will behave - for example, whether objects will slide or roll when pushed. Overall, teachers continue to find this area of the early years curriculum very broad and have difficulty planning and resourcing activities for the many elements within it.

32. **CREATIVE AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT** receive a high priority and the provision is at least satisfactory in over nine in ten schools. Art and music are generally well developed. For example, pupils are encouraged to copy or create rhythms and sing. Provision for physical development is more limited, usually owing to old or limited amounts of equipment or insufficient outdoor play areas. Schools with cramped or unsatisfactory accommodation often take imaginative steps to overcome these difficulties and cope despite the problems. Nevertheless, the gap between the good and the poor provision for physical development is very wide.

Attitudes and behaviour

33. Pupils' **ATTITUDES** are overwhelmingly positive and the vast majority of pupils behave well. Attitudes or behaviour are seen as overall problems in only 2 per cent of schools. In most schools pupils know the routines and rules of school life, and respond positively to rewards and praise. Only 0.04 per cent of pupils are excluded from primary schools⁶. These are mainly boys in Key Stage 2. Relationships are good or very good in nine in ten schools. The positive attitudes of the pupils to timetabled mathematics and literacy lessons have been a strong feature of the national projects. Pupils have responded well to the high status they see being given to this work. They have enjoyed the direct teaching elements and structure of the lessons.

34. The **RESPONSE** of pupils to their lessons is generally very positive, but varies across the primary age range, and is closely linked to the quality of the teaching. Pupils' response is good in three-quarters of nursery and reception class lessons, in seven in ten Year 6 lessons, but in only six in ten lessons in Years 3 and 4.

Attendance

35. Attendance in the vast majority of schools is very good. In only 4.2 per cent of schools is attendance below 90 per cent⁷. The average attendance is 93.8 per cent. Unauthorised absence accounts for less than 1 per cent of the absences in the great majority of schools. However, inspectors are making increasing references to the late arrival of pupils attending nursery and reception classes; this is an issue in almost two-fifths of these classes. While attendance for under fives is not compulsory in the same way as it is for pupils of statutory school age, lateness has a disruptive effect on the work of the class. It is important, moreover, for parents and schools to do all they can to instil habits of good attendance and punctuality from the early years to help children make the most of their schooling.

Quality of education

The quality of teaching

36. The quality of teaching continues to improve. The proportion of lessons with good or very good teaching has risen by about five percentage points and the overall quality of teaching is now good or better in just over half of schools. Nevertheless, if standards are to rise sufficiently to meet the government targets, improvement will be needed in the four schools in ten where inspectors report that the teaching is no better than satisfactory overall, as well as in the one in 20 schools where it is unsatisfactory. More weak teaching continues to be seen in Years 3 and 4 than in any other years: in one in ten lessons in these years the teaching is weak. On the other hand, in six in ten lessons in Year 6 the teaching is good or very good, and a similarly strong picture is reported from nursery and reception classes.

Chart 6- Lessons in Primary Schools: Teaching (*percentage of lessons*)

37. Of the primary teachers observed by inspectors on five or more occasions during an inspection, 67 per cent taught no lesson where the teaching was unsatisfactory, and 50 per cent of teachers taught mostly good lessons. Poor teachers are rare. There were only 3.2 per cent of teachers whose teaching was unsatisfactory in over half of the lessons observed.

38. The chart below shows the difference between qualified teachers who have taught for more than one year and newly qualified teachers. As expected, more experienced teachers teach better than newly qualified teachers. The gap in performance is similar across all subjects and encouragingly small.

Chart 7 - Quality of Teaching in Primary Schools:

qualified teachers with more than one year's experience and newly qualified teachers (*percentage of lessons*)

39. The chart opposite shows inspectors' judgements of different aspects of teaching. All of these aspects have improved, particularly the selection of the appropriate **TEACHING METHODS**, the **USE OF TIME AND RESOURCES** and **TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING**. The majority of teachers in schools involved in the numeracy or literacy projects generally recognise the value of the approaches to teaching promoted by these projects, and have worked hard to implement the requirements, for example for organising and managing more direct whole class teaching. Such teaching requires considerable teaching skills and good subject knowledge to engage the whole class in the work. Teachers must be clear about what has already been learned and what is now to be taught. Where these features are not in place, inspectors report over-extended introductions to lessons, and teachers spending far too long simply talking to the class.

40. Schools are making less use than in previous years of published schemes in English and mathematics in which pupils work at their own pace through graded workcards or workbooks. The structure of mathematics and literacy lessons, increasingly being adopted in other subjects, encourages the teacher to work with the whole class on a particular aspect of the subject, and then the pupils to follow this up in groups of pupils with similar attainment. In literacy lessons there is a tendency for teachers to overuse home-made **WORKSHEETS** which require considerable time and expense to prepare and are often difficult to store tidily or systematically. Many worksheets are undemanding and involve activities such as colouring or wordsearches. They are often unrelated to the objectives for the lesson and require little more than the writing of single words to form a list or to complete sentences. This undermines the attention that should be given to the improvement of writing, in particular the ability to write complex sentences and sustained, accurate prose.

Chart 8 - Quality of Teaching: Key Stage 1 and 2 (*percentage of schools*)

41. **PLANNING** continues to improve, particularly the identification of learning objectives for individual lessons. One of the characteristics of effective teaching reported in successful schools has been the sharing of clear aims and objectives with the pupils at the start of a lesson. These are then reviewed in the plenary session at the end of the lesson, with feedback to pupils about what has been achieved and what needs to improve. Despite these improvements, **PLANNING** remains weak in one school in seven, mainly because of a lack of focus on what specific skills or knowledge pupils are to learn. Short-term planning and the preparation of materials for use in lessons continue to occupy a considerable amount of teachers' time. Nevertheless, there are signs that schools are beginning to collate materials for future use, rather than treating each exercise as a "one off" task.

42. The Frameworks for the teaching of literacy and numeracy have been broadly welcomed. They offer teachers a clear view of what to teach and when. Although most schools now have **SCHEMES OF WORK** in place for most subjects, these rarely give sufficient detail to indicate precisely to teachers what has to be taught to a particular year group. About one-third of schools give insufficient attention to ensuring that pupils are set increasingly demanding work as they move up through the school.

43. The **EXPECTATIONS** held by teachers of pupils' performance are still too low in too many schools. They are high in only four schools in ten. To help pitch the work at the right level of demand, an increasing number of schools are setting pupils according to their levels of attainment, especially at Key Stage 2 in mathematics and English. About six in ten junior schools set for at least one of these subjects for some year groups.

In virtually every case of setting inspected by HMI⁸, teachers reported that they were able to plan and match their teaching more accurately to the needs of a particular group of pupils and make better use of expertise available in the school. Schools believed that their selective use of setting had a positive impact on standards. However, teachers did not always adapt the content of lessons and their teaching methods to take advantage of the narrower range of ability in setted classes.

44. **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY** is increasingly being taught to larger groups of pupils or to whole classes, in some cases in information technology resource areas rather than gathered around a single computer in a classroom. This form of teaching is often more effective than the practice of allowing small groups of pupils to use a computer with insufficient guidance or instruction because the teacher is preoccupied with other groups.

45. **TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING** of the subjects they are teaching has improved, and in just under half of schools it is judged to be good. The poor subject knowledge of teachers continues to be closely linked with unsatisfactory teaching. Some inspectors report that schools have teachers with good subject expertise but are often unable to release them from their class to help other teachers. The importance of further training in the teaching of reading, especially phonological awareness, is being recognised by literacy consultants in the preparation for the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. Newly qualified teachers are likely to have a good grounding in the teaching of literacy and numeracy, as training courses have increasingly emphasised these important aspects in recent years. Training for teachers in

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY remains an essential requirement if standards are to rise, and without continuing training in the subject teachers become rapidly out of date in their knowledge.

46. There has been some improvement in the quality and use of **DAY-TO-DAY ASSESSMENT**, and some teachers are now using the question and answer element of their "literacy hours" to focus on assessing what particular pupils know. In those schools where teacher assessment is used effectively to raise standards, teachers decide how and when they will assess pupils' attainment at the same time as they plan the work. They are proficient in using a range of assessment techniques, such as asking questions, observing and listening to pupils and setting tasks or tests towards the end of a series of lessons. They also have manageable written recording systems and a sensible approach to the retention of evidence⁹.

47. Only one-quarter of schools make good use of homework. Reading scheme books are taken home in most schools, and many teachers ask pupils to learn number facts and to practise their multiplication tables at home. However, practice is often inconsistent from one class to the next and this is frequently raised as a concern by parents in their response to inspection questionnaires and at parents' meetings. A small but growing number of schools, often in disadvantaged areas, hold regular "homework clubs" after school, which are often well attended. Typically, a very good working atmosphere is established and pupils are able to complete or extend work started in lessons, and receive extra help with areas in which they have difficulties. Year 6 pupils are sometimes given opportunities to revise work likely to be encountered in the National Curriculum tests.

48. The extra support given to pupils speaking **ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE**, funded under Section 11 of the Local Government Act 1966, is generally satisfactory. Schools are currently reviewing the deployment of Section 11 staff in the light of the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy and the new funding arrangements. It is important that schools know how to make the best use of Section 11 staff in the teaching of literacy to bilingual learners, and that these staff are able to receive training in the implementation of the strategy.

Leadership and management

49. Most headteachers are successful at establishing a positive ethos in their schools. Even when weaknesses are present in other aspects of the school, many schools are able to create a good ethos.

Chart 9 - Leadership and Management: Primary Schools (*percentage of schools*)

50. In almost two-thirds of schools the headteacher, supported by the governing body and a senior management team, provides clear **EDUCATIONAL DIRECTION**. In the most successful schools the educational direction includes a strong commitment to **RAISING STANDARDS** through, for example, focused curriculum planning and the use of test and other assessment data to target work more closely to what the pupils need to know next. Last year, weaknesses in the leadership of about one in six primary schools were reported; the picture has improved slightly this year. However, leadership, identified over many years as the key factor behind a successful school, remains weak in too many schools.

51. Although much of the training for the **NATIONAL LITERACY AND NUMERACY PROJECTS** was aimed at key teachers and subject co-ordinators, the role of the headteacher was crucial to the success of the project. Where headteachers were indifferent to the project, or had delegated too much of the responsibility for raising standards, the initial impetus given to the teaching of literacy or mathematics by the training was lost. The most successful of the project schools were those in which the headteacher gave the work a high status, had personal experience of teaching the literacy hour or mathematics lesson, and was aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the staff in teaching literacy and numeracy.

52. The **MONITORING OF STANDARDS AND EVALUATION OF TEACHING** have improved, but still receive insufficient attention in too many schools. In those schools that have been most successful in implementing the National Literacy or Numeracy Projects, headteachers have given particular attention to monitoring the work in classrooms by observing teachers and providing additional support and advice where necessary. They have not just monitored whether the organisation of the literacy hour was in place; they have assessed the extent to which the objectives of the project were being met, what had been learned by the pupils, and how effective the teaching had been.

53. In just over one-third of schools the governors were influential in setting aims and targets for the school and in monitoring progress towards them. By contrast, in about one-quarter of schools governors were poorly placed to know about and influence the education provided. The proportion of ineffective governing bodies was twice as high in disadvantaged areas as in advantaged areas.

The curriculum and assessment

54. In most schools the curriculum is broad and balanced. Teachers work hard to ensure that the work undertaken is interesting

and relevant to the pupils. In recent years more focused attention has been given to literacy and numeracy. Evidence from the national projects shows that while literacy or numeracy received a greater priority, they did not necessarily take up more time. Teachers usually found that the time they gave to English and mathematics was used better than in the past. In some schools, however, there were concerns about a squeeze on the other subjects.

55. Imbalances within subjects are most marked in information technology and design and technology, with serious concerns in one-third and one-quarter of schools respectively. In information technology, for example, too much time is given to wordprocessing and too little to control and data handling. **EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY AND ACCESS TO THE CURRICULUM** is at least sound in the large majority of schools, and curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is good in almost two-thirds of schools throughout the primary phase. Schools are currently considering how best to deploy their special needs support staff as they move to implement the literacy and numeracy strategies.

56. Despite much good work undertaken in recent years by early years staff to prepare schemes and policies which help promote the desirable outcomes, policies affecting the work of nursery or reception age pupils are non-existent or out of date in one in five schools.

57. Schools are making better use of **ASSESSMENT DATA** than in the past. For example, more schools are analysing their end-of-key stage data to review the performance of different groups of pupils, such as boys and girls and pupils from ethnic minorities, but this still often receives insufficient attention. Many schools are also using the more detailed and discriminating information from other assessment such as reading tests, alongside the broader picture provided by national curriculum tests. The requirement for schools to set targets in English and mathematics came towards the end of the inspection year, but for most of the schools in the literacy and numeracy projects the monitoring of progress against targets is well established. Teachers are also making greater use of **TARGET SETTING**, for their class, for groups of pupils or for individuals.

58. **BASELINE ASSESSMENT** is now undertaken in almost half of schools, a significant increase on previous years. However, there are wide variations nationally. It is applied to children of different ages in different parts of the country, often depending on admissions and transfer policies. Some children are assessed when they enter nursery classes at the ages of 3+ or 4+, others when they transfer or enter the reception class as "rising fives". Inspectors report on the involvement of parents in the baseline assessment of their children in only a very small proportion of schools.

59. The majority of primary schools offer a range of **EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**, usually to Key Stage 2 pupils. Provision for extra-curricular activities is good in about half of schools. Whilst these are principally for practice and inter-school matches in football, netball and cricket, good examples are reported of successful after-school clubs in a wide range of cultural or sporting activities: French, choir, recorder, science and chess, for example.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

60. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good in just over two-thirds of schools. This aspect of school life is generally a strength and very rarely appears as a key point for action following an inspection. Religious education, not surprisingly, provides more opportunities for **SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT** than any other subject, but collective worship, usually referred to as "assembly" in schools, makes the most significant contribution to spiritual development. Where worship is carefully planned to contribute to spiritual development, it does so by creating an atmosphere of reverence and opportunities for reflection in a period of calm and quietness; by providing opportunities for pupils to learn and think about the values of Christianity and other religions; and by encouraging participation and self-expression. Provision for spiritual development generally receives greater attention and is significantly better in voluntary aided church schools than in the maintained sector.

61. Provision for **MORAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT** is a strength in about four-fifths of schools. Moral development is promoted through stories and issues in assemblies and through the consistent messages pupils hear about right and wrong in all aspects of school life. Features of school life which inspectors have highlighted as making a significant contribution to social development include: good relationships between pupils and adults; a strong and consistently implemented behaviour policy; active participation in charity fundraising; pupils taking responsibility for tasks such as running the library; older pupils readily helping younger pupils; and an active and effective school council. In schools where social development is weak, pupils generally have too few opportunities to demonstrate initiative, and there are often insufficient places in the school conducive to good social contact outside lesson time.

62. Just under half of schools make a good contribution to the **CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT** of pupils, and there are weaknesses in the provision in around one school in ten. Art, music and religious education make the strongest contributions to this aspect, often supported by visitors to the school and visits to concerts, art galleries, museums and places of worship.

However, if schools are to derive the maximum benefit from these visits, systematic planning and collaboration between the visiting artist and the schools are essential. One in five schools fail to prepare their pupils for life in multicultural Britain, by paying too little attention to non-European cultures.

63. The proportion of schools failing to provide a daily **ACT OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP** - one in ten last year - has continued to fall. The challenge for many schools is to provide an experience of consistently high quality. There remain, however, some schools which either do not provide a daily act of worship or misguidedly assume that religious education can be taught entirely through acts of worship.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

64. In less than one school in twenty are there serious concerns about provision for pupils' support, guidance and welfare. In the vast majority of schools teachers make it a high priority to provide a safe and caring environment, and give good support and guidance to their pupils. In most schools the atmosphere is such that pupils feel confident in their dealings with adults and that their concerns are taken seriously. Attention to the welfare of pupils is a time-consuming element of the work of some schools, particularly those in areas of disadvantage, where parents as well as their children may rely on the support and guidance of the school and make considerable demands on the time of the headteacher. Several schools in such areas provide breakfast for many pupils who otherwise might start the day without a meal.

65. Almost every school has a sound **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY** in place. Procedures are usually secure and lines of communication clear. Nevertheless, schools need to be vigilant to ensure that everyone, including ancillary staff, is aware of procedures, and to pay particular attention to the induction of new staff.

Partnership with parents and the community

66. Links between schools and parents are at least adequate in a substantial majority of schools. Most parents report that they are given a clear understanding of what is taught. It is usual for schools to promote an "open door" policy, giving parents easy access to staff. Considerable correspondence from schools, especially through regular newsletters, keeps parents well informed about events at their children's school.

67. Many schools involve large numbers of parents and other helpers in the work of the school - for example helping with safety arrangements at swimming lessons, joining school trips and assisting in the classrooms. In the best examples parents are provided with clear guidance about how they can help most effectively, and are briefed by the teacher on what sort of support is required.

68. **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT** is a strength in many primary schools. **FUNDRAISING** enhances the level of resources in most schools, and often helps schools to buy a particularly expensive piece of equipment such as a video camera or to respond quickly to changing priorities such as the need for "big books" to support the teaching of literacy. Many schools have "parents' rooms" which can act as a drop-in facility for parents to meet socially, but also form a base for adult education classes or for parents to work with small groups of children.

69. **LINKS WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY** are frequently reported as a very positive feature of the life of a school, providing curricular enrichment and enhancing opportunities for social, moral, spiritual or cultural development. No general pattern emerges; schools simply make the best use of where they are, and reports illustrate positive links with local places of worship, shops, farms, police and fire services and manufacturing industry. "People who help us" is a topic studied in many Key Stage 1 classes, and is usually supported by visits of a wide range of people from the local community.

The efficiency of the school

70. In around three-quarters of schools, the quality of **FINANCIAL CONTROL AND ADMINISTRATION** is good or very good. Day-to-day organisation and routine administrative procedures are almost always efficient and effective. Recommendations of recent audit reports are generally acted upon. Many inspection reports record the considerable contribution made to the smooth running of schools by bursars and administrative staff. About half of schools now have clearly defined procedures for planning educational developments, supported through a carefully considered allocation of the funds available. Such schools have appropriate long-term plans covering the next few years, and detailed and well-focused short-term plans. More than nine in ten schools provide at least satisfactory **VALUE FOR MONEY**, and good value for money is provided in two-fifths of schools. In those schools where poor value for money is provided a combination of factors usually contribute to this: poor progress and attainment, unsatisfactory teaching and weaknesses in the management, coupled sometimes with high unit costs.

71. Schools generally use the **RESOURCES** at their disposal well. They are beginning to come to terms with the implications, for the use of resources, of the literacy and numeracy strategies. For example, most schools now teach the literacy hour and the mathematics lessons in the mornings. There are several consequences of this for the use of resources. School halls and grounds may be largely unused for physical education or drama in the mornings; and some schools are understandably discussing the timing of other activities, such as special need support for individual pupils or instrumental music teaching. Many schools are now effectively deploying their support staff and volunteer helpers to work with groups of pupils in the literacy hour.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

72. The match in terms of the number, qualifications and experience of teachers to the demands of the curriculum is good in over one-third of schools, adequate in about two-thirds of schools and inadequate in 3 per cent. Nevertheless, the unfilled vacancy rates for full-time qualified staff have almost doubled in the last five years, rising from 0.5 per cent of teachers in post in 1993 to 0.8 per cent in 1998¹⁰. Vacancies for headteachers have almost trebled in the same period, rising from 0.5 per cent to 1.4 per cent. **RECRUITMENT** is a particular problem in London, with a vacancy rate of 3.6 per cent in inner London. Recruitment of headteachers to schools seen as "difficult", often in areas of socio-economic disadvantage, is also a problem; the schools presenting the greatest challenges are finding it hard to appoint headteachers of the necessary calibre to tackle these challenges.

73. Arrangements for the **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT** of staff vary considerably in quality. They are good in two-fifths of schools but weak in one school in seven. There continue to be weaknesses in the arrangements for ensuring that teachers who have attended courses can feed back effectively to the rest of the staff. Few schools evaluate the quality of the training they have received, or the impact of the training on the work of the school. Increasingly, programmes of in-service training reflect school priorities, with a particular focus on the teaching of reading, as schools anticipate the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. The strategy relies on the quality of the dissemination of the training by the "key teachers" of literacy to the rest of the staff. In the light of weaknesses highlighted above it will be important for schools to plan their "in-house" programmes of literacy and mathematics training carefully. About three-quarters of schools have **APPRAISAL** systems that meet statutory requirements, but inspectors reported that appraisal was effective in identifying in-service training needs in only one-third of schools.

74. Most schools have sufficient **ACCOMMODATION** to enable them to teach the National Curriculum, although there are concerns about the adequacy of the accommodation in about one in nine schools. Many schools use their grounds imaginatively, for example to support **ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION**. This aspect of the work of primary schools often goes unreported, but inspection reports indicate some excellent practice and a widespread attention to the quality of the local environment, as well as a recognition of its value as a resource. The best examples are outstanding, with full use being made of school grounds: sculptures and murals created by pupils and artists; streams and ponds; and environmental trails including bird hides and "minibeast" sites. These resources, as well as motivating pupils and influencing behaviour and attitudes to conservation, ensure close links between parents, the local community and the school.

75. The **QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF RESOURCES** are good in around three in ten schools and inadequate in one in ten. Over a quarter of schools have inadequate resources for information technology and about one in ten has inadequate books for English. The main weaknesses in English continue to be worn, out-of-date or inappropriate books, unsuitable worksheets and poor access to library resources. The main priority for schools is the purchasing of books for use in the Literacy Hour, in particular, collections of "big books" and sets of books to use in guided reading sessions. Schools that were involved in the National Literacy Project almost always succeeded in establishing an adequate level of resourcing, at times with valuable loans from literacy centres and schools' library services. However, successful teaching of the Literacy Hour also demands that the use of these resources should be carefully planned and efficiently organised. There was encouraging evidence from the Project that schools were doing this well, although weaknesses remained in using sets of text for word level work in guided reading.

1 See Annex 2 for an interpretation of inspection data

2 DfEE data, 1998

3 Level 2 is subdivided into grades C, B and A. Grade A is the most demanding

4 *The National Literacy Project: An HMI Evaluation*. OFSTED, 1998

5 *Nursery Education: Desirable Outcomes for Learning on Entry to Compulsory Education*. SCAA, 1995. These are not a statutory requirement.

6 DfEE data, 1998

7 DfEE data, 1998

8 *Setting in Primary Schools*. OFSTED, 1998

9 *Teacher assessment in the core subjects at Key Stage 2*. OFSTED, 1998

10 DfEE data 1998

Secondary schools

Educational standards achieved

76. Standards in secondary schools have continued to improve gradually. The average GCSE points score per pupil in maintained schools has risen from 35.6 in 1997 to 36.8 in 1998¹¹. The proportion of pupils gaining five or more A*-C grades has risen from 43.3 to 44.4 per cent. The proportion of pupils gaining five GCSEs at grade G or above has also improved slightly. However,

5 per cent of pupils still leave school without any GCSE qualifications.

77. National Curriculum test results at Key Stage 3 have improved in English but are similar to previous years in mathematics and science. Pupils are expected to reach Level 5/6 at the end of Key Stage 3. This year 65 per cent of pupils achieved Level 5 or above in English, 59 per cent in mathematics and 56 per cent in science. Despite these improvements in English, it remains a concern that about four in ten pupils in Year 9 lack the literacy and numeracy skills required to reach Level 5.

78. Inspectors judge that pupils make good overall gains in knowledge, understanding and skills in about four in ten schools. In these schools, progress is generally consistently good and information technology is often the only subject where pupils underachieve. In about half of schools pupils make satisfactory overall progress, but there is often considerable variation across subjects, related to a lack of consistency in the teaching. There is substantial underachievement in about one school in ten¹².

79. The chart below shows inspectors' judgements of progress in lessons. The proportion of lessons where pupils make good gains in knowledge, understanding and skills has increased in all years and the proportion of lessons with unsatisfactory progress has fallen. Progress in Year 7 lessons remains better than in the subsequent two years of Key Stage 3.

80. Evidence from the re-inspection of secondary schools shows that the overwhelming majority of schools are actively trying to raise standards, often in response to performance tables and OFSTED inspection. Seven in ten of the schools inspected in 1997/98 showed an upward trend in results since their previous inspection. This often reflected the improvement in the quality of teaching and other important aspects of school provision that had taken place since the previous inspection. The lowest attaining schools on average had a higher improvement trend.

81. Schools with broadly similar intakes across a range of social indicators continue to vary significantly in their results, typically by about 15 GCSE points. Some with disadvantaged intakes have succeeded in achieving good standards against the odds. Conversely, some schools in socio-economically advantaged areas, while scoring above the national figure, should be doing even better.

82. The gap between the highest and lowest attaining pupils has continued to widen. The average GCSE score of the highest achieving quarter of pupils was 60.7 points compared with 11.0 for the lowest attaining quarter. Although the lower attaining pupils have improved, particularly in schools with low average points score where attention is often more sharply focused on low attaining pupils, their improvement has been less than that of the more able. Target setting in the future will need to ensure that sufficient attention is given to raising the attainment of all pupils.

83. The poor **LITERACY SKILLS** of a substantial minority of pupils, particularly boys, contribute to low attainment and poor progress across the curriculum. Particular weaknesses in writing, such as a failure to write accurately at length and an inability or unwillingness of pupils to persevere with improving the quality of their writing, are not being addressed with sufficient urgency. A number of improving schools where attainment was previously low have raised overall standards by successfully tackling weaknesses in literacy. These schools have begun with a careful analysis of the problem and then used a range of strategies, often focused on priority groups, including tighter marking policies across all subjects, the teaching of key words, the use of writing frames, paired reading, homework clubs, reading and writing clinics and the use of literacy support workers. This has improved Key Stage 3 results in English and improved standards in those subjects where the use of language is a significant requirement.

Standards in National Curriculum subjects and religious education

84. The charts opposite show inspectors' judgements of pupils' progress in Key Stages 3 and 4. A number of points stand out:

- pupils achieve well in mathematics and science in about four in ten schools, and in English in almost half of schools.

However, there is substantial under-achievement in about one in ten schools in mathematics and science and one in 14 in English;

- *particular weaknesses remain in religious education, modern foreign languages, and information technology.*

85. Standards of achievement in **ENGLISH** have shown only a small change over the last few years. There has been some improvement at Key Stage 3 which has reflected the increased attention being given by secondary schools to the literacy skills of pupils as they transfer from primary school.

86. Boys, low-attaining pupils and some EAL pupils of both sexes often lack opportunities for sustained and constructive talk and too many find it hard to listen with concentration and to adjust to different degrees of formality. In mainstream English, drama is often under-represented and the contribution it makes to speaking and listening skills varies greatly.

87. In reading and writing the majority of pupils reach adequate standards. They acquire sound comprehension skills, write accurately and maturely in a steadily increasing number of genres and cope with the reading and writing demands made on them in all subjects. However, there are two main causes for concern. First, too many pupils still lack these essential literacy skills. Second, there are many pupils who just reach adequate standards but fail to develop their skills and interests. For example, they continue to make some basic errors in grammar, spelling and punctuation, use a style which is inappropriate and employ a limited vocabulary. Their reading is confined to basic reference materials and texts studied in class. Inferential comprehension is weak. Worst of all, they do not read with enjoyment and do not see reading as a way of enhancing their work in other subjects.

Chart 11 - Progress in Key Stage 3 (percentage of schools)

88. In **MATHEMATICS** most pupils acquire sound numeracy skills but a large minority of pupils cannot recall number facts and struggle with basic written and mental calculating techniques. Increasingly, secondary schools are beginning to address the problem of poor numeracy, particularly with Year 7 pupils. However, insufficient attention is given to developing and maintaining numeracy skills across all year groups. Pupils' knowledge of shape, space and measures is generally sound. They develop descriptive statistical techniques and can apply them successfully in other subjects. Estimation skills are generally weak and pupils are better at collecting data and constructing graphs than analysing outcomes to test hypotheses. Standards in algebra vary considerably between and within schools. They are frequently low at Key Stage 3. Pupils with weaknesses in numeracy, whose understanding of arithmetic is poor and who cannot relate the algebraic techniques they are taught to the rules of arithmetic, make little or no progress in algebra.

89. Standards in **SCIENCE** have yet to reflect sufficiently the improvements in primary science over recent years. Able pupils are often insufficiently challenged at the start of Key Stage 3 and so underachieve. Progress at Key Stage 3 has improved markedly in the small but growing proportion of schools that have systematically built on pupils' achievement at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 4 pupils are usually thoroughly prepared for the demands of GCSE examinations but insufficient account is taken of the needs of different ability groups. Now that the 1995 changes to the National Curriculum Order have been fully implemented, the variety of science activities is growing. This has improved the motivation and achievement of pupils in many schools. Attainment is very similar in the different sections of the programme of study, although many pupils continue to have difficulty with chemical equations and quantitative work in physics. Work in experimental and investigative science is often narrow, focusing on 'fair testing' in a small number of contexts, carried out to a format prescribed by the teacher. Pupils are often adept at carrying out laboratory routines but rarely review critically their practical work.

90. Pupils make good progress in **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY** in only about one-third of schools and in a further one-third progress is unsatisfactory. The difference in achievement of pupils in these schools is widening. Progress in this subject compares unfavourably with all other subjects at both key stages. Pupils often repeat mundane, low-level work as they move up through the school. Modelling, measurement and control are often neglected in favour of presentation and communication - applications which pupils tackle well. The overwhelming majority of schools where achievement is unsatisfactory do not comply with National Curriculum requirements for information technology. In schools which do comply, pupils' progress compares well with other subjects.

91. In **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**, skills in making remain stronger than those in designing. The knowledge and understanding associated with industrial application, systems and control are not as strong as other aspects. Progress is constrained by teachers' low expectations of both the most and the least able pupils, and by a failure to ensure that tasks are increasingly more demanding as pupils move through their secondary schooling, particularly in Key Stage 3. The large size of an increasing number of teaching groups also limits access to resources and poses health and safety risks. Insufficient funding significantly constrains the range and quality of work in both key stages in a significant minority of schools. In Key Stage 4, many pupils improve their attainment by continuing with designing and making activities outside normal lesson time,

particularly those taking GCSE short courses.

92. Most pupils are well motivated by starting **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES** as a new subject in Year 7 and make good progress, though this is not maintained in Years 8 and 9. Pupils make less progress in modern foreign languages over the five years of compulsory secondary education than in most other subjects. The use of the target language by most pupils does not develop sufficiently in important aspects of the programme of study, such as those requiring them to initiate and develop conversations and commit language to memory. Consequently, pupils make insufficient progress towards becoming independent users of the target language. The weaknesses in performance are partly due to the restricted range of opportunities provided in Key Stage 4 in many schools and partly because insufficient ground has been covered in Key Stage 3. As a result, many pupils have an insecure grasp of the structure of the foreign language and limited confidence in speaking it.

93. Progress in **GEOGRAPHY** improves steadily across the key stages from a variable base in Key Stage 2. At both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 there is some sound investigative work and understanding of geographical processes. The underachievement of some pupils is due to undemanding work which involves colouring, copying, filling in words and using narrowly focused worksheets. In both key stages most pupils, at levels appropriate to their development, have sound knowledge and understanding of places and themes and can offer explanations and apply these to new geographical contexts. Their improving specialist vocabulary and developing investigative skills result in some excellent individual studies. By Key Stage 4 many pupils are beginning to have an understanding of complex environmental issues. Where pupils have insecure geographical knowledge and understanding this is often linked with insufficient opportunities for extended written work which requires explaining and reasoning.

94. Pupils' progress in **HISTORY** at Key Stage 3 has continued to improve and the level of underachievement among those who opt to study the subject in Key Stage 4 is less than for any other subject. Teachers show increasing confidence in giving an overview of the period and exploring historical concepts in depth with pupils. Progress across the key elements of the subject is nevertheless variable and many schools do not build sufficiently upon pupils' experience of history in Key Stage 2. Weaknesses include, in some schools, little historical knowledge, an inability to undertake independent enquiry, mechanistic use of historical sources, and an inability to communicate knowledge and understanding in extended writing. Achievement in interpretation of history remains the weakest of the key elements, reflecting the lack of opportunities to develop this important aspect of the subject.

95. In **PHYSICAL EDUCATION** boys make better progress in games than do girls; inspectors report that boys show higher levels of motivation and greater interest in the challenge of team games. However, girls do better than boys in gymnastics. Girls show sound and often good co-ordination, poise and control, while boys often have limited movement, lack fluency and control, and have a limited understanding of what constitutes quality. Where dance is taught, attainment is high and pupils can compose, rehearse and improve complex dance sequences and bring expression to their movement. Swimming is always sound and often good, with many pupils swimming confidently and showing a good knowledge of safety and personal survival. Factors limiting pupils' progress include lack of physical and intellectual challenge in tasks, and short modular programmes often found at Key Stage 3, which fail to provide opportunities for pupils to improve their skills by participating in activities over an extended period of time.

96. In the majority of schools, Key Stage 3 **ART** courses meet National Curriculum requirements and equip pupils with adequate practical skills, and knowledge and understanding of art. Pupils achieve good standards where the Key Stage 3 course comprises a series of tasks and projects in different media and techniques, each with clear objectives for the development of skills and knowledge. A grounding in drawing accurately from observation is the skill which is the most helpful to pupils as they progress through the key stages. The failure to learn how to draw in Key Stage 3 is often the cause of underachievement and in some cases leads to poor performance at GCSE.

97. Pupils' progress in **MUSIC** at Key Stage 3 has improved. In the schools with good, brisk teaching that builds on pupils' prior learning, pupils make good progress in singing, playing a variety of instruments, composing, listening and appraising. A range of optional activities outside lesson time, frequently including peripatetic instrumental lessons, allow pupils to pursue their particular musical interests and further raise their attainment. Poor progress is often the result of poor planning but is sometimes aggravated by poor timetabling of the subject. The minority of pupils who continue to study music at Key Stage 4 usually make good progress.

98. At Key Stage 4 in **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**, the introduction of GCSE or other accredited courses for all pupils has had a positive effect on their achievement. In particular, pupils are making more progress than previously in understanding concepts, symbolism and the impact of religion on people's lives. The most frequent causes of poor progress are low expectations and the setting of trivial tasks. A significant minority of schools provide insufficient time for the Agreed Syllabus to be taught, which limits the achievement of the pupils.

Vocational courses

99. Pupils on Part One GNVQ courses continue to show high levels of commitment and are particularly motivated by the links with vocational sectors. Achievement is more consistent on Intermediate than Foundation courses and the highest attaining pupils achieve standards which compare well with the equivalent GCSE courses. A study of pupils who completed the award last year has shown that many benefited from the independent style of learning promoted by the course and have made an excellent start to their post-16 courses. In art and design, leisure and tourism and information technology, which are coming to the end of their first two years of piloting, much of the work in pupils' portfolios is satisfactory, but relatively little is good. There are particularly wide discrepancies between the best and weakest work in information technology and engineering.

The achievement of different groups of pupils

100. **GIRLS CONTINUE TO OUTPERFORM BOYS.** The difference is particularly marked in the written English tests at Key Stage 3. Seventy-three per cent of girls achieve Level 5 or higher compared with 56 per cent of boys. Overall at GCSE girls scored an average of 39.3 points while boys scored 34.3. Both boys and girls in single-sex schools achieve higher results than their counterparts in mixed schools. When account is taken of the intake characteristics these differences reduce and in the case of boys the difference is slight (see Annex 5). The majority of mixed schools express concern for the underachievement of boys compared to girls, particularly at GCSE, but only a small minority of these schools have devised effective strategies to improve boys' performance. Those that do, focus on providing more explicit guidance to boys on planning, organising and completing work, and give particular attention to homework planners. They use mentors and role models to combat the anti-achievement culture that can develop amongst boys, and encourage underachievers to attend homework clubs and lunchtime or after-school lessons.

101. The persistent link between low attainment and **SOCIO-ECONOMIC DISADVANTAGE** continues. Schools with disadvantaged intakes generally have significantly lower average GCSE points scores. However, there is encouraging evidence this year that the more disadvantaged schools have a greater upward trend in their results than schools overall (See Annex 6). For example, two schools with very high levels of disadvantage show a trend in improvement of average GCSE points score of more than four points per year over a four-year period, and over 40 schools with high levels of disadvantage improved by more than two points per year. These schools have a number of key features in common:

- strong, effective leadership that harnesses the efforts of staff, pupils and parents in the pursuit of improvement;
- hardworking staff who share the vision that the school can make a difference and have high expectations of all pupils;
- raising standards in literacy is seen as of fundamental importance and there are planned strategies to bring this about;
- well-structured study support before and after school, including homework clubs and holiday revision classes;
- they draw on a range of extra funding and support from the community and local businesses, yet keep a sharp focus to initiatives and ensure that they do not dissipate energy across too many competing demands.

102. The variation in achievement of pupils from differing **MINORITY ETHNIC GROUPS** remains complex. Overall the attainment of minority ethnic groups is improving, with some groups achieving above national averages, while others continue to underachieve. Once they become proficient in English, the attainment of Bangladeshi and Pakistani pupils often matches or even surpasses that of pupils in similar circumstances whose first language is English; however, their lack of higher grades at GCSE remains a concern. Black Caribbean pupils slip back markedly in secondary schools after a generally sound start in primary schools, as do Gypsy Traveller pupils. An increasing number of secondary schools analyse attainment data by ethnic group but few yet use the information in producing a specific ethnic focus to their initiatives to raise standards.

Attendance

103. **ATTENDANCE** is generally good, with over seven in ten schools achieving over 90 per cent. The average attendance is 91 per cent. Most schools work hard to ensure regular attendance. Two-thirds of schools have effective procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance, but in one in ten schools this is unsatisfactory. Early intervention by the Education Welfare Services and early contact with the home by schools is helping schools to tackle absence more effectively. However, the minority of pupils whose absence from school is accepted and occasionally encouraged by parents continue to pose particular difficulties for schools. Many schools express concern about the impact of extended holidays on the progress of pupils from some ethnic minorities, particularly Bangladeshi and Pakistani pupils, and to a lesser extent Black Caribbean pupils.

Attitudes and behaviour

104. In most schools pupils have a positive attitude to learning. They are generally polite and well-behaved. **BEHAVIOUR** is good in seven in ten schools and unsatisfactory in one in 20. Where behaviour is good, schools have a clear and consistent

approach to discipline. When pupils are familiar with and understand the need for rules, and these are explained straightforwardly to them, they are more likely to be accepted. The small number of schools with poor behaviour generally lack clear, firm management, teaching that engages the interest of the pupils, and a consistent application of rules and sanctions.

105. BULLYING is a serious problem for too many pupils and is a cause of deep concern to the parents involved. While the majority of schools have policies on bullying, implementation is often uneven and the definition of what constitutes bullying is too narrow and often confined to threats of, or actual, physical abuse. Incidents of verbal abuse are more common and perhaps more wearing. These sometimes occur frequently in lessons and often go unchallenged. Where schools recognise the damage that bullying can do and where staff, pupils and parents work together, incidents are identified early and usually dealt with to the satisfaction of the victim and parents.

106. The latest figures for permanent **EXCLUSIONS** show a small increase of 119 over the previous year to 10,463¹³. This total represents 0.34 per cent of secondary pupils. However, there are large variations between schools and between LEAs. Establishing in-school centres and behaviour support teams has assisted in supporting troublesome pupils who might otherwise have been excluded. As is appropriate, most schools use permanent exclusion as a last resort, and permanent exclusions are rarely the result of a single incident.

107. Schools recruiting pupils with similar academic and social backgrounds vary considerably in their rates of exclusion. Where behaviour is well managed through effective teaching and organisation, pupils are less likely to be excluded. Such schools are characterised by a sound code of behaviour or conduct with an emphasis on rewards, personal responsibility and an awareness of the consequences of poor behaviour. Senior managers monitor and identify patterns of behaviour and develop strategies for defusing disagreements and conflicts. The small number of pupils whose behaviour is affected by mental health difficulties pose a particular challenge for schools. Some successful schools intervene early and provide good support for these pupils. However, links between the different agencies who support these young people are extremely variable.

108. Some specific groups are more likely to be excluded than others. Children in care and those known to Social Services frequently become excluded. Boys are over four times more likely to be excluded than girls. Ethnic minority pupils, especially Black boys, are also more likely to be excluded. In some shire counties, Travellers' children are likewise disproportionately excluded. A high percentage of excluded pupils have poor literacy and numeracy skills. However, many Black and Asian pupils who are excluded do not fit this category and are often of average to above-average ability but underperforming.

Quality of education

The quality of teaching

109. The **QUALITY OF TEACHING** continues to improve, particularly at Key Stage 3. The chart below shows that in more than half of lessons the teaching is good or very good and it is less than satisfactory in less than one in ten. The quality of teaching has a significant impact on the standards achieved by pupils. For example, pupils in schools with the lowest proportion of good teaching on average achieved about 6 GCSE points fewer than pupils in a matched sample of schools with an above-average proportion of good teaching.

Chart 12 - Lessons in Secondary Schools: Teaching (*percentage of lessons*)

110. Nine in ten of the schools re-inspected had a higher proportion of good teaching than in their previous inspection. Of the one in ten schools where the amount of good teaching had reduced, most served areas with above-average levels of disadvantage. In part this reflects the difficulty in recruiting and retaining teachers in these schools. Two-thirds of schools where teaching was a weakness at the time of their last inspection have satisfactorily addressed the problem.

111. The chart below shows the difference in the quality of teaching by qualified teachers with more than one year's experience and newly qualified teachers. Unsurprisingly, the more experienced teachers teach better than the newly qualified teachers, but the gap is relatively small. Newly qualified teachers in the shortage subjects of mathematics, science and information technology tend to teach fewer good lessons than those in other subjects.

Chart 13 - Quality of Teaching in Secondary Schools: qualified teachers with more than one year's experience and newly qualified teachers (*percentage of lessons*)

112. Of the secondary teachers observed by inspectors on three or more occasions during an inspection, over 75 per cent taught no lesson where the teaching was unsatisfactory, and 34 per cent taught all lessons well. Poor teachers are rare. Only about 5 per cent taught mostly unsatisfactory lessons.

Chart 14 - Quality of Teaching: Key Stages 3 and 4 (percentage of schools)

113. The chart above shows inspectors' judgements of different aspects of teaching. Good **PLANNING** was a key contributory factor identified where inspectors judged the teaching to be good. Effective planning identified **CLEAR OBJECTIVES** which shaped the content, style and pace of the lesson. In the best lessons, pupils were clear about what was to be achieved, and reviewed their work at the end to check on their progress. Carefully judged learning objectives asked pupils to work at just a little beyond their attainment level, and lessons were planned to give pupils time to reflect on the task set and to engage with it effectively.

114. Despite improvements, teachers' **EXPECTATIONS** are judged to be unsatisfactory in one school in eight. Schools set pupils by ability in order to pitch the work at the right level. The majority of schools combine **SETTING BY ABILITY** in some subjects with mixed ability grouping of pupils in others. Pupils are mainly taught in mixed ability groups in Year 7 but a growing minority of schools are introducing ability grouping from the outset, making good use of data from Key Stage 2. Setting generally makes it easier for the teacher to match the work set to the pupils' attainment. Sometimes, however, bottom sets in some subjects contain high proportions of boys or pupils with English as an additional language. In other cases, lower ability groups have pupils with particular learning needs that are not properly identified or catered for and who, at times, affect the progress of the whole group. Pupils in the middle ability groups are often insufficiently challenged.

115. Schools which were judged to have made substantial overall improvement since their previous inspection had given particular attention to the quality of teaching. In the small minority of schools with low standards which had made little or no improvement there was some good teaching, but much was mediocre or weak. Pupils' progress was also hampered by poor attendance, low levels of literacy and weak study skills. These schools also struggle to establish a professional ethos. Teachers often have varying expectations and accept lateness for lessons, low output from pupils, and the non-completion of homework. These weaknesses are further exacerbated by high staff turnover and absence, and non-specialist teachers who struggle with basic knowledge of the subject they are teaching.

116. Secondary schools are giving increased attention to the literacy skills of pupils as they transfer from primary school. The summer of 1998 saw a large increase in the number of schools and pupils involved in **SUMMER LITERACY SCHOOLS**. In 1997 about 1,600 pupils took part in 50 schemes; in 1998 over 16,000 pupils took part in schemes running in over 500 schools. Their aim was to improve reading and writing skills in 11 year olds, mostly those working at around Level 3, in order to help them cope with the challenges of the secondary school curriculum. Typically, the school ran for five hours a day for two or three weeks, with structured literacy teaching in the mornings and a range of sporting, drama or information technology activities in the afternoon.

117. Most of the pupils attending summer literacy schools were highly motivated and responded well to the teaching; they were enthusiastic, willing to learn and regular in their attendance. A large majority of the teaching was at least satisfactory, and half was good. Where there was weak teaching, individual tuition was too often at the expense of the majority, and pupils complained of "boring" worksheets. There is, however, as yet no clear evidence of the long-term impact of summer school on pupils' attainment.

118. Pupils with **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS** are usually well taught and make good progress when they receive direct tuition from specialist special educational needs staff. These specialists also provide effective guidance to subject teachers on suitable resources, teaching methods, pupil management and assessment techniques. However, subject teachers often pay too little heed to pupils' individual education plans in planning their work. The large numbers of pupils who experience learning difficulties but who do not have individual education plans are much less likely to have their needs addressed by subject teachers.

119. The day-to-day **MARKING** of pupils' work remains a weakness, even in schools that have improved significantly in other aspects of teaching since their previous inspection. Schools frequently have sound marking policies and there are many examples of excellent marking carried out by individuals and departments. However, there is often a wide variation in the quality of marking both within departments and across a school. Sometimes it is simply not carried out regularly or thoroughly, with work at best only cursorily ticked. Marking frequently focuses on completion and presentation, neglecting strengths and weaknesses and failing to inform pupils what they must do to improve. At best, marking is frequent and focused, and makes clear to pupils what is required for a high grade. Monitoring of marking is often weak, both by heads of department and by senior management.

120. Although there has been an increase in the proportion of schools where the use of **HOMEWORK** is satisfactory or better, it remains a weakness in one in seven schools at Key Stage 3 and one in nine at Key Stage 4. The basic discipline of homework timetables being followed is a prerequisite for sound practice, and successful schools make sure that homework is set, collected

in at the right time from everyone, and promptly marked. This improves motivation and generates a strong work ethic in the school. The good use of homework makes a valuable contribution to teaching pupils how to manage their own time successfully and to the development of study skills. Research commissioned by OFSTED¹⁴ found that pupils were particularly motivated by homework assignments that required strong degrees of investigative work and creativity. An increasing number of schools are providing study facilities for pupils at lunchtime and after school. These homework clubs are particularly beneficial for pupils who do not have suitable study facilities at home.

Leadership and management

121. LEADERSHIP is strong in seven in ten schools. Effective headteachers give schools an essential sense of direction and purpose. In nearly half of the schools, the leadership was judged to be stronger than at the time of their first inspection, but in one in three it was judged to be weaker. In a number of the schools where improvements were noted a new headteacher had been appointed. A new headteacher usually gives a school a fresh impetus, quickly identifying and rectifying weaknesses in communication, the management structure, and policy statements. In one in seven schools the leadership is weak. This is a slightly higher proportion than last year. These tended mainly to be schools serving disadvantaged areas and this reflected the fact that some of these schools have experienced considerable difficulties in filling vacant posts for headteachers and deputies. Unfilled senior posts remain a particular problem in the south-east.

Chart 15 - Leadership and Management: Secondary Schools (*percentage of schools*)

122. The greater focus on raising standards has led to much more **EVALUATION** of teaching by senior management teams in the last year. More headteachers formally observe lessons, but some are still reluctant to do so. The extent to which heads of departments evaluate teaching has also increased, but to a much lesser degree. Schools are also making increasing use of performance data to monitor performance and to set realistic yet challenging targets for improvement. A key factor in raising standards in improving schools has been the use of carefully analysed data to provide a sharp analysis of the performance of different subject areas and different teachers. Inspection shows a strong relationship between the quality of teaching and the quality of monitoring and evaluation of teaching. However, despite improvement, monitoring and evaluation remain weak in over one-third of schools.

123. The **DAY-TO-DAY** running of the majority of schools remains good. Most schools have a senior management team which has well-defined roles, meets together regularly to oversee developments and provides effective support for the headteacher. The roles of members of the senior management team are increasingly defined to include the line management of **MIDDLE MANAGERS**.

124. DEVELOPMENT PLANNING is improving. In those schools where planning was weak at the time of the previous inspection, five out of six schools have made some progress in addressing the concerns raised. However, weaknesses remain in a substantial number of schools. Not all schools cost their proposals carefully in terms of resources, staff time, or the in-service training required. Some schools set objectives that are too vague, often the same from year to year, without any clear statements about the criteria for success. In a few schools, far more objectives are set than could possibly be tackled successfully within a year. Departmental planning varies considerably across subjects and is most effective in English and science. In one school in four, departmental planning is weak and does not provide a fully considered response to whole school priorities.

125. Most **GOVERNING BODIES** make an important contribution to the development of the school. Governors are influential in setting targets, identifying priorities and monitoring and evaluating progress in about half of schools. In a large and growing number of schools individual governors take responsibility for particular areas or subjects. In the best practice they monitor the work of departments by receiving reports from subject heads, and by visiting lessons. However, a large number of governing bodies do not ensure that all statutory responsibilities are fulfilled. A particular omission in many schools is the duty in the annual report to parents to comment on the school's progress in implementing its action plan deriving from the previous inspection. In many schools, one or more key issues identified in the previous inspection, which it is the duty of governors to implement, have yet to be fully addressed. These include the legal requirement for an act of collective worship; the provision of religious education; and the full programme of study for information technology. Overall, governors have insufficient influence in one in five schools. The proportion of ineffective governing bodies is five times higher in disadvantaged areas than in advantaged areas. Those schools which face the greatest challenges and where the need to raise standards is highest, are those most likely to lack the strategic support they need.

126. A substantial minority of schools are **NOT MANAGING THEIR PROVISION FOR SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS** effectively. Some of these schools do not have sufficient regard for the special educational needs Code of Practice, and the progress made in implementing it is not reported to parents. In the small number of schools where the special educational needs co-ordinator lacks sufficient status and has too heavy a teaching commitment, the management of special educational

needs is weak.

127. The **MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY** is weak in a substantial number of schools. In this subject, it is the curricular provision and management of resources, rather than the quality of teaching in timetabled information technology lessons, that often limit achievement and need to be monitored carefully. The co-ordination of this work across the curriculum is often poorly managed, and too few schools report progress and attainment of all pupils in Key Stage 4.

128. In schools where **VALUE FOR MONEY** is very good, financial control is tight and the management of the budget very effective. The budget setting and development planning are closely linked. A number of schools, and more frequently individual departments, do not cost their development proposals sufficiently. Many schools use a formula to allocate funding to departments. Such an approach can lead to inefficiencies, with finance not being closely linked to the priorities of the development plan. Once funds are allocated, financial control is generally good. However, in only half of schools is the monitoring of spending sufficient, with the use of resources checked against their impact on standards.

The curriculum and assessment

129. Most schools have a **BROAD, BALANCED AND RELEVANT** curriculum but the proportion of schools where there are weaknesses in provision has increased to one in seven at Key Stage 3 and one in four at Key Stage 4. In general, schools have been cautious in making changes to their curriculum. GCSE **SHORT COURSES** are most often used in order to comply with statutory requirements rather than as a way of providing greater flexibility and more choice. Schools' reluctance to use short courses more widely is usually due to constraints of timetabling and schools' perceptions of the difficulties of teaching the courses in the time available. Religious education and information technology are the most popular short courses.

130. The majority of schools comply with **STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS** for the National Curriculum at both Key Stages 3 and 4. The subject with the highest level of non-compliance is information technology. About one-third of schools have not addressed this even though it was an issue at the time of their last inspection. Religious education is often weak at Key Stage 3 when it forms part of a broader humanities or personal and social education course. A minority of schools at Key Stage 4 are failing to provide design and technology for all their pupils.

131. The interest in vocational courses has continued to grow and at least five in six schools now provide one or more courses at Key Stage 4. In one in three schools the leadership of the vocational curriculum is good or very good and effective partnerships with industry have been established. However, one school in ten offers little or no vocational education and has poorly co-ordinated work-related opportunities in the curriculum as a whole.

132. Good planning is an essential component of effective provision in **THE PART ONE GNVQ PILOT** and is found in three-quarters of the schools involved. Where it is not done well, pupils frequently fail to complete their portfolio work. Planning for the key skills continues to be a weakness in about four in ten schools. Nine in ten schools give 20 per cent of curriculum time to the course. Those that give significantly less time generally severely reduce the essential component of work-related experience. The lack of well-established national standards for assessment leads to considerable variations in teachers' assessment judgements.

133. In the majority of schools the **PERSONAL AND SOCIAL EDUCATION** programme makes a major contribution to the personal development of the pupils. However, a minority of schools do not include personal and social education as a distinct element of the curriculum, particularly at Key Stage 4. While the quality of planning is generally adequate, it is good in only one school in seven. The major weaknesses are the unclear relationships between personal and social education and the tutor programme, and the failure to allocate sufficient curriculum time for the programme to be taught effectively.

134. **HEALTH EDUCATION** is a major component of personal and social education courses. In a minority of schools it includes little more than sex education and drug education. In these cases too little attention is paid to aspects of physical and mental health. The quality of planning for health education remains at least adequate in five schools in six. Planning for **SEX EDUCATION** meets statutory requirements except in a minority of schools where insufficient information is provided to parents on their right to withdraw their children from some aspects of the programme.

135. Six out of seven schools have a **DRUG EDUCATION** policy and most are of good quality. This compares favourably with the previous year. Four out of five schools have a policy for the management of drug-related incidents. This is a small increase since last year. Schools without such a policy are often unsure how to react to such incidents and sometimes move too quickly and inappropriately to exclusion when problems arise. About one in 20 of all exclusions, both fixed-term and permanent, is, at least in part, drug-related.

136. Three-quarters of schools provide an effectively planned programme of **CAREERS EDUCATION AND GUIDANCE**.

In the remaining one-quarter the content, organisation and time allocated to careers work are unacceptable¹⁵. Careers education is part of the personal and social education programme in seven in ten schools. The rotation of topics is used extensively by schools to ensure that the work is taught by teachers with a good knowledge of careers, but where insufficient attention is given to the timing of topics, careers advice is given to some pupils either too early or even sometimes after they have had to make critical choices.

137. Provision for **STUDY SUPPORT**, including sport, information technology, revision classes and homework clubs remains good in three-quarters of schools. Four out of five parents responding to questionnaires used during inspections indicated that the school encouraged their children to become more widely involved in the life of the school, rather than just their daily lessons.

138. There has been a significant increase in the number of schools that have extended to 25 hours the **TAUGHT TIME** each week for all pupils. Timetabling cycles have also changed with an increasing minority of schools using two-week cycles in order to better ensure adequate coverage of all aspects of the curriculum. The taught time for individual National Curriculum subjects varies considerably, but few schools monitor the effect of this variation on the standards achieved. As a result, they are not well placed to make informed judgements about the allocation of curriculum time.

139. There has been an improvement in the quality of summative **ASSESSMENT** at Key Stage 3; it is now good in one-quarter of schools. Whole school policies on assessment continue to improve and are beginning to lead to more consistent practice within and across departments. However, the effective use of both National Curriculum level descriptions and internal moderation procedures by some subject departments rarely influences practice elsewhere in the school.

140. While the quality of **SCHOOL RECORDS** of pupils' attainment is generally adequate, they often vary in quality within a school. The use of assessment information to monitor progress remains good in about one-quarter of schools but the frequency with which records are updated remains too variable, so that it can be difficult to form a judgement of a pupil's attainment and progress other than when reports are being compiled. The **TRANSFER AND USE OF CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT INFORMATION** from primary to secondary schools remains an area of weakness.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

141. Provision for pupils' **SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT** is unsatisfactory in two-fifths of all schools. Where provision is good the school makes clear its commitment to spiritual values. In a number of schools prayer plays an important role in encouraging pupils to reflect on spiritual matters. Teachers often lack understanding of the nature of spiritual development or of the ways in which it may be promoted. Seven in ten schools fail to comply fully with the requirement for collective worship.

142. Provision for pupils' **MORAL DEVELOPMENT** is good in four in five schools. Issues to do with moral choices are demonstrated, not only through school assemblies which give an important corporate signal about such things, but also importantly in some very good personal and social education where moral issues are discussed in an open and frank way. Schools' behaviour policies and practices generally provide a moral basis for school life, with the pupils themselves often making a valuable contribution to their formulation through discussion in school councils or personal and social education lessons.

143. Provision for pupils' **SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT** is good in three-quarters of schools. Social and moral development are closely intertwined, for it is often through consideration of social issues and involvement in social events and activities that pupils develop both social skills and moral awareness. Although good provision is widespread, and many schools enable some pupils to take responsibility in all year groups, opportunities for social development are more numerous for older pupils. Many subjects contribute to pupils' social development, especially personal and social education, religious education, physical education, English, history, geography, music and drama. However, it is through extra-curricular activities that pupils develop most strongly the social awareness and skills which prepare them for their future lives.

144. Provision for pupils' **CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT** is satisfactory or better in almost nine in ten schools. Half of schools provide well for pupils, with a planned programme of opportunities for pupils to take part in a wide range of dramatic, dance or musical events as well as to visit museums, galleries and exhibitions. Residential experiences are frequently provided and can play an important role in lifting horizons and broadening pupils' experience. Inviting writers and artists into school to run workshops enables the pupils to experience different ways of working. All of this has an impact on the quality of pupils' own work when they see real examples of high standards. Although some schools' equal opportunities policies take account of the views of pupils, including those from minority ethnic groups, too many schools do not prepare pupils adequately for life in a multi-ethnic society.

Support, guidance and pupil welfare

145. Only just over half of schools have effective procedures in place for **MONITORING PUPILS' PROGRESS**. In these schools, the tutors have a clear role and sufficient time to support pupils, including those with special educational needs, with target setting and the monitoring of their progress against these targets. Tutors and year heads keep and make good use of progress records to maintain an up-to-date profile of each pupil. In one in ten schools, however, there are no formal procedures in place to identify underachieving pupils. Though policies have in some cases been formulated, they are not being consistently implemented. The role of the tutor is also often poorly defined and the time devoted to tutorial work insufficient for them to monitor effectively.

146. The **GUIDANCE** on option choices is usually good but there is often scope for further improvement. When Year 9 pupils receive accurate information about qualifications required for particular careers and are clear about their own attainment, they are better able to make informed choices and are more highly motivated. Careers advisers make an important contribution to the quality of careers guidance. Nine out of ten guidance interviews are satisfactory or better. In one-quarter of schools with sixth forms, pupils do not receive objective advice about the full range of post-16 options. In such cases the pupils are often placed under considerable pressure to stay at school.

147. An increased proportion of schools make effective use of a personal homework diary and planner. These are proving to be effective as a means of pulling together some of the key strands in a school's support and guidance system. The planner enables pupils to develop a sense of responsibility in the way that they organise their work, boosts the frequency and quality of the contact between pupils and their form tutors and provides an important monitoring link between home and school.

148. The large majority of secondary schools have appropriate child protection policies in place, but a minority of schools need to ensure that all staff are fully familiar with the policies.

Partnership with parents and the community

149. The **PARTNERSHIP** with parents is adequate or better in the overwhelming majority of schools. Most annual written reports comply with statutory requirements and provide clear information about pupils' attainment and progress. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are involved appropriately in the formal reviews of their children's progress. Homework diaries and planners provide a useful channel of communication between home and school. Overall, nine out of ten parents responding to the questionnaires used during inspections felt that they could approach the school with questions or problems to do with their child. Eight out of ten felt that the schools provided them with a clear understanding of what was taught. Where this was inadequate, parents felt unable to help ensure that homework was completed.

150. **HOME/SCHOOL CONTRACTS** have been developed in a minority of schools. These contracts provide a helpful basis for parental understanding of basic policies such as discipline and homework. This has generally strengthened relationships between the school and home. There are occasions, however, when schools make every effort to involve parents but meet with a poor response. In such cases, parents generally have little involvement in their child's learning, and do not become involved in the work of the school, or assist in supervising homework. At worst, some parents appear to condone poor behaviour and truancy and this makes it very difficult for the schools to deal with the individual pupils concerned.

151. **SCHOOL-BUSINESS LINKS** are a developing feature in the work of many schools and make successful contributions to pupils' understanding of the workplace. In one school in six, however, links are not sufficiently developed to have an impact on the work of the school. Schools seeking to raise the achievement of disaffected pupils have sometimes worked successfully with their local Compact in establishing targets on attendance and punctuality for all pupils and personal and academic targets for older pupils. Also, in some schools, local businesses have contributed by providing mentors for Year 10 and Year 11 pupils, who have been effective in helping some pupils to keep on target with their GCSE work.

152. Nearly all pupils undertake **WORK EXPERIENCE** in Key Stage 4 and for the majority it is satisfying and rewarding and helps to inform their career choice. Arrangements for the planning of work experience are satisfactory or better in nine out of ten schools but the timing of the experience for some Year 11 pupils towards the end of the year places unacceptable academic pressures on them. For about one in five pupils work experience offers little challenge and they are often frustrated by the lack of opportunity to use their experience in the curriculum as a whole; some pupils become disillusioned and openly undervalue the activity. Where extended periods of work experience are carefully managed there are benefits for the pupils involved and some previously disaffected pupils improve their attitudes and motivation. This enhances their employment prospects.

Staffing, accommodation and resources

153. The majority of schools are well staffed and teachers are generally effectively **DEPLOYED**, though one school in 14 experiences some difficulties in achieving an adequate match of the subject taught to the initial qualification of the teachers.

Particular difficulties have been experienced in information technology and religious education, where poor teaching by non-specialists has had an adverse effect upon standards. Schools in the inner London area continue to have particular difficulties with the recruitment of teachers and have a higher proportion of unfilled vacancies.

154. The quality of support by **CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS AND NON-TEACHING STAFF** is generally good, though there are significant shortages of classroom assistants in one school in seven, particularly in design and technology, art and information technology.

155. The proportion of schools providing good **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT** opportunities for teachers has fallen since last year while the proportion providing unsatisfactory experiences has remained constant at one-quarter of schools. In just over half of schools the training needs of individual teachers are identified effectively through teacher appraisal. Schools are not always able to prioritise their staff development needs, with the result that the training does not sufficiently contribute to the schools' stated targets for improvement. Teachers' participation in training is rarely conditional on their providing structured feedback to colleagues or on the training being directly or indirectly related to the quality of teaching and learning in school. Particular attention needs to be given to staff development for teachers of careers education and guidance; only a small proportion have had placements to improve their understanding of industry and the world of work.

156. While six in ten schools continue to meet the statutory requirements on appraisal, in other schools arrangements for appraisal fall short of what is required and in about one in ten schools appraisal has collapsed completely. A significant number of schools have begun to operate a system of annual appraisal for all teachers and in these and other cases appraisal has been adapted in order to simplify the original scheme. Some schools use classroom observations carried out for monitoring purposes for appraisal, thus reducing the cost of the appraisal scheme. Schools, and to a lesser extent LEAs, vary in their awareness of government initiatives on appraisal. Training has lapsed and generally there is a reluctance to develop appraisal systems for fear that new statutory requirements in the future will require further changes.

157. Almost all secondary schools have **INDUCTION PROGRAMMES** for new teachers including newly qualified teachers. There are, however, significant weaknesses in the quality of the induction programmes in one school in six, mostly where heads of department fail to provide the ongoing support needed by new teachers.

158. One in five schools has unsatisfactory **ACCOMMODATION** that adversely affects the curriculum. This is a slight improvement on last year. At the same time, there has been a decrease in the proportion of schools where the overall accommodation is good. The subjects most affected by poor accommodation are those requiring specialist facilities: music, art, design and technology, science, information technology and physical education. In the one school in 20 where maintenance of the premises is poor, **HEALTH AND SAFETY** issues often arise as a consequence. While most schools have appropriate health and safety policies, over two-thirds of schools have one or more safety issues requiring urgent attention. Where health and safety issues were raised in the previous inspection these have not been addressed in full in one in eight schools.

159. The proportion of schools where **LEARNING RESOURCES** are good has fallen to one school in five. Over one-quarter of schools have inadequate resources. The most significant weaknesses are in design and technology and information technology. Also, many schools do not have enough musical instruments for teaching music in Key Stage 3. Inadequate levels of suitable textbooks restrict the teaching in some subjects such as modern foreign languages, mathematics, geography and physical education. In particular, these shortages limit what can be set for homework, which in turn reduces the contribution homework can make to pupils' learning and progress while also giving them too few opportunities to practise these reading skills.

160. Access to computers sufficient in number and quality to promote the use of information technology across the curriculum remains a problem in half of the schools. There has, however, been an improvement in the quality of the resourcing of libraries. Over seven out of ten school libraries are adequately or better resourced: in the remainder there are significant shortcomings in both the number and range of books available. One in ten schools does not have a careers library and in one-quarter the quality of information available to pupils on careers is unsatisfactory.

11 OFSTED analysis of provisional DfEE data 1998. The points score per pupil is calculated by allocating one point to a G; two points to an F up to eight points for an A*, for each subject taken.

12 See Annex 2 for an interpretation of inspection data

13 DfEE data 1998

14 *Homework: Learning from Practice*. OFSTED/The Stationery Office, 1998

Sixth forms in schools

Educational standards achieved

161. One-quarter of young people aged 16-18 are in school sixth forms and a similar proportion are in further education. The participation of this age group in education has doubled over the last 15 years. There are now almost 400,000 students in school sixth forms, a growth of nearly 10,000 over the last year. In maintained sixth forms about three-quarters of students are studying for GCE A levels, one in ten Advanced GNVQ and one in ten Intermediate GNVQ. The proportion following Advanced GNVQ courses has trebled over the last four years. Overall, school sixth forms account for over two-thirds of those students completing full GCE A-level programmes and more than a quarter of students completing the Advanced GNVQ.

162. There is evidence of continued, gradual improvement in standards in sixth forms. GCE A-level results have improved slightly. The average points score for students taking two or more GCE A levels was 17.6 in 1998 compared to 17.0 in 1997¹⁶. The average points score was similar for boys and girls. However, since on average the boys started from lower levels of prior attainment than the girls, the boys have made greater overall progress and closed the gap that existed at GCSE. This improved progress is most marked amongst high ability students. The average points score per subject entry for Advanced GNVQ courses has matched those for GCE A levels.

163. The chart opposite shows inspectors' judgements of progress in lessons. There has been a slight improvement on last year, reflecting a corresponding improvement in the quality of teaching. Students make good progress in the majority of GCE A-level and Advanced GNVQ lessons, and in two in five Intermediate GNVQ lessons. Many students have made substantial improvements in attainment over a year or two on GNVQ courses, after little prior success in GCSE.

164. Small sixth forms tend to recruit students with lower prior attainment and those pupils tend to make less progress than students in large sixth forms. Inspection reports on small sixth forms show that inadequate teaching time, co-teaching of different year groups or courses, weak development of students' organisational and analytical skills and poor information technology provision contribute to slow progress. However, inspection also provides examples of small sixth forms with good-quality provision and high standards.

165. ACHIEVEMENT IN GCE A LEVEL lessons is predominantly satisfactory or better. The best students in all subjects show a consistently high level of scholarship, work well under pressure and perform equally well in timed written exams, practical work and coursework assignments. The weakest students in GCE A-level classes usually cope with the basic techniques required for the syllabus and have a reasonable grasp of the subject matter. Overall standards required of students and levels of demand are the same for modular and corresponding linear syllabuses. Features such as more regular assessment and feedback, and the opportunity to resit modules, have nevertheless contributed to a higher pass rate amongst weaker students in modular than in linear syllabuses. More able students generally perform equally well on linear and modular syllabuses.

166. The large majority of Advanced **GNVQ** students are committed and conscientious. They work effectively both independently and as part of a team and are able to organise both themselves and others. Frequent contact with the world of work, and business, promotes a high level of self-reliance and interpersonal skills. The best distinction portfolios match GCE A-level grade A performance, showing mature work of impressive range and depth. These students can synthesise a variety of material and analyse complex ideas, but pass and merit students are often uncritical of the evidence they collect.

Chart 16 - Lessons in Sixth Forms: Progress (*percentage of lessons*)

167. The revised unit structure of the new **GNVQ** assessment model, which is currently in the pilot stage, is encouraging greater rigour and has led to improved standards within the vocational areas. Advanced work is at least satisfactory and there are examples of good standards in art and design, business studies and information technology. At Intermediate level, standards are again generally satisfactory and often good in art and design. Inspection of portfolios in the summer term by HMI found improvements in standards, as compared with the current model, and a good equivalence with standards on comparable GCE A-level or GCSE courses. The new specifications have encouraged better analysis in students' work, though there are still too many examples of direct copying from secondary sources.

168. Within the new GNVQ model, standards in key skills ¹⁷ have been broadly satisfactory, though with considerable variations between schools. Performance on the set assignments, which form the external component of assessment for key skills, has generally been poor, particularly in application of number. Some schools however, have been able to prepare their

students effectively for these assignments and have achieved better results.

169. The proportion of registered students gaining a full GNVQ varies considerably across schools. It is typically above three in five, with a further one in five staying the course but receiving only a part award. Some students are able to complete the award by returning to school for a further term or year after the notional end of their course, since there is no time limit on when the GNVQ has to be completed. Full award completion rates in schools are higher than the national figure, where just over half of students complete the award. Non-completion is usually due to ineffective course organisation and monitoring of students as they work on assignments, though students are also tempted from courses by employment opportunities.

170. Overall, the quantity, quality and consequently standards **OF ENRICHMENT PROGRAMMES** vary widely. Because of the limited provision in some schools, a significant minority of sixth-form students, particularly those on GNVQ or two GCE A-level programmes, are taught for only half of the 25-hour week. A small number of students have the opportunity to take a wide curriculum of more than three Advanced courses, together with an assessed enrichment programme. In schools that teach the International Baccalaureate, students are given this opportunity and are stimulated to high achievement across a body of knowledge and skills which is much more extensive than the normal sixth-form workload. Once committed to such demanding regimes, students show effective time management and good study skills. The more they have to tackle, the better they can cope.

171. The **RESPONSE AND ATTITUDES** of students engaged in post-compulsory education in schools are mainly very positive. There is, however, variation as the same individuals are observed from subject to subject, according to the quality of teaching, the extent of prescription and the pace and expectations generated. The well motivated sixth form sets the tone in a school. This is often a key factor in a school's determination to establish a small sixth form and make it work.

Quality of education

Teaching

172. Section 10 inspections show that there has been a significant overall improvement in sixth-form teaching over the last year. The proportion of lessons judged very good or excellent has risen from 15 per cent to 22 per cent whilst the proportion judged unsatisfactory has fallen from 5 per cent to 3 per cent. The quality of teaching improves markedly from Year 11 to Year 12 and is better again in Year 13.

173. The chart below shows inspectors' judgements of the different aspects of teaching. The pattern is similar to last year, but with a substantial improvement in teachers' use of day-to-day assessment. Low expectations and poor management of homework are characteristics of weak sixth-form teaching. In general, GCE A-level lessons would benefit from a broader range of teaching approaches, and GNVQ work would benefit from more direct teaching, which is encouraged by the new assessment model for GNVQ.

Chart 17 - Quality of Teaching: post-16 (*percentage of schools*)

174. Teachers on **MODULAR A-LEVEL COURSES** have raised their expectations of Year 12 students much earlier in the course and sharpened their course organisation to meet the requirements of these syllabuses. Day-to-day assessment has necessarily improved in preparing students for regular module examinations.

175. Teachers are finding the new **GNVQ ASSESSMENT MODEL** easier to manage. Where teaching arrangements for a GNVQ course involve four or five teachers, it is difficult to achieve coherence and consistency in teaching. In some GNVQ subject areas which are new to the curriculum, teachers' own knowledge is not always fully secure across the whole subject specification. Many GNVQ teachers need more help with curriculum planning, teaching methodology and assessment. Teaching quality in key skills ranges from excellent to poor, but many teachers are uncertain about their role in teaching these skills.

Curriculum and assessment

176. Most schools, including some **SCHOOLS WITH SMALL SIXTH FORMS**, provide a post-16 curriculum that meets the needs of their particular students. Some small sixth forms do this by providing essentially vocational courses with GCE A-level English and mathematics in addition. By contrast, others are forced to limit their curriculum in an unsatisfactory way. Some offer limited science/non-science GCE combinations. A few abort courses that are grossly undersubscribed, with the result that, for example, some sciences operate but not others, leaving a limited range of miscellaneous subjects. Combination of Year 12 and Year 13 teaching is sometimes necessary for budgetary reasons. A small sixth form inspected in 1993 was said to be "requiring rationalisation" with "unacceptable curriculum entitlement" cited as a matter of "major and urgent concern". It was

re-inspected this year when it had 71 sixth-form students on roll; over the last three years only half of the GCE A-level entries have resulted in a pass grade and the sixth form continues to be a drain on resources.

177. In some areas, collaborative arrangements between sixth forms, often in association with further education colleges, enable schools to provide a wide range of courses economically. Students benefit from remaining within their "home" schools as a social base and for an enrichment programme, whilst being able to choose from a good range of subjects and levels of course as well as interacting with a large number of other students in good-size classes. Schools with large sixth forms have less to gain from collaborative arrangements, but they do enable schools to offer subjects such as law and history of art which would not otherwise be viable.

178. **MODULAR GCE A-LEVEL COURSES** are increasingly common, and in 1998 represented over half of A-level entries in schools. They are better suited to some subjects than others and function most successfully in mathematics, physics, chemistry and biology. They are not well suited to modern foreign languages where almost all schools enter candidates at the end of the course. The complete move to modular syllabuses in geography has resulted in some fragmentation in the way in which topics are covered.

179. **ENRICHMENT PROGRAMMES** range widely in quantity and quality, though teaching on non-examination work is as good as elsewhere in the sixth form. In a minority of sixth forms, large as well as small, there is virtually no provision beyond examination courses and even students on three GCE A-level programmes sometimes have more than 10 hours of non-contact time each week. The rationale for what is provided compulsorily or offered on a voluntary basis is not always strong. In some schools, general studies GCE A- or AS-level syllabuses provide a basis for a well-structured course. The tiny minority of schools operating the International Baccalaureate provide a comprehensive range of contrasting and overarching studies without sacrifice of depth.

180. **COURSEWORK** for GCE A level is usually organised well and assessed to a high professional standard. It generally follows through appropriately from coursework in Key Stage 4. Where practical examinations in the sciences have remained of the same nature for many years, they fail to build sufficiently on practical skills developed in Key Stage 4. In both coursework and practical examinations in the sciences, assessment criteria have insufficient scope to promote or reward the higher skills of which the best students are capable.

181. The new **GNVQ ASSESSMENT MODEL** is improving the quality of curriculum planning by simplifying requirements and procedures, though late arrival of materials left planning haphazard in some schools. Teachers are able to increase the vocational content of courses. The new assessment and grading approach is leading to more manageable and accurate assessment. However, externally set benchmark assignments have taken up too much time on Intermediate courses. With Advanced courses, teachers have tended to delay formal assessment as long as possible. External set assignments are making an important contribution to the rigour of key skills assessment. However, the burden of key skills assessment at Intermediate level needs to be reduced and simplified. The purpose and range of key skills assessment should be carefully reconsidered, in order to retain and encourage the appropriate application of key skills within the vocational contexts.

182. Approaches to the new pilot **KEY SKILLS QUALIFICATION** have varied considerably in the A-level centres involved. This has been a consequence of a lack of clarity about the purpose of the proposed qualification. Some schools have used the qualification to develop students' key skills, whilst others have viewed it merely as a means of accrediting existing skills.

183. Except in church schools, statutory requirements concerning **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND ACTS OF WORSHIP** in post-compulsory years are usually disregarded. Students and their teachers cannot see any rationale for this regulation, which is not matched by a corresponding regulation for those in 16-19 education in the further education sector.

Student support and guidance

184. **GUIDANCE** to students entering the sixth form is usually sound, but a significant minority are encouraged to take courses for which they have insufficient prior attainment and which they then find too demanding. This is common in small sixth forms where there is an inevitable concern to make up numbers. As students with low attainment at GCSE move successfully through Intermediate GNVQ, they are sometimes unwisely guided into Advanced courses with insufficient attention to their competence in key skills. Sixth-form tutors are generally efficient in monitoring attendance, coursework commitments and progress in subjects. Some schools make effective use of value-added predictions based on pupils' GCSE results to monitor pupils' performance in their GCE and GNVQ courses and more could usefully do so.

185. **CAREERS** lessons are provided through tutorial sessions, general studies and various enrichment programmes. These are usually supported by programmes of visits to universities, open days and careers fairs. Nearly all students intending to go on to

higher education are well informed. However, schools are much less effective at supporting students in finding out about occupations and work options available. Often students' knowledge about these options is limited, but exceptions include GNVQ students who can describe working conditions in detail and have a good knowledge of local and national job markets and the organisation of the workplace. Overall, careers education and guidance is unsatisfactory in about one in four schools. Work experience placements are on offer to a growing minority of students. These are well conceived and usually give good value for the time and effort involved.

Management and efficiency

186. The great majority of sixth forms are well managed. Schools are adopting a more rigorous approach to evaluating the success of their sixth form and making increased use of value-added indicators to judge effectiveness. The management of sixth forms is most effective when the head of sixth form has clearly defined responsibilities and is a member of the senior management team.

187. GCE A level continues to serve the needs of many sixth-form students well. However, schools have rightly broadened their curriculum to meet the needs of the increasing numbers of pupils staying on. Schools were understandably cautious in the early days of the GNVQ, but the motivation and achievements of the students have confirmed the value of these qualifications in the sixth-form curriculum. Schools need to continue to review their curriculum to ensure that they provide properly for the needs of present and future students.

188. In large sixth forms there is no difficulty covering the cost of provision. Indeed, there are some situations where large sixth forms subsidise work in main school. In small sixth forms, managers are too easily persuaded by staff, students and their parents to timetable small groups which drive the sixth-form budget into deficit. In a few small sixth forms an over-ambitious curriculum is offered, which results in corner-cutting in teaching both in the sixth form and in the main school.

16 Provisional DfEE data, 1998. The points score per pupil is calculated by allocating two points for an E, four for a D, up to 10 for an A for each subject taken; and half the number of points for an AS subject.

17 The three mandatory key skills are communication, the application of number and information technology.

Special schools

189. Evidence for this report is drawn from Section 10 inspections, from an HMI inspection exercise examining good practice in schools for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties, and from other inspections by HMI. Most of the schools inspected were for pupils with moderate or severe learning difficulties and for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties, but hospital schools, schools for pupils with sensory impairment, for those with speech and language disorders, and those with autism and other disabilities, were also inspected.

Educational standards achieved

190. Standards in special schools have continued to rise. There has been a marked improvement in schools for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. This is a considerable achievement for schools working in this particularly difficult sector. Pupils' progress is often particularly good in early years classes in all types of school. Schools' adoption of the "Desirable Learning Outcomes" guidelines has resulted in raised standards.

Chart 18 - Progress in Special Schools (*percentage of schools*)

191. Pupils make satisfactory or better progress in English in nine in ten special schools. Progress is better this year, particularly in schools for pupils with severe learning difficulties. Pupils' progress in speaking and listening has improved in schools for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The amount of drama taught within English has increased and this has contributed to the improvement in speaking and listening, not least in developing pupils' confidence and fluency.

192. There has been a slight overall improvement in pupils' progress in reading, most noticeably in schools for pupils with severe learning difficulties. Good progress by pupils in reading is closely associated with a structured and systematic approach to the teaching of reading in all types of school. Poor progress is associated with the absence of a whole-school policy for reading development and with the lack of a suitable range of appropriate books, particularly for older pupils. The most substantial overall improvement is in pupils' progress in writing. This is satisfactory or better in more than eight out of ten schools. Written policies and schemes of work for writing are becoming more common, and increased attention is being paid to handwriting, spelling and grammar in subjects other than English.

193. Pupils' progress in mathematics is satisfactory or better in nine in ten schools overall, but in only three-quarters of schools for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. An increasing number of pupils take nationally accredited courses. In schools of all kinds, a narrow interpretation of the mathematics programmes of study denies pupils the opportunity to make progress in practical mathematics. Progress in science is satisfactory or better in nine in ten schools. An increasing number of schools teach science well, and practical work has improved.

194. Progress in design and technology is satisfactory or better in eight in ten schools. It is least satisfactory in schools for pupils with severe learning difficulties and with emotional and behavioural difficulties, where specialist teaching and facilities are less common. Pupils make satisfactory progress in information technology in only half of special schools. Lack of progress is often due to the poor use of equipment available and to the lack of schemes of work.

195. Pupils make satisfactory or better progress in geography in more than eight in ten schools and in history in slightly less than eight in ten. In modern foreign languages pupils make satisfactory progress in little more than one-third of schools. This reflects the fact that the subject is still being established as part of the curriculum. Standards are rising most quickly in schools for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties, where increased attention is given to reading and writing in the foreign language.

196. Progress in physical education is satisfactory or better in nine out of ten schools. Pupils' achievements in swimming are particularly good. Pupils make at least satisfactory progress in art in almost all schools, and are making use of a widening variety of art media such as scraper board, batik, photography and printing rollers. Increased use is being made of "artists in residence" who are employed to lead workshops with pupils, raise teachers' expectations and widen the range of pupils' experiences. In at least eight out of ten schools pupils make satisfactory or good progress in music. Pupils make sound progress in religious education in seven in ten schools. This represents a considerable improvement over time.

197. Pupils' progress in personal, social and health education is satisfactory in the few schools where the subject is planned and taught in a sufficiently structured manner to enable judgements of progress to be made by the school or the inspection team. In many schools where a strong emphasis on personal, social and health education is claimed, the subject is not effectively

planned and co-ordinated, and pupils' progress is not assessed or recorded.

Quality of teaching

Chart 19 - Quality of Teaching in Special Schools (*percentage of lessons*)

198. The improvement in the quality of teaching is continuing. The quality of teaching is now judged to be good in more than half of lessons.

199. In all schools, the most commonly identified component of good teaching is the high quality of teachers' planning. In the best practice, the aims for the lesson are shared not only with the other members of the teaching team, particularly the learning support assistants, but also with pupils. Team planning, involving learning support assistants and therapists, is a particular strength in schools for pupils with severe learning difficulties and for pupils with physical disabilities.

200. Teachers' subject knowledge is strongly associated with good-quality teaching in all types of special schools. It is particularly important in Key Stages 3 and 4 in schools for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Conversely, a lack of subject knowledge is identified as a factor reducing the quality of teaching in almost half of all special schools. Subjects such as music, design and technology and modern foreign languages pose problems in terms of staff expertise for many schools, especially small schools with a limited number of teaching staff.

201. An accurate match of lesson plans to the needs of all pupils in the teaching group is a strength of the teaching in one-third of schools, but less than half of schools make effective use of assessment information in planning lessons. This is an improvement on previous years, but many schools continue to have difficulty in making this essential link between assessment and planning.

202. Learning support assistants are usually effectively deployed. The schools making most effective use of such staff invest in training courses aimed at their needs and include learning support assistants in general staff training programmes. As a result, learning support assistants in these schools take responsibility successfully for small groups of pupils for activities as varied as survival cookery and computer sessions.

Curriculum

203. Special schools are giving more attention to securing coverage of the whole range of National Curriculum subjects and religious education and are giving priority to the teaching of literacy and numeracy. Nine in ten schools for pupils with severe learning difficulties now offer all of these subjects to all pupils. The teaching of a modern foreign language to Key Stages 3 and 4 is the most frequent omission. Schools for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties have the greatest problems in providing the full National Curriculum, with one-third of schools omitting one or more subjects for some or all of their pupils. Music and information technology are the subjects most frequently missing from timetables.

204. Schools are achieving a better balance among subjects, but only half have developed the process satisfactorily. Schools for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties have moved most in offering a balanced curriculum. There is no detailed national guidance on what constitutes the ideal balance for pupils of different ages and disabilities. Schools must, therefore, evolve and justify their own rationale. Too often, the curricular balance is decided at the level of individual teachers who sketch out a class timetable, which is then modified for individuals as they are withdrawn or re-grouped for various purposes. In the absence of any monitoring, the timetables of individual pupils can become seriously unbalanced.

205. The attention given to the National Curriculum programmes of study for each subject has also improved considerably, but is satisfactory in only half of schools. Schools for pupils with moderate and with severe learning difficulties have shown the greatest advance. The subject least likely to be taught across the full range of the programme of study is information technology, but there are also weaknesses in the planning of design and technology, science and music. These difficulties stem largely from class teachers' lack of specialist subject knowledge, while the improvement is associated with developing quality of schemes of work and the increasingly effective monitoring by subject co-ordinators.

206. Schools are increasingly successful in supporting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. The great majority meet moral, social and cultural needs (including the multicultural aspect) satisfactorily, and provision is judged to be good in half of schools. Although provision for spiritual development is improving, one in five schools gives inadequate attention to this aspect of the curriculum.

Chart 20 - Assessment and Recording in Special Schools (*percentage of schools*)

Assessment and recording

207. The assessment and recording of pupils' progress remain a cause for concern in many schools and show little sign of improvement. Almost one in five schools has no whole-school policy for assessment and recording, and overall practice is satisfactory in only half of schools.

208. The most common feature of unsatisfactory assessment and recording is that each class teacher uses a different approach, so that records are discontinuous, with no effective picture of progress over time. In schools with improving assessment there is usually a teacher with a post of responsibility for assessment and recording, and some means of monitoring each teacher's practice.

209. The preparation of individual education plans causes many schools difficulty. Only half of schools have established a satisfactory cycle of effective target setting and review within individual education plans. The writing of relevant and quantifiable targets is the most common problem. There are wide variations in teachers' ability to do this effectively, even within the same school.

210. Schools' perceptions of the nature and purpose of individual education plans vary greatly. Some regard them as opportunities to set a small number of indicative targets for the pupil in key areas of weakness, while others prepare the individual education plan as a comprehensive teaching plan. The absence of a national consensus or guidance on the nature of the individual education plan in the context of the special school gives rise to much uncertainty and anxiety as to the acceptability of adopted practices.

211. Pupils' access to external accreditation at Key Stage 4 and post-16 continues to vary widely. The best provision is in schools for pupils with physical disability, with visual and hearing impairment, and with speech and language problems. Only about half of schools for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties and of those for pupils with moderate learning difficulties offer a satisfactory or good range of accreditation for their pupils at Key Stage 4. The latter group of schools is making strong efforts to broaden further pupils' opportunities for accreditation.

Management and efficiency

Chart 21 - Leadership and Management in Special Schools (*percentage of schools*)

212. Leadership and management are satisfactory or good overall in four in five schools. The best leadership in all types of school is characterised by senior management teams which provide strong direction but which also involve all staff in decision-making, so that agreed policies are more likely to be put into practice consistently. Managing change is a constant process in special schools, and the most successful management teams regard the analysis of needs for change and planning of responses as their primary functions.

213. In contrast to the more favourable overall picture of management, over half of schools have weaknesses in curricular leadership and management. Schools with otherwise effective leadership and organisation have significant shortcomings, including in some cases a lack of co-ordinators for National Curriculum subjects. The great majority of schools are still at an early stage of monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching. Only one school in five makes effective use of planned classroom observation.

214. About six in ten governing bodies are satisfactorily involved in the general management and planning process of their schools, but only one in 20 is effective in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. Governing bodies and school management teams find it difficult to visualise a meaningful monitoring role for the governors within the complex and highly specialised professional environment of the special school. Thus they often feel unable to take the first steps in putting the role into practice.

215. The ratio of pupils to teachers varies widely within groups of similar schools. This is justifiable to a degree, as the populations of pupils with different learning difficulties vary. Low numbers of teachers in some schools are balanced by higher than usual numbers of learning support assistants. However, there are undue variations in overall funding between schools working with similar populations. These variations are not directly reflected in standards achieved by pupils.

216. More schools plan their finances effectively, for example by costing initiatives in their development plans. Half of schools now do this. The timespan of school development plans is extending, so that seven in ten schools now have plans which extend beyond one year. While unforeseen external budgetary changes may upset the fine detail of such plans, longer-term financial planning enables initiatives to be prioritised and funding to be used more flexibly.

217. The most effective development plans include criteria for the success of each initiative. These enable the senior management team and governing body to evaluate the plans, and to establish a cycle of target setting and review for the whole

school. Schools are increasingly aware of the need to evaluate the outcomes of management initiatives by improvements in pupils' progress, but few are able to do this because of a lack of effective means of assessing and recording pupils' progress.

Accommodation and resources

218. The lack of specialist subject accommodation continues to limit pupils' progress in many special schools. Only six in ten schools have satisfactory accommodation for science, although provision is improving, particularly in schools for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. A similar proportion of schools has suitable accommodation for design and technology. One in four schools has unsatisfactory accommodation for music. Less than half of schools have satisfactory accommodation for physical education. The best provision is in schools for pupils with physical disabilities. Only one-fifth of schools for pupils with moderate learning difficulties and with emotional and behavioural difficulties have satisfactory changing and gymnasium provision. Where on-site facilities are poor, some schools, particularly those for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties, make use of community sports facilities, and often make a virtue of the enhanced social integration which this brings.

219. Less than half of schools have a library at present. Schools for pupils with moderate and severe learning difficulties are actively developing libraries, but there is little sign of improvement in schools for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Even where they have libraries, many schools have difficulty in planning their use effectively, so that the resource is underused.

220. Schools of all kinds continue to build up learning resources to enable them to teach the full National Curriculum programmes of study in every subject. All types of school have made improvements in resources for English, and these are satisfactory or better in three-quarters of schools. In contrast, resources for mathematics are sufficient in less than half of schools to support the teaching of numeracy and to provide a suitable variety of practical experiences.

221. Two-thirds of schools have adequate learning resources for teaching the full programmes of study in science, design and technology and information technology. Resources for geography, history and physical education are adequate in a little more than half of schools. Increasingly effective use is being made of the local environment to support practical work in both geography and history. Religious education is the subject with the least satisfactory levels of resource; only one-third of schools have sufficient books and materials.

Schools requiring special measures and schools with serious weaknesses

222. Since 1993 a total of 717 schools have been made subject to special measures. This represents about 3 per cent of all secondary schools and primary schools, 8 per cent of special schools and 6 per cent of Pupil Referral Units (PRUs). Of all of these schools, 55 have closed, and 143 have since been removed from special measures because they made the necessary improvements and now offer an acceptable standard of education.

223. The picture for 1997/98 is a little different from previous years. The number of new schools being identified as failing to provide an acceptable standard of education shows a rising trend in primary and secondary schools. There are contributory factors which account for this. First, 1997/98 was the last year in the four-year cycle for inspecting primary schools, and included a number of schools whose inspection had been deferred, sometimes because of particular internal difficulties. Second, this year has been the first of a new cycle for inspecting secondary schools and, of the schools inspected, around 40 per cent were placed in the programme because national indicators and previous inspection reports had shown them to be weak. Following these inspections, 4 per cent of secondary schools were made subject to special measures. These were schools which had made little or no improvement since the first inspection, or in which the quality of education had deteriorated.

224. Primary schools subject to special measures continue to differ in size, type and socio-economic circumstances. Just over one-third have intakes with high levels of disadvantage in and around large cities, and in most of these schools the standards achieved in one or more key stages are unacceptably low. This is often reflected in poor National Curriculum test results. However, other cases include very small rural schools, some schools in more advantaged areas, and nursery schools. There are examples of schools where national test results are average or above, but where many able pupils are seriously underachieving, because teachers fail to make lessons sufficiently challenging. A particular problem for some small primary schools is the considerable impact that one weak teacher can have on the overall education provided.

225. About half of secondary schools subject to special measures have intakes with high levels of disadvantage. Standards of attainment in these schools are low, particularly in literacy and numeracy, and examination results are often well below average.

226. Special schools subject to special measures vary in size, age range and disability provision. However, almost half of the schools placed in special measures last year provide for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties and cover at least three key stages. A significant difference this year is the increasing number of schools with a wide disability intake that have been made subject to special measures or have serious weaknesses. The wide ranges of disability are often the result of LEAs' reorganisation, or closure of certain types of special schools in line with inclusive education priorities. This results in a redesignation of remaining special schools to provide, on an area basis, for a wider range of special educational needs. Such schools provide for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties, moderate, severe or complex learning difficulties, and autism. In addition, many of these schools are small in size (under 60 pupils on roll). The combination of these factors adversely affects all aspects of the schools' management and places undue demands upon planning and upon the expertise of staff.

227. The common weaknesses of schools subject to special measures remain similar to previous years: a high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching; poor progress made by the pupils; and inadequate leadership and management, causing the school to fail to provide satisfactory value for money. In a number of schools there are poor relationships between different groups of the school community, dissatisfaction among the parents and a high staff turnover. Poor behaviour and attendance are common features in the secondary and special schools, but less so in the primary schools. Many of the primary and special schools have failed to implement the National Curriculum sufficiently, and too little has been done to develop teachers' inadequate subject knowledge.

228. All schools subject to special measures have undertaken a programme of improvement based on their action plan. The best plans identify precise targets to be achieved over a specific timescale, with success criteria that describe actual improvement. For example, a school might set itself a percentage target for children reaching a particular National Curriculum level by a certain time. The majority of schools have made satisfactory or good progress against their action plans. Sometimes this progress is rapid and due to changes in key senior personnel, but at other times improvement has depended on sustained efforts being made over a longer period of time. The improvements that schools have made quickly relate to systems and structures, and to the consistent implementation of whole school approaches for example some schools have improved pupils' behaviour

in this way. Special schools have improved their planning and provided a closer match and relevance of activities to age and ability levels. Residential special schools, usually providing for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties or complex learning disabilities, have instigated more effective behaviour management strategies and improved the working relationships between education and care staff.

229. The improvements that have often taken longer to achieve have been in tackling weak teaching, or in raising pupils' attainment. Local and national projects focusing on literacy and numeracy have improved the structure and pace of lessons, although it is too soon to measure the impact of this on standards. A few schools have improved national test and examination results relatively quickly, but in most cases these improvements are slow to emerge. Where schools are being considered for closure or reorganisation, the resulting uncertainty often impedes their progress.

230. Steps have been taken this year to ensure that schools subject to special measures receive their first monitoring visit by HMI after about six months, whereas previously it was more commonly 12. It is too early to evaluate fully the impact of this action, but initial evidence shows that schools requiring special measures now make quicker progress in the initial stages. Most schools value the termly monitoring visits of HMI, and use them as an opportunity to review progress and pinpoint areas where further work is needed.

231. In the best instances, LEAs have prepared clear statements of action and have supported schools in special measures effectively, establishing guidelines that clarify the range of strategies they will use. Using the data and other information already available about the school, a number of LEAs are identifying and supporting weak schools ahead of a registered inspector's judgement. Increasingly, there is a growing understanding of which actions are likely to produce the required improvements in underachieving schools. This has helped to shorten the time between the original judgement that a school needs special measures, and the improvements actually being made. The 1997 OFSTED publication *From Failure to Success* looks in detail at what has helped schools in special measures to improve. Some LEAs respond less well, often by failing to strike the right balance between monitoring the school's progress and offering well targeted advice on how to improve.

232. One strategy that has been used by some LEAs is to second an experienced and successful headteacher into a school, to provide strong leadership. There are examples where this has proved very successful, and some where it has been less effective, particularly where unclear or unrealistic timescales have been used. A number of detailed case studies of this approach to school improvement were presented in the OFSTED publication *Making Headway* (1998).

233. Building on the work started in 1994, since September 1997 inspectors conducting Section 10 inspections have been required to state in the report if the school has serious weaknesses. Over 500 schools have been found to have serious weaknesses and with this formal designation they cannot say any longer that they did not realise they were in this category.

234. Many of the strategies that have helped schools with serious weaknesses to improve are similar to those used in schools subject to special measures. Some schools have grouped pupils according to attainment in order to raise standards. In primary schools this tends to be for English and mathematics, but in secondary schools it can extend to other subjects. Schools are analysing performance data more systematically, especially results from national and standardised tests, and are using these to measure progress and set new targets for individual pupils. In many schools, pupils are explicitly shown how they might improve their own National Curriculum levels, or GCSE grades. Many special schools have improved the clarity of the objectives on pupils' individual education plans and tackled weaknesses in their coverage of the National Curriculum.

235. The progress made by secondary schools with serious weaknesses has been slower than that of other schools. Improvements to systems and structures have been positive, and there has been much worthwhile staff development. However, some schools struggle to improve levels of pupils' attendance or to raise standards consistently.

The education of young people who have disengaged from mainstream education

236. During 1997/8, OFSTED's work on identifying effective strategies for countering disaffection with education, and thereby for combating social exclusion, has concentrated primarily on young people from 14 onwards who have left, or are in danger of leaving, education and training prematurely or whose lifestyles and behaviour place them at considerable risk. Evidence has been drawn from a range of inspection: an evaluation of the initial stages of 17 DfEE-funded New Start partnerships, which began in autumn 1997; inspection of detached (ie street-based) work aimed specifically at such young people in six local authority youth services, serving highly disadvantaged metropolitan boroughs; inspection of Pupil Referral Units; inspection of the quality of education provision for young people in secure accommodation; and, with the Prison Inspectorate, inspection of education programmes within seven Young Offender Institutions.

237. The 17 **NEW START** partnerships, involving schools, LEAs, training and enterprise councils, careers companies and youth services, in all regions of the country, have been funded by the DfEE for a period of 18 months (autumn 1997 to spring 1999). Their focus is young people aged 14-17 who are likely to opt out of education and training, both pre- and post-16, and who are among the 50,000 young people who leave statutory schooling each year without any qualifications. This group not only includes those who truant or who are excluded from school but also those who reluctantly remain within the system, without enthusiasm or self-confidence, and who inevitably never achieve their potential.

238. In the early months the Projects have wisely concentrated upon building and strengthening the foundations of the local partnerships. Following a research phase, often taking the form of an audit alongside a consultation exercise to which young people themselves make a major contribution, each partnership has developed an action plan which sets the parameters for the implementation phase. Speed of progress in drawing up these action plans has varied from area to area, with the subsequent implementation being subject to delay in a number of instances. Where the timetable has been successfully met, however, it is usually because the partnership has been able to build on previous work of this nature, often extensive, and has seen its function as lending cohesion, rigour and permanence to what was previously short-term, insular and fragmented. Indeed, one of the prime aims of New Start is to ensure that practical action, where appropriate, is embedded into the mainstream work of all the partners and can therefore be sustained when funding comes to an end.

239. Some of the most promising indications of sound preparation include: involving young people closely in determining the causes of disaffection; collaborative planning by a range of agencies; closer links between schools and the youth service; improved support, guidance and mentoring for young people which will continue to be available post-16; and, in some areas, the instigation of specialist training for teachers and others working with this particular group. Inspection during 1998/99 will focus on whether these carefully planned initiatives are implemented effectively and, most importantly, whether they are monitored thoroughly to keep them on track. In the past, few providers have demonstrated the ability to manage initiatives and review outcomes equally rigorously. For this reason the New Start projects are attempting to do things differently.

240. In the survey, in six local authority **YOUTH SERVICES**, of detached projects with young people perceived to be at risk, there were only a small number of examples of effective work. In these cases, staff had successfully harnessed the enthusiasm of diffident young people, involving them in long-term activities such as the establishment of a young people's centre in their neighbourhood, thus developing their organisational and interpersonal skills as well as channelling their energies constructively. Work had been well planned and researched, often as a result of sound partnership with other agencies. Through the good links which young people had established with youth workers, they were able to gain access to appropriate information, support and advice on education, health, finance and housing. However, much detached youth work lacked rigour, structure and clear objectives. Even in the best work, there was an absence of effective procedures for evaluating what had worked and why.

241. Pupils in **PUPIL REFERRAL UNITS** (PRUs) generally make at least satisfactory educational and behavioural progress although, as would be predicted, their attainments are generally considerably lower than would be expected for their age and ability. An increasing number of PRUs, however, are offering some courses leading to a nationally accredited qualification; a small number of reports indicate that some pupils have gained a GCSE grade A*-C in one or two specific subjects - notably in art, occasionally in mathematics or English. More than eight out of ten PRUs are successful in improving pupils' behaviour, promoting positive attitudes to education and fostering good relationships. Teaching is satisfactory or better in a similar proportion of lessons. The quality and use of assessment, however, are less than satisfactory in four out of ten PRUs - in common with findings in educational and behavioural difficulty special schools. The size and nature of PRUs, including the

part-time provision that they make, create particular problems for the development of a broad and balanced curriculum; four out of ten units fail to offer this. Similarly, while many individual pupils have begun to attend regularly, often after very long periods of previous non-attendance, the overall levels of attendance are significantly below 90 per cent in nine in ten PRUs.

242. Over the last three years there has been an expansion of places for **YOUNG PEOPLE IN SECURE**

ACCOMMODATION. Whilst there is evidence of an improving status for education and firm aims are stated about the vital role of education within the overall provision of each unit, in reality there are factors which frequently prevent these aims from being met. Little educational information is provided by local authorities when young people are admitted and with variable quality of initial assessments it is difficult for staff in secure units to plan work effectively and demonstrate that pupils are making some progress. However, in a few secure units, the young people do make significant progress, with opportunities for external accreditation, including GCSE. Attainment is frequently low because of absences from previous educational establishments. A high proportion of young people have learning difficulties, with poorly developed literacy and numeracy skills. Staff are not specifically trained, in most secure units, to be able to address these difficulties and there is need for more effective collaboration between care and education staff.

243. Much of the teaching is sound, with five out of the 23 units inspected having good or very good teaching. Six units had less than satisfactory provision and some are being re-inspected with Social Services Inspectors approximately one year after the last inspection rather than waiting for the next triennial inspection. Secure units report difficulty in recruiting new staff, as is the situation in many schools for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. However, most have a sufficient number of teachers, although there are inevitable difficulties with subject coverage. There is some particularly effective teaching in units which draw on specialist teachers appointed to both the secure unit and an open unit on the same site. The curriculum is generally becoming more broad and balanced, with planning based on National Curriculum programmes of study. However, careers education and guidance and assessment, recording and reporting are often weak.

244. In **YOUNG OFFENDER INSTITUTIONS**, high standards were achieved by a substantial number of young prisoners who had the opportunity to attend good lessons. Unfortunately, owing to insufficient provision, these circumstances are rare. A few sessions occupied participants on totally inappropriate tasks such as tracing or cutting out pictures; these tasks were neither educational nor successful in countering disaffection. Attainment was at least satisfactory, and sometimes good, in basic skills, art and information technology. Generally, however, young offenders make insufficient progress because of the overall shortage of provision and a lack of variety in the curriculum offered.

245. In a minority of Young Offender Institutions, the quality of educational provision is good and supported well by the management. In most institutions, however, it is inadequate for the needs of young prisoners. In a minority of cases, that which is available is badly organised. The curriculum has insufficient breadth. Needs analyses are rarely undertaken and expectations are commonly too low. Careers and employment guidance for young prisoners is of very variable quantity and quality and is limited in effectiveness by lack of collaboration with services in offenders' home areas.

246. Education is generally accorded low status in Young Offender Institutions. Good resources are frequently not exploited fully because of lack of communication and co-operation between the rest of the regime and the education department. This often results in low numbers in classes, late arrivals and regular disruption to lessons. This unsatisfactory situation demands urgent remedy. Young prisoners need to gain practical, marketable skills, including, for many, much higher skills of literacy and numeracy, as a means of reducing the risk of re-offending.

Youth work and adult education

Youth work

Educational standards achieved

247. During 1997/98, HMI carried out full inspections of three LEA youth services, a survey of detached youth work in six metropolitan boroughs and a national inspection of the training of part-time youth workers. The achievement of young people who took part in this local authority youth service provision was good in just over half the sessions inspected and unsatisfactory in about one in eight. These are very similar proportions to those found in inspections of local authority youth services in 1996/97.

248. In the services inspected, achievement was particularly good in art, performing arts and other practical sessions. In well-focused discussions, participants improved their knowledge and understanding of issues related to substance abuse, sexuality and gender. Most of the sessions targeted on the interests of minority ethnic groups led to effective participation and achievement. In all three local authorities inspected, young people with learning difficulties made effective social and educational progress. The unsatisfactory provision often contained repetitive programmes with limited educational content which presented little challenge for the young people. As a result, they often became unruly and achieved little.

249. In the National Voluntary Youth Organisations (NVYOs) funded by the DfEE standards have improved steadily over the year. The care and detailed attention that NVYOs have paid to identifying appropriate targets have been crucial factors in enabling them to assess and improve standards of achievement. A number of organisations, however, are still insufficiently clear about the educational purpose of the activities that they provide.

Quality of education

250. The quality of provision in three local authority youth services inspected was good in just over half of the sessions and unsatisfactory in one in seven. Where youth workers knew participants well enough to understand what participants already knew and could do, and were able to plan activities with them which built on these strengths, provision was effective. Similarly, when senior managers and youth workers regularly evaluated the quality of sessions, good practice was consolidated and weak practice rectified. Detached youth work generally made a worthwhile contribution to health education, the avoidance of substance abuse and crime diversion. The causes of poor sessions were generally youth workers' lack of awareness of young people's needs and management's failure to identify and remedy poor work.

251. The best staff had a good knowledge of their local communities, both urban and rural, and had high expectations of the young people with whom they worked. These young people showed a strong allegiance to the club or project and developed the qualities of persistence, fortitude and determination to succeed. While allowing young people to develop in an informal environment, youth workers were able to identify and maintain appropriate boundaries. By contrast, unsatisfactory or poor work was often found where staff were acting solely in a policing or containing role. Names of young people were not known, or not used, and much of the work was unplanned or unstructured.

252. Aiming work at priority groups, including disaffected young people and those with learning difficulties, was generally successful. However, in some instances, insufficient account was taken of locally identified needs related to minority ethnic groups, unemployed young people and single parents, with a resulting absence of appropriate provision. There is still much to be done to plan provision on the basis of sound assessment of need and to involve young people directly in planning programmes of activities.

253. The reduction in full-time staffing in several areas had a negative effect on the quality and regularity of support as well as the co-ordination of in-service training. Staff development is often of good quality but insufficiently focused on the specific needs of the service. The initial training provided by most services for their part-time staff offers good opportunities for training youth workers to relate their theoretical knowledge to their practice in the workplace and to develop skills of planning and evaluation. There is insufficient clarity in the standards that are expected of newly trained youth workers.

254. Programmes of youth work in the NVYOs were sound but a number had too rigid a structure for the informality of youth work. Planning and evaluation were usually good, partly because of the requirement of the funding scheme for clear targets and indicators with formal and regular self-evaluation. Most of the NVYO schemes are specifically targeted at disadvantaged and

disaffected groups. Much of this work, including some within Young Offender Institutions, has been very effective. Many organisations show considerable skill in curriculum development and most are successful in adapting their work to specific needs, though there is a wide variety between the best and the weakest work.

255. In the NVYOs, support, development and training for staff have been vital elements in the improvement of youth work. Many organisations, however, underestimated the time required to train volunteers. Specific allocation of funding for training has ensured that it takes place, but occasionally the training itself has not been at the right level for the staff involved. Some, however, was very good, raising the quality of youth work throughout the organisation.

Management and efficiency

256. There is sometimes a marked variation in quality between different elements in a local authority service and these inconsistencies require attention. Quality assurance needs to be more systematic and comprehensive. Some of the new youth services lack focus, often because they are led by officers without relevant professional experience. They are sometimes in departments other than education and elected members lack the knowledge and experience to offer informed support. Links between local authority services and voluntary youth organisations are usually good, though links with schools are not well developed. The resources available to youth services are usually effectively managed. Budgetary cuts this year have led to reductions in staffing and provision. Most youth services in unitary authorities have suffered budgetary reductions following separation from larger authorities.

257. The management of most NVYO schemes is good, with clear organisational structures and identified lines of accountability. In some organisations, however, despite appropriate policies, management is tenuous because regions or individual units are largely independent. Frequently, leaders of a scheme cannot adopt a line management role. Other organisations face the difficult task of changing people's perceptions of their work with young people, owing to long-held traditions that activities and competitions are in themselves youth work. A number have been successful and others are improving slowly.

Adult education

Educational standards achieved

258. In the three full service inspections, a survey of modern foreign language learning and thematic inspections of access, participation and family learning conducted in 26 local authorities during 1997/98, standards of achievement were good or very good in 70 per cent of classes and unsatisfactory in one in 20. Adult learners are committed, enthusiastic and perceptive about their learning needs and achievements, which are spread evenly across the whole curriculum.

259. Given skilled and knowledgeable guidance and support, disadvantaged adults who achieved little in their schooldays succeed well on a range of courses carefully designed to meet their needs. Basic education students given the chance to set their own goals and learn at their own pace, when it suits them, quickly discover their own ability and aptitude for learning, gain confidence and start to expand their ambitions. Prisoners on a range of courses achieve and progress, gaining skills, knowledge and qualifications, particularly in art and information technology.

260. Achievement is generally high in art and craft classes and many students make rapid progress in information technology and business-related subjects.

Quality of education

261. The quality of teaching was good or very good in 70 per cent of classes and less than satisfactory in only 8 per cent. Most tutors are skilled, knowledgeable, trained enthusiasts and some are active, successful practitioners of the subjects they teach. Sessions are generally well planned with clear, appropriate objectives, a good pace and challenging content that extends students. Conversely, in poor classes the teaching is insufficiently demanding, ill-prepared or has confused objectives. In poor modern foreign language classes tutors talked at length in English, giving students little or no opportunity to use the language they were learning. These tutors lacked specialist language teaching training and updating. General adult education qualifications do not ensure specialist language teaching skills.

262. There is a clear correlation between high-quality teaching and specialist curriculum leadership for modern foreign languages. More generally, the resourcing of curriculum leadership and development bolsters quality and enables services to develop innovative, diverse and responsive curricula.

Access and participation

263. In some parts of the country adults have little or no opportunity to learn locally, but good services go to considerable lengths to support courses close to where people live or work. They also provide specialist adult educational guidance and information. These services know their communities well and work hard to provide appropriately, for instance offering particular daytime courses in areas with large retired populations. Pressure to accredit courses in order to secure funding is deterring some modern foreign language students.

264. Many services now strive particularly to reach under-represented and disadvantaged groups by researching their needs, eliminating barriers to participation and providing an appropriate curriculum in the local community. Parent education, family literacy, information technology and business skills courses have all successfully attracted and retained new students. Some courses enable students to improve their quality of life and contribute more to the community. Others take students on to higher-level learning in other institutions.

265. Many services do not have the resources or the contacts to develop such provision alone. They generally require successful partnerships with schools, social services, the voluntary sector, business, training and enterprise councils and other agencies. Indeed, services committed to providing access generally manage to do so through a range of partnerships.

266. In a number of new unitary authorities, adult education has been linked into lifelong learning policies and is now seen as integral to the overall raising of achievement. Provision for disadvantaged groups, particularly in family literacy, numeracy and parent education, has developed rapidly.

267. Adults in prison have limited access to education and training. In many cases, only one in five prisoners is able to participate in education. Few prisoners have adequate induction interviews to diagnose their educational needs and inform them about what is on offer. Although the core curriculum of the Prison Education Service emphasises basic skills, insufficient thought has been given to their teaching. Basic skills are mostly taught in isolation, which is rarely productive, when they could be integrated with the teaching of other subjects. Linked basic skills support also needs to be offered in prison workshops, to help raise levels of attainment. In some prisons, financial pressures are reducing the curriculum, with the loss of valuable courses in subjects like art and music. Few establishments now offer evening classes.

Management and efficiency

268. There is an unacceptable degree of variation in how local authorities manage their responsibility to secure provision for certain aspects of adult learning. Some devolve this responsibility without adequate central oversight or monitoring, failing to ensure general access or consistent quality. Whereas the best local authorities make good use of the potential for links between adult and school education, unmonitored devolution to community schools whose main focus is school-age children and their parents can result in failure to provide for other sections of the community. Other local authorities manage efficiently, with a light touch, within an agreed framework of standards and expectations. Local authority funds for adult education are generally reducing year on year. Well managed services have diversified their funding bases and entered into partnerships so that provision is secured. These services have good financial monitoring and are run efficiently and effectively.

Independent schools

269. The evidence for this section of the report is derived very largely from OFSTED's role in advising the DfEE about the suitability of independent schools for initial and continued registration under the 1996 Education Act. For this purpose every independent school is visited by HMI at least once every five years, some more frequently. In the past year, HMI made registration visits to 411 schools. These schools represent a wide cross-section of the independent sector. Seven schools, which had been identified as causing serious concern from previous visits, received inspections leading to published reports.

270. In January 1996 there were 2,264 independent schools in England which catered for the full-time equivalent of 546,787 pupils. These numbers have been fairly static for the last few years. While the number of pupils in the independent sector remains relatively stable, there has been an increase in the number of children under three in some schools. About one in five independent schools has such children, some of whom can be as young as six weeks. The concerns raised last year about the poor quality of provision and care for a significant minority of these pupils still remain.

271. Nursery settings in independent schools are exempt from local social services inspections under the Children Act 1989, although HMI are asked to apply criteria from the Children Act in their registration inspections. The future arrangements for the regulation of early education and day care will need to ensure that the welfare of children in independent nursery settings is given due attention.

Statutory requirements

272. Independent schools are statutorily required to meet acceptable standards as regards the instruction, the proprietor and staff, suitability of premises and accommodation and - in the case of boarding schools - pupils' welfare. Of the 411 schools visited, 60 caused considerable concern. These represent about 2.5 per cent of independent schools - a reduction on last year's figures. Thirty-two did not meet these requirements for instruction, 20 did not adequately ensure pupils' welfare, 30 had poor accommodation, 9 had inappropriate or dangerous premises and 15 had problems related to the suitability of the proprietor or weak management. Some schools failed to meet the requirements in more than one of these areas. Only 12 of these problematic schools were accredited members of one of the associations within the Independent Schools Council. Of these, nine had problems of overcrowding or poor accommodation and only three had poor instruction. All schools which fell below the level of acceptable standards received a letter from the DfEE requiring them to give evidence of progress on their shortcomings within three months. Action from DfEE and OFSTED led to a Notice of Complaint proceeding against four schools with very serious deficiencies. One of these has since closed and three remain under close scrutiny.

Educational standards achieved

273. Although most of the provision in independent schools for under-fives is at least satisfactory, some is poor, being overcrowded, unhygienic, insecure or unsafe. This is a cause for particular concern because increasing numbers of schools are admitting very young children and babies. Provision is particularly poor in institutions that seek to evade inspection by local social services by admitting, or claiming to admit, just over the minimum number of statutory aged pupils.

274. Independent schools generally achieve highly in public examinations. In 1997, 85 per cent of pupils achieved five or more higher grades at GCSE and an average points score of 53, which is equivalent to just over ten grade Cs. There are considerable variations across schools. For example, in 10 per cent of schools all pupils achieved five or more higher grades, but in some 5 per cent - usually small schools serving particular religious or ethnic communities - no pupils achieved five higher grades. Schools with sixth forms perform better than those without, with regard to the more able pupils. However, schools without sixth forms achieve better with the lower attaining pupils. At GCE A level the average points score for pupils attempting two or more subjects was 23, which is slightly higher than that in selective maintained schools (22).

275. Schools which exist for a primarily religious purpose differ significantly from the rest. In Jewish schools, the religious aspects of the curriculum are often very demanding and intellectually rigorous. However, while speaking and reading skills in English are often well developed, writing skills tend to be poor. Seventh Day Adventist schools have a commitment to raising standards in the minority ethnic community they serve, as well as providing a Christian education; they vary in their success. Schools within the Christian Schools Trust also vary widely. Some aim to provide the National Curriculum from a Christian perspective and those with secondary pupils prepare them for the GCSE. In most of the established Muslim schools, especially day schools, standards are satisfactory and there are signs of improvement. Standards in the secular curriculum of some newly established schools and of a significant proportion of the boarding schools are a cause of some concern.

276. Academic standards are high in the music schools that are participating in the government-funded Music and Ballet Schools Scheme. Schools within the ballet scheme have satisfactory to good academic standards and good or very high standards in dance. Stage schools are not part of this scheme and their academic standards are variable, and in some cases low.

277. Most independent tutorial colleges cater entirely for post-16 students and are not therefore required to register as a school. About 30 colleges, however, take a small number of pupils of statutory age and about half of these were visited to check on their suitability. Some do not make appropriate arrangements for a broad and balanced curriculum for their school-age pupils and provision for pupils with special educational needs is sometimes inadequate. Three of the colleges gave cause for serious concern.

278. Boarding schools overall do not perform as well in external examinations as day schools, but this may be linked to the number of overseas students admitted. Schools which are members of a recognised association perform significantly better than those which have no affiliation. Single-sex schools generally perform better than mixed schools.

The quality of education

279. Teachers in well established secondary independent schools are knowledgeable about their subject and this leads to high expectations, a good pace of work and, on occasion, scholarship. The best teaching draws out pupils' reactions, invites opinion, challenges them to make judgements and to take the initiative. The minority of weak teaching is characterised by poor planning of lessons, leading to inappropriate activities. Some pupils whose first language is not English are particularly disadvantaged by poor planning.

280. In the best schools the curriculum has breadth and richness. Pupils have access to a wide range of subjects and this is supplemented by extra-curricular activities which add significantly to the pupils' education. In some schools, however, the curriculum is restricted by the small size of the school, the lack of a clear philosophy or lack of appropriate accommodation. For example, the free choice given to pupils in some schools can lead to a lack of breadth and balance in the subjects they take in Key Stage 4. Other schools do not have the specialist accommodation to teach the full range of subjects within design and technology, sometimes reflecting their history as a single-sex school.

281. The philosophy and organisation of some of the religious schools lead to weaknesses in their secular curriculum. For example, Jewish boys' schools have a narrower curriculum than girls' schools. In the former, the secular curriculum can be confined to only English, mathematics and "general knowledge" because of the time given to teaching Hebrew studies. Many of the small Accelerated Christian Education schools with a wide age-range of pupils have difficulty offering a sufficient range of subjects. This is a particular problem in practical science and modern foreign languages. In the majority of the established Muslim day schools design and technology, information technology and music are often under-represented; physical education and art can also be limited in scope. In Muslim boarding schools the curriculum continues to be narrow, with the core subjects of mathematics, English and some science, in addition to physical education, often being the only non-religious provision.

282. Most stage schools attempt to provide a broad education but some find this difficult. Pupils' professional studies can occupy half of their time, thus reducing the time for academic studies. Some Steiner schools lack facilities for teaching science, but schools in the Steiner Fellowship now have a policy which takes account of the National Curriculum.

283. It is a matter of concern that in a few schools some foreign national pupils do not have full access to the curriculum. This is sometimes because of a lack of support for their English language needs. Their progress in learning the English language is not helped by their being sometimes socially isolated mostly with other pupils whose first language is not English, as a result of boarding provision at weekends.

284. The majority of schools have satisfactory arrangements for assessing pupils' work and progress. One in seven schools lack clear and effective procedures to mark, assess and report on pupils' work. Often these weaknesses stem from a failure to identify clearly the intended learning outcomes of the curriculum. Half of the schools with weak provision are unusual in type: schools with a religious foundation, foreign schools or those catering for specialisms such as the arts.

285. While there are no statutory requirements concerning pupils' welfare in day schools, HMI look for effective policies and procedures for child protection and for dealing with bullying. In the vast majority of schools the welfare of pupils is satisfactorily safeguarded.

School management

286. Independent schools are generally effectively managed, but there are considerable variations. Weak management is often, but not exclusively, associated with the smaller, sometimes more specialist, schools. These schools have few, if any, systems for

effective management and depend excessively on established daily routines.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

287. Many independent schools are well staffed. Indeed, a major factor in parents opting for the independent sector is often the small class sizes and the attention given to individual pupils. The quality or the sufficiency of staffing can be poor in schools where the fees are low or where they rely on voluntary help. Staff appraisal schemes are not well developed in most schools. In the better schools there are very good opportunities for staff development, but in the smaller or privately owned schools this is often a neglected feature, the owners citing costs as a major impediment.

288. The well-established schools often have excellent accommodation and facilities. Some small preparatory schools have difficulty in providing the full range of specialist accommodation, for example in design and technology and science, although an increasing number are developing better facilities for information technology.

289. The provision of resources for learning varies from excellent to very poor, generally depending on the school's income. In schools charging high fees the pupils have access to very good-quality resources and equipment. In others, particularly the religious schools or very small schools, routine resources and books can be in short supply.

Boarding provision

290. There has been considerable improvement in the support for pupils' welfare in boarding schools compared with last year. This is mainly due to the continued work of social services department inspectors working with the schools, but partly also to the response of schools to the publication of the Utting Report. The Boarding Schools' Association has started a programme of validated training for boarding staff at Roehampton which is helping to raise standards of provision in member schools.

291. About nine in ten of the boarding schools inspected provide satisfactory support for their pupils. A high proportion of the schools where support for pupils' welfare is unsatisfactory are not finally registered with the DfEE. One-third of the schools where there are long-term serious concerns are preparatory schools. These concerns mainly involve failure to conform with the requirements of the Children Act 1989. The proportion of schools with clear complaints procedures has improved from 67 per cent last year to 88 per cent this year. Ineffective child protection procedures and policies are reported from only one-quarter of the boarding schools this year as opposed to one-third last year. The percentage without any child protection policy or procedure remains steady at 10 per cent. There continue to be health and safety concerns in about one-third of boarding schools visited, but only about 14 per cent now have no health and safety policy. The proportion of schools with overcrowded dormitories remains at about 20 per cent, but the percentage with insufficient or unsatisfactory showers or baths has decreased from 15 per cent to just over 10 per cent. Sadly, the proportion of schools reported to be making inadequate checks on the suitability of staff has not fallen.

292. Most schools visited had at least satisfactory boarding accommodation and in over half it was good. However, a quarter of secondary boarding schools have features which are unsatisfactory, and this proportion rises to almost a half in those schools which have recently opened.

The private inspection of independent schools

293. The associations which belong to the Independent Schools Council are implementing substantial reforms to their inspection frameworks from January 1999, on the basis of which OFSTED has been able to recommend to the DfEE that, if they implement these arrangements successfully, they are likely to be able to produce secure and reliable reports and to advise the DfEE about the suitability of their member schools for registration. This is a new departure, involving self-regulation for the 1,350 schools which fall within the Independent Schools Council. HMI will monitor the effectiveness of this arrangement closely and will advise Ministers on whether the inspections provide a secure basis for confirming the continued registration of the schools.

Teacher education and training

Primary initial teacher training

294. Training to teach reading and number was inspected in about 75 per cent of primary providers in 1997/98, to complete the Primary Follow-up Survey, which was extended to cover all providers over a two-year period. In the 1997/98 inspections, trainees were assessed for the first time against the new standards for the award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). Providers also introduced the Teacher Training Agency's Career Entry Profile for all trainees who successfully completed their initial teacher training (ITT) course.

Reading

295. Many providers were already adjusting their courses in anticipation of the National Curriculum for ITT which became a requirement in September 1998. They were beginning to use a range of methods to audit trainees' subject knowledge, including more rigorous scrutiny at interview, the use of commercially-produced materials linked to the QTS standards, and tests of language and linguistic terminology. However, the methods are not yet sufficiently systematic and rely too much on trainees' self-assessment.

296. Courses mostly provide trainees with reasonable or better preparation to teach the basic skills of literacy and familiarise them with the National Curriculum programmes of study for reading. Some do not pay sufficient attention to the level descriptors. This is often reflected in the trainees' weaknesses in assessment and recording. Training for the National Literacy Strategy and the literacy hour is included in almost all courses, and has improved the trainees' teaching of reading to whole classes.

297. Even though courses have paid greater attention to preparing trainees to teach literacy, the majority of trainees are still uncertain about how to plan and teach phonic work appropriately in the teaching of reading. This is a serious weakness which needs to be addressed for trainees specialising in Key Stage 1 and in Key Stage 2. It is misguided to assume that the latter will not need rigorous training in the teaching of reading.

298. The extent of trainees' experience across the full age-range has been a cause for concern. The majority of trainees specialising both in early and in later years courses have insufficient opportunities to teach and assess pupils outside their specialist age-range to meet the requirements of Circular 14/93. Even where this experience is specified as part of the training, mentors and trainees do not always ensure that it takes place. This affects the trainees' ability, for example, to teach the more able readers at Key Stage 1 and struggling readers at Key Stage 2. A substantial minority of trainees on courses for the age range 3-8 have very limited experience of teaching in nursery settings. Those who have appropriate experience, however, often show a very good understanding of how to teach literacy to young children and how to build on this at Key Stage 1.

299. Very good training in information and communication technology is a strength only of a small minority of courses. These courses enable trainees to develop their own information and communication technology skills and to use them successfully in the classroom. More often, however, not enough attention is given to the use of information and communication technology to teach reading, and trainees have very few opportunities in schools to put any skills they have into practice.

300. Class teachers generally provide good support for trainees. However, a widespread problem in school-based training for the teaching of reading is that trainees have insufficient opportunities to work with good teachers of reading. In some schools, trainees benefited from working with co-ordinators of English and of special educational needs, but such opportunities are not widespread.

301. For most aspects of reading taught at Key Stages 1 and 2, the trainees' knowledge is at least sufficient and sometimes good. However, knowledge of linguistic terminology, including the terminology required to teach reading and to discuss language more generally, is a particular weakness for a substantial minority of trainees. A minority of trainees still have unacceptable weaknesses in their own spelling and punctuation.

302. Trainees have benefited from the focus on the National Literacy Strategy and from the time dedicated in schools to the teaching of reading. However, shortcomings in medium-term planning and in the setting of clear learning objectives for individual lessons are common. Objectives tend to be too vague or general, and are sometimes couched purely in terms of activities rather than what is to be learned. Even the best trainees experience difficulty in planning to teach reading over an extended period. Increasingly, trainees were gaining experience of teaching a 'Literacy Hour'. In these cases the management of

whole class teaching and group work was often of good quality. Some trainees are beginning to make effective use of a plenary session to review pupils' work, but this remains an area for development.

303. Trainees' skills in assessment and recording show some improvement since last year, but remain relatively weak. They have a generally good knowledge of the attainment of individual pupils, gained through informal assessment, but they do not use this knowledge effectively. The lack of clear objectives for lessons makes it difficult for trainees to assess rigorously whether pupils have achieved what they intended them to learn.

304. Trainees' record-keeping has improved, but it still varies in its usefulness. Most trainees are required to keep detailed records for a small group of pupils. The best trainees are able to take on the schools' record systems and sometimes to improve them; they keep reliable and manageable information. On a small number of courses, the majority of trainees keep minimal records. They do not fully understand their purpose and are not able to use them in the planning of lessons.

305. Most trainees are familiar with statutory assessment and reporting requirements. Some have direct experience of national tests or have helped to prepare pupils for them. Trainees' understanding of these has been improved significantly when they have had discussions with class teachers. Familiarity with the tests is inconsistent on some weaker courses, where trainees vary widely in their confidence and experience in using the level descriptions. Many schools do not recognise the important part they can play in ensuring that trainees understand the statutory requirements.

306. Trainees' experience of preparing and presenting reports to parents is variable. Many providers now require trainees to report on at least one pupil, but a minority of courses require improvement in this area. Trainees rarely attend parents' evenings, although many take part in simulated reporting.

Number

307. Most courses are designed well to enable trainees to meet the standards for the award of QTS. On all courses the training to teach number is strongly emphasised within the overall provision for mathematics. The preparation for trainees to teach place value and to make use of correct number vocabulary, notation and conventions, is particularly good. The development of mental methods and strategies is a prominent feature of most courses and trainees are shown the limitations and advantages of different approaches to doing calculations. Taught sessions often introduce effective ways to use calculators and information and communication technology in the teaching of number. However, trainees do not always get sufficient opportunity to put the knowledge gained into practice in schools. A small minority of courses still do not teach trainees how to recognise and remedy pupils' number errors and misconceptions.

308. A good number of providers had already made changes to courses in anticipation of the ITT National Curriculum for mathematics which became a requirement from September 1998. The development of trainees' own mathematical knowledge continues to be an important issue and trainees' knowledge of number is frequently audited at the start of training. A few providers have also introduced some form of screening tests of number knowledge as part of their selection procedures. Many providers have effective formal support systems for improving trainees' subject knowledge. On a quarter of courses there are weaknesses in the way that trainees' knowledge is monitored and assessed, and some providers rely too heavily on trainees to address their own needs through self-supported study.

309. Weaknesses remain in the arrangements made for trainees to observe the teaching and assessment of pupils of differing abilities across the full primary age-range. These are frequently due to the limited amount of time that trainees spend outside their specialist age phase. There are, however, examples of good practice in this area. Many providers ensure that trainees spend a sufficient amount of time in their non-specialist sub-phase and carry out particular number-related tasks and activities during their time in classrooms.

310. Trainees specialising in the early years are more confident and knowledgeable about the number work at Key Stage 2 than are later years specialists about the early stages of development in number. A minority of all trainees have limited knowledge of the progression in number between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 or of how to extend the learning of advanced pupils at Key Stage 2. Those trainees on courses for the age range 3-8 generally have a very good understanding of how to develop numeracy skills in young children and of how to build on the work of nursery and reception classes at Key Stage 1 and into Key Stage 2.

311. Schools continue to develop their understanding of their role in training and a small number of mathematics co-ordinators are becoming involved in observing trainees and monitoring planning documentation. However, more still needs to be done to make sure that all trainees observe and work with good teachers of mathematics and receive sharply focused subject feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of their teaching of number. The overwhelming majority of providers set assignments and directed tasks which are directly linked to school-based work and to the subject and professional knowledge needed for teaching number.

312. Most trainees are able to make appropriate conceptual links between number and other areas of mathematics such as data handling, probability and measures. Increasingly, trainees are using the lesson structure and materials of the National Numeracy Project to help them with their planning to teach number. In many cases this has led to an improvement in trainees' ability to set specific learning objectives for their lessons to ensure effective teaching. Nevertheless, on about one course in eight, trainees often set objectives that are too broad or they couch objectives in terms of activities to be covered rather than knowledge to be learned or concepts to be understood. An important weakness is that a significant minority of trainees do not have sufficient opportunity to plan and teach a sequence of lessons.

313. More attention has been given to ensuring that trainees have experience of teaching number to whole classes. Many trainees introduce their lessons well, engaging pupils' attention successfully and making use of effective questioning skills. A significant minority of trainees have difficulties in organising the use of time effectively and some experience difficulties in organising the transition between whole class teaching and group work or give insufficient time to plenary sessions. Better trainees are becoming increasingly skilled at evaluating the achievement of learning objectives to improve their teaching and their planning of the content and methodology of lessons.

314. In over one-third of courses weaknesses remain in trainees' competence in the assessment, recording and reporting of pupils' progress. Good practice in assessment, recording and reporting is often associated with very clear guidance about, for example, lesson planning or record-keeping, and with rigorous monitoring to ensure that trainees are putting recommendations into practice.

315. Almost all trainees keep records of their assessments of pupils' performance; however, these vary in quality from excellent to barely adequate, and a tiny minority of trainees, even on some of the better courses, keep hardly any records of number work. Weaker trainees are often unsure what to record or why they have to record at all. The better trainees use their records of assessment to organise or reorganise ability groups, to differentiate work in planning lessons, to identify common errors and misconceptions and to help review systematically what they have taught.

316. Most trainees are familiar with statutory assessment and reporting requirements. Those trainees placed in a Year 2 or Year 6 class during the testing period will have direct experience of national tests, but few providers request that partnership schools ensure that all trainees have some experience of the administration of the national tests or discuss them with appropriate teachers. Most trainees have at least an adequate understanding of the expected demands of pupils in relation to the level descriptions and most are able to assign levels to their pupils' work.

317. Many trainees draft simulated parental reports on a small number of pupils, often as part of a directed task. It is rarer for trainees to contribute to the actual written reports, but if they are in their placement school at the appropriate time, they are sometimes consulted by class teachers who are compiling such reports. Only a minority of trainees have actually observed at a parents' evening or made oral reports to parents. Many courses seek to compensate for this by including an oral feedback simulation during the course, but this is by no means universal and many trainees do not have any practical experience of oral reporting approaches.

Secondary initial teacher training

318. In 1997/98 OFSTED completed a two-year programme of secondary subject inspections which covered every provider and used the joint OFSTED/Teacher Training Agency Framework. A small number of individual subject inspections were carried over for inspection in 1998/99. The focus was the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) route to QTS. OFSTED will be publishing an overview report with subject-specific detail later in the academic year. The findings and issues outlined here are preliminary.

319. The number and quality of applicants for teacher training continue to vary markedly according to subject, region and provider. Recruitment in English and history is very good and there has been little or no difficulty in meeting the targets set by the Teacher Training Agency. Recruitment in geography is less buoyant, with newer courses in particular experiencing some difficulties in meeting their targets. In science, design and technology and mathematics, under-recruitment is almost universal and many science courses have very few trainees who are specialists in physics. In design and technology and physical education there are problems in recruiting appropriately qualified trainees because many of the applicants have degrees whose content is not well matched to the requirements of the National Curriculum. A majority of the trainees in English, history and geography have upper second class degrees or better. In shortage subjects such as science, for example, it is common for fewer than half to have those qualifications.

320. Completion rates are generally good, with over nine in ten trainees acquiring Qualified Teacher Status. Principally in mathematics, but also in science, withdrawal rates were relatively high during 1997/98, the second year of the inspection

programme. In mathematics one-quarter of the trainees failed to acquire Qualified Teacher Status. In the case of mathematics, financial pressures leading to withdrawal were the dominant reason for failure to achieve QTS, whereas in the case of science, trainees failed because they made insufficient progress in meeting the QTS standards.

321. The quality of the training is at least good in three-quarters of courses. The training programmes provided 'centrally' in the partnerships, that is in the universities, colleges or, in the case of school-centred training, the lead schools, are usually good. Programmes are generally well planned and effectively taught, with a good coverage of relevant topics. However, in science and design and technology, partnerships are sometimes overambitious about the number of specialist areas they are able to prepare individual trainees to teach effectively at Key Stage 4. In physical education, most patterns of training emphasise trainees' strengths at the expense of areas in which they are insecure. Support for trainees in partner schools has generally improved, although pockets of poor practice remain. In some subjects the focus of the training in schools is mainly on developing the skills of classroom management, with insufficient emphasis on teaching and assessing the knowledge, understanding and skills specific to that subject.

322. The inspection has revealed some areas which require further emphasis or development in training. These vary from subject to subject but include the following: the provision of direct experience of post-16 teaching; the development of trainees' subject knowledge, especially where the focus of the degree is not closely aligned with what is taught in schools; literacy and numeracy skills, especially where they are part of a subject, for example numeracy in geography; and the development of trainees' information technology teaching capability. There is a need for closer co-ordination between centrally-provided programmes and work in schools on some courses so that the two elements complement and reinforce each other.

323. The quality of feedback on trainees' teaching skills and class management is often good or very good from both school mentors and tutors from the central institution. Some feedback provided, for example by mentors, tends to underemphasise subject-specific issues related to pupils' understanding, effective learning and assessment. Many mentors are extremely hard pressed for time, and have neither allocated nor protected non-contact time to meet their training responsibilities.

324. The procedures used to audit the trainees' subject knowledge vary and are often not systematic. Mentors need to be drawn fully into this process of making judgements about the extent and depth of trainees' subject knowledge and the remediation which may be required. Where the audits are carried out by the central institution, for example, the results are not always communicated to the trainees' partner schools.

325. Providers' assessments of trainees are becoming more detailed and sharply focused on QTS standards. Most partnerships have made good progress in converting systems from those based on the previous competences to those based on the new standards, and within a very tight timescale. A small number of providers have been slow in adapting to the pace of change in policy. Nearly one-third of courses need to improve the quality of their assessment and fewer than one-fifth of courses were rated as very good in this aspect of provision. In a minority of partnerships a greater consistency among mentors in assessing trainees' performance is needed, promoted and supported by moderation carried out by subject specialists.

326. Written assignments set for trainees are usually well conceived, appropriately focused on classroom practice, carefully and helpfully marked and accurately assessed. In some subjects, the more consistent use of assignments as evidence for meeting the standards is needed, as well as more regular communication of trainees' attainment in assignments to mentors.

327. Regular target-setting is now a standard feature of training practice. The quality of targets set is variable, but there were some indications of improvement during the course of the two-year cycle. The best practice is becoming very good, the targets being precisely defined, appropriate, specific to the trainee, and realistic.

328. Trainees' subject knowledge was very good in one in five courses, and good in a further two-thirds. In science and design and technology the weaknesses are associated with the breadth of subject knowledge which is required. Knowledge of the National Curriculum and how it operates in schools is less well developed in some subjects, including science, where trainees have been overdependent on schools' schemes of work. Other areas which require improvement also include the trainees' knowledge and understanding of vocational courses and the links between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3. Trainees' knowledge of key skills, relating to reading, writing and knowledge of information and communication technology, is variable and heavily dependent on the schools in which they have been placed.

329. Trainees' skills in planning and teaching are generally good. One-sixth of courses were rated as very good and a further two-thirds as good. Trainees usually have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, are able to achieve good standards of classroom control, and strive to establish and maintain safe and purposeful working environments in their classrooms and laboratories. Medium-term and longer-term planning are generally good but much affected by the quality of departmental practice. Some departments have comprehensive schemes of work of their own and this can mean that trainees have limited opportunities to undertake independent planning. Daily lesson planning is detailed, often imaginative and usually covers the

relevant requirements of the National Curriculum programmes of study.

330. Areas needing further development in planning include: consistency in establishing clear learning objectives for lessons and sequences of lessons, appropriate to the full range of ability, including, in particular, high-attaining pupils; the use of assessment information from previous lessons and marked work to guide planning and future learning; more explicit identification of National Curriculum and syllabus coverage in planning, of assessment strategies, and of provision for differentiation and progression in learning; more awareness of how to stimulate intellectual curiosity as well as how to generate enthusiasm for the subject; and a more analytical approach to pupils' errors and misconceptions.

331. The standards achieved by trainees in assessment, recording and reporting are more variable than for the other standards. While just over half of courses were rated good, and about one-tenth very good, one-third were judged to require significant improvement. Trainees' proficiency depends very much on their experience in partner schools, and the trainees' weaknesses often reflect practice in schools where they are placed. The strengths of trainees' performance in assessing, recording and reporting include generally good-quality marking of pupils' written work, with effective monitoring of the understanding of individual pupils during lessons, particularly those with special educational needs; appropriate oral feedback during the course of lessons; and good understanding in applying the level descriptions of the National Curriculum and of grade criteria for GCSE. The trainees also keep clear, full records of work submitted, and grades, marks and levels awarded, and show a good understanding of the range of assessment data which can be used to target teaching and diagnose difficulties. Where opportunities are provided, the trainees are able to prepare good-quality reports for parents and they often make effective contributions to parent consultation evenings. Areas of their assessment and recording practice to which trainees need to give further attention include: more specific evaluations of lessons in relation to the achievement of learning objectives; greater precision in assessing pupils' levels of attainment; and the consolidation of this by sufficient experience of making judgements alongside experienced teachers.

National Professional Qualification for Headteachers (NPQH)

332. The National Professional Qualification for Headteachers (NPQH) is an initiative of the Teacher Training Agency; it provides a qualification which is designed to prepare aspiring headteachers for their roles as professional leaders of schools. The national training and assessment programme is based upon the National Standards for Headteachers, developed by the Teacher Training Agency, which set out the key knowledge, understanding, skills and attributes that are required of headteachers.

333. During the summer term of 1998, OFSTED carried out a small-scale inspection of NPQH training which involved visits to a small sample consisting of 22 candidates. During the visits structured interviews were carried out with candidates and a range of documentation was scrutinised. Where candidates were aspiring headteachers, the headteacher or nominated senior member of staff from their existing school was also interviewed. Inspectors looked for evidence of school improvement related to NPQH.

334. All the candidates visited had had a wide range of experience within different schools. Many of them were deputy headteachers in primary, secondary or special schools, two had already obtained headships and a further two were acting headteachers. Candidates embark on training with varying expectations about what the course will offer. The training often does not address issues in sufficient depth to meet their diverse needs. One-third of the candidates considered that training sessions were too undifferentiated and inflexible, especially where they failed to take sufficient account of their prior management experience. In response to such concerns, a new accelerated route to the qualification, for those candidates who are close to obtaining a headship, is being trialled from September 1998.

335. The headteachers in candidates' own schools do not generally have enough information about NPQH or what the programme requires candidates to do. Headteachers rarely play a major part in the training and assessment processes and they often feel that their experience is not used fully.

336. Those candidates who reported greatest benefit from participation have grown in confidence, improved their analytical skills and have greater knowledge and understanding of strategic planning. The training has significantly improved their management and leadership skills.

337. Candidates undertake assessment tasks that are intended to lead directly to school improvement. Where tasks have been designed and completed well, they have clear benefits for pupils' learning. However, starting points for assessment tasks do not always meet the particular circumstances of candidates and there is a danger in such circumstances that participation in NPQH is seen as a burden to schools rather than a support.

338. NPQH training has not been running long enough to allow its full impact to be evaluated. Changes to the content of

courses and access to the qualification have already been made in response to candidates' evaluations of the training, and their impact will be subject to further inspection.

Local education authority support for school improvement

339. The 1997 White Paper *Excellence in Schools* sets out a new role for LEAs. For each school the LEA should:

- analyse recent test, examination and inspection data;
- compare results and progress with data from other schools;
- monitor parental and local concerns;
- agree annual targets;
- check that the school's approach to improvement planning meets national standards set by the DfEE.

If an LEA has concerns about a school's performance it should intervene to secure good standards. Where, however, schools are performing successfully there should be no intervention. LEAs need to know how their schools are performing; they must exercise sensible judgements as to when and how to intervene; and they must possess the managerial skills to bring about improvement. Legislation has given LEAs greater powers to equip them for this new role, but also places new requirements on them, in particular cyclical planning for improvement. The government has also proposed a new code for relations between LEAs and schools to ensure that schools receive effective support and are suitably challenged without being subject to unnecessary intervention. 'Fair Funding' will require LEAs to delegate money for curriculum support to schools and retain only what can be shown to be necessary to meet statutory requirements. These arrangements will need to be open and transparent and must lead to more money being delegated to schools.

340. HMCI has acquired new powers to inspect LEAs' contribution to school improvement. A five-yearly inspection cycle began in January 1998, following a period in which certain pilot LEAs agreed to be inspected. This summary draws on six inspections conducted under the new statutory powers and four pilot inspections, one of which had been requested by the Secretary of State. These ten LEAs do not represent a balanced sample of the 150 authorities in England: three of the first six to be inspected statutorily were chosen because of the relatively low performance of their schools and two because of their schools' high performance. In addition, this summary takes account of the inspection revisit made to one LEA at the request of the Secretary of State in order to identify progress made since its inspection the previous year. Evidence is also drawn from other HMI surveys of particular aspects of provision in a wider range of LEAs, and from the evaluation of all reorganisation proposals made by LEAs.

LEA support for school improvement

341. The quality of the LEAs' contribution to school improvement varied greatly. In the most effective LEAs, it was clear that schools had benefited in many detailed ways from the involvement of the LEA but there was no clear evidence that this led directly to an appreciable rise in standards across the authority. The better LEAs, Surrey, Birmingham and North Somerset, had a relatively clear sense of purpose. They met their major statutory obligations, managed services well, supported schools well with performance data, and for the most part successfully implemented their main objectives. By contrast the weakest LEAs, despite the considerable resources they were given, achieved little in support of school improvement. Manchester and Hackney did not fulfil certain fundamental statutory responsibilities concerning pupils' basic rights and needs, and lacked a clear vision of their own role and purpose. Despite this range of quality, all of the authorities inspected, except for two of the weakest, were showing signs of improvement, albeit not always very great, in some or all of the above respects.

The role of the LEA and the planning and management of provision

342. In general, the LEAs inspected were attempting to establish a more precisely defined role in relation to school improvement, taking account of new government policy. Those LEAs which had a clear and reasonable vision of their role had consulted appropriately with their schools. Other LEAs were still developing their role; in the case of Manchester, neither clearly nor coherently. Crucially, most of the LEAs needed to define what they meant by the partnership they claimed to have with schools, specifying the respective roles of the school and the authority. They also needed to be clearer about how and when the LEA would intervene if schools were not improving or were deteriorating. The re-inspection of Calderdale showed that, despite the recommendations of its earlier OFSTED report, the LEA had not been able to dispel the mistrust and hostility some schools felt towards it and still needed to develop more transparent decision-making and better consultation with schools.

343. Few of the LEAs inspected set out their costs clearly, allocate resources precisely to priorities, or do enough to check that they spend their money well. The demands of 'Best Value' and 'Fair Funding' will require a significant change. Many will find it difficult to move from incremental budgeting which has been complicated by ill-defined service costing and complex recharging practices, to a position where all money retained centrally is required to be earmarked for a particular purpose.

344. The effectiveness of LEAs' planning varied widely. Two LEAs tried to do too much. Despite its relatively clear sense of purpose, Birmingham was running too many initiatives and projects. More would have been achieved if it had focused more energy on raising standards in literacy and numeracy in primary schools. Hackney had too many plans for too many purposes, not linked clearly enough to the overall purposes of the LEA. In Manchester the service plan lacked a clear rationale, and at one time there were far too many priorities - over 50. With so many priorities and no clear means of identifying which were the most significant, they were in effect not priorities but rather a set of aspirations which may or may not be realised.

345. In order to plan effectively, LEAs must have: a clear idea of the schools' needs; a clear picture of the performance of all pupils and of all significant groups of pupils; a detailed understanding of the implications of local and national priorities; and a rigorous, unsentimental assessment of the capacity of their own services to deliver. Such information was not always available, and most of the LEAs inspected were unclear about what they could reasonably expect to achieve. However, Birmingham and North Somerset authorities had sound procedures for measuring their own progress towards meeting their objectives.

346. Four of the ten LEAs, Birmingham, North Somerset, Surrey and Kingston, managed their service provision well. They identified and to a large extent met schools' various needs, ensured that schools had realistic expectations of what they could provide, and maintained or were developing sound quality assurance procedures. Where provision was less well managed, LEAs tended to respond to schools' demands rather than their needs, which sometimes resulted in questionable value for money. There was evidence of inconsistency in the provision of services, or of an over-complex array of projects, indicating a need for better direction and co-ordination. Often such projects were grant funded and the money was rightly conditional on certain objectives being met. These objectives were not always easily reconcilable with the main thrust of the LEA's strategy. In Hackney and Sandwell, for example, undue complexity and waste of effort resulted from the need to seek funds from various sources. However, there were signs in all but the worst LEAs of senior officers giving greater attention than previously to consistency, accountability, and quality assurance. A survey of schools in 21 authorities indicated that special educational needs services and building maintenance tended to be less well regarded than most other aspects of LEA provision, and were on average rated by headteachers as less than adequate.

347. Most of the LEAs inspected were taking reasonable steps to meet most of their statutory obligations, and acting appropriately to ensure that their schools did so too. In each of the following important areas there were at least two LEAs that were failing to discharge their responsibilities adequately: provision of school places or out-of-school provision; appropriate and timely statementing of pupils with special educational needs; and teacher or headteacher appraisal.

The use of performance data

348. LEAs are increasingly providing schools with performance data in order that they can evaluate their own strengths and weaknesses. Most of the LEAs inspected produced a useful range of statistical information in a manageable form. This often included comparisons with similar schools and value added measures. Surrey produced high-quality information that was considered useful by most schools, but was slightly over-ambitious and some schools found the data daunting. By contrast, Manchester provided insufficiently detailed data to meet schools' needs. In general, the data proved helpful to schools, particularly in targeting specific groups of pupils whose progress needed to improve. It was also of great value to the LEAs themselves in identifying trends across the authority and pinpointing schools where intervention was needed.

349. Most LEAs provided schools with helpful guidance and training in the use of performance data. Primary schools generally needed this more than secondary schools; many of the latter already had extensive experience of analysis of examination and test results. However, schools needed more help in using the data for setting performance targets which acknowledged pupils' present attainment and also incorporated a reasonable degree of challenge.

350. A further survey of a group of 25 LEAs serving areas with varied ethnic composition showed that only about half of these had any useful data on the attainment of different ethnic groups. Only one-third monitored the attainment of ethnic groups comprehensively. Those that did were generally in London or other metropolitan areas and had, at best, important management information for focusing initiatives and keeping parents and local communities well informed. Those that did not were in a weak position for implementing national policy on the needs of ethnic minorities. However, many LEAs had plans to remedy this deficiency in the near future.

LEAs and Section 10 inspections

351. Some of the LEAs inspected continue unnecessarily to divert significant amounts of scarce resources to pre-inspection advice and "support", partly because schools ask for it and partly because both LEAs and schools want to ensure a favourable report. About half of the LEAs inspected provided a significant amount of support to schools before their OFSTED inspection, but there was little evidence that such support promoted real improvement in the schools. Support for schools after their inspection varied in quality and effectiveness. Some authorities were better at supporting primary than secondary schools and several did not always identify weak schools' need for help, or did not allocate resources to support them. Overall, there was a general need for greater clarity about what development support schools were entitled to expect from their LEA, and to what extent the LEA matched its provision to schools' needs.

352. The LEAs inspected tended to give better support to schools identified by OFSTED or the LEA itself as having serious weaknesses, although there were sometimes inconsistencies where the LEA lacked clear criteria for identifying serious weakness or where its procedures were patchy. By contrast, Sunderland agreed action with a school and co-ordinated a programme of support. This meant mobilising a range of services to meet the school's needs, maintaining close contact with governors and senior management, and monitoring the progress made by the school.

353. The LEAs inspected met their statutory obligations with regard to schools requiring special measures. They generally had clear procedures and gave good, constructive support, though they were not uniformly effective in rescuing schools in difficulties. Surrey and North Somerset, in particular, took a broad range of action to help such schools, including supporting weak teachers, improving schools' curriculum planning, and monitoring their progress. LEAs' secondment of headteachers into schools subject to special measures was beneficial in the majority of cases. It stabilised these schools, raised morale and began the process of change. LEAs responded better to urgent crises when they had written policies for such eventualities, and had briefed the secondees well. However, the schools from which the headteachers were seconded sometimes suffered and LEAs had not always done enough to protect these schools.

Support for improving the quality of teaching

354. LEAs' contributions to improving the overall quality of teaching varied significantly from authority to authority. Not surprisingly, the inspections found that if improvement in teaching is to occur, it must be led by the school itself. Nevertheless, LEAs had a largely positive impact in schools in half of the LEAs. Although there were certain strengths in the others, the quality and impact of their work varied too much. In the most successful LEAs, in-service training matched the schools' identified needs, and in three of these authorities advisory teachers or consultants also worked with headteachers, training them to observe lessons and evaluate the quality of teaching. In general, LEAs tended to focus their initiatives on the primary phase, probably wisely because many of the secondary schools felt that they could obtain better advice or consultancy from elsewhere. Even so, the LEA's work was sometimes hampered by gaps in the expertise of the advisory team, or by a lack of awareness in poorly managed schools of what improvements were necessary.

355. All of the LEAs inspected attempted, with varying degrees of success, to support primary schools in the drive to improve standards of literacy, and when it was implemented, to assist with the development of the National Literacy Project, particularly in weaker schools. The main flaw in this support was that it was often insufficiently focused on improving the quality of teaching by giving teachers a clear evaluation of their performance, LEAs need to make sure that the main literacy initiative is well co-ordinated with services for bilingual pupils and pupils with special educational needs in some LEAs there was confusion about the respective roles of these services. At the same time, schools need to be selective and have the flexibility to decide which of the LEA's services best serve their priorities.

356. LEAs are not as advanced in supporting improvements in numeracy, reflecting the national timetable. In only two authorities was this a very high priority at the time of inspection, but it was clear that six of the ten LEAs were making a positive contribution to improvement, albeit only a slight improvement in two of them. Again, the main effort has rightly been focused on the primary phase.

Reorganisations

357. The majority of proposals made by the full range of LEAs to the Secretary of State regarding the reorganisation of schools concerned uncontroversial matters, such as the addition of a nursery to a primary school or the enlargement of a school to meet local population change. These were usually well-presented proposals and they were normally accepted by the government. However, the quality of the long-term organisation of school places varied considerably across LEAs. Some authorities showed considerable knowledge of their schools and made plans which had a clear reference to educational standards, whereas others sought to rationalise the provision of places without proper heed to the implications for quality or, sometimes, to local needs and perceptions. Proposals to close seriously weak schools or those requiring special measures did not always provide a

solution which offered realistic hopes of long-term improvement. Furthermore, some local planning had been too drawn-out and had led to instability and uncertainty in schools.

Annex 1

Inspection evidence

Section 10 inspections

The Section 10 inspections of primary, secondary and special schools were carried out by registered inspectors. There were 7,284 such inspections: 6,218 of primary or nursery schools, 645 of secondary schools, 317 of special schools and 104 of Pupil Referral Units.

Section 5 inspections

From the inception of Government funding for nursery education in 1996 to the end of December 1998, OFSTED has carried out over 20,000 inspections of settings in receipt of funding for four-year old children. In addition to the published reports on each setting, OFSTED has written two overview reports on the quality of funded nursery provision. A third publication is planned in 1999.

HMI inspections

During the year HMI made over 3,300 visits to schools. These included more than 1,400 inspection visits to schools with serious weaknesses or requiring special measures and over 400 inspection visits to independent schools. They also included investigations of, amongst other things, the teaching of the National Literacy Project in primary schools, good practice in schools for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties, and modular GCE A levels.

The sample of schools inspected by HMI included all types, but the sample was not chosen to be representative of the different types of school in England.

HMI inspected LEA support for school improvement in ten LEAs, six under new statutory powers and four pilot inspections.

HMI inspected a range of initial teacher training including secondary subject training and training for teaching reading and number in primary schools. In addition, HMI carried out an inspection of National Professional Qualification for Headteachers training.

HMI also inspected a range of youth work and adult education provision: full inspections of adult education in three LEAs; full inspections of youth work in three LEAs; grants to national voluntary youth organisations; education provision in young offenders' institutions; a survey of modern foreign language learning; and access, participation and family learning in 26 local authorities.

Annex 2

Interpreting inspection evidence

Evidence from Section 10 inspections for 1997/98 has been compiled from a number of distinct sources:

- judgements on individual lessons - graded on a seven-point scale;
- judgements on features of the school such as the progress made by pupils - also graded on a seven-point scale;
- written evidence supporting these judgements;
- published reports;
- information on the schools provided by the headteacher.

All of these sources of evidence were used to produce this report. The quantitative judgements have been based on grades provided by inspectors which have been checked against supporting textual information. A summary of these grades is contained in Annex 7.

Standards achieved by pupils

Inspectors make two separate judgements of standards achieved by pupils:

- attainment - how well pupils are achieving in relation to national standards or expectations;
- progress - the gains pupils make in knowledge skills and understanding.

When judging attainment inspectors judge whether the proportion of pupils achieving the national expectation is below, broadly in line with or above that which is found nationally. This comparison with norms is a key part of the measurement of standards and provides important information for the school being inspected. However, because the inspection grades for attainment are made in comparison to a national norm, when aggregated nationally they can only produce a distribution about that norm. They cannot produce a measure of the national level of attainment of pupils. In this report, evidence from national tests and examinations is used to provide a quantitative measure of the national level of pupils' attainment. Inspection evidence is used to identify key strengths and weaknesses in pupils' attainment and the school factors contributing to high and low attainment.

While attainment provides an important component of evidence on the achievement of pupils, it provides only a partial picture of the effectiveness of the school. Able pupils who are achieving levels which are above the average could still be underachieving if they do not make the progress that they should. Conversely, pupils of low ability may be doing well if they are making good gains, even though their attainment is below the average for pupils of a similar age. Pupils with moderate or severe learning difficulties in special schools will invariably be attaining at well below the national level, but in effective schools they will make good progress. Progress is, therefore, a valuable indicator of the impact and effectiveness of the school.

Inspectors judge the progress made in individual lessons. They also make overall judgements for each National Curriculum subject and for each key stage and for the school as a whole. These judgements are based on a range of evidence - lesson observations, written work, pupil interviews and test and examination results - and therefore provide a rounded view of achievement. These overall judgements have mainly been used to provide the evidence for the educational standards achieved by pupils in individual subjects and in the school as a whole. Lesson grades have been used occasionally when finer detail is required, for example of variations across years within a key stage.

Interpreting grades

Inspectors use a seven-point scale when grading progress and other features of schools. Grades 1-3 indicate very good or good progress where most pupils achieve better than expected. Grade 4 indicates satisfactory progress where most pupils achieve reasonably well. Grades 5-7 are used where progress is unsatisfactory or poor and most pupils underachieve. For other features of the school, grades 1-3 generally indicate a strength that promotes high standards, grade 4 indicates neither a strength nor a weakness, implying sound standards. Grades 5-7 indicate a weakness which promotes low standards. In the charts in this report, grades 1-3 are grouped and displayed as good/very good, and grades 5-7 are grouped and displayed as unsatisfactory/poor.

The quality of teaching

Direct observation in lessons provides the clearest view of the quality of teaching. Inspectors use a seven-point scale to judge the quality of teaching. Grades 1-3 indicate very good or good teaching that promotes high standards. Grade 4 is satisfactory teaching that promotes sound standards and grades 5-7 are unsatisfactory or poor teaching that promotes low standards. In this report lesson grades have generally been used to provide quantitative overviews of the quality of teaching.

Annex 3

The sample of schools

HMCI's Annual Report gives an evaluation of quality and standards in English schools during the 1997/98 academic year. The main evidence base for this evaluation is inspections carried out under Section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996.

There were 6,218 primary schools and 317 special schools inspected during the 1997/98 academic year and these schools were broadly representative of English primary schools as a whole. The schools inspected were essentially those that had been randomly allocated to the fourth year of the initial cycle of inspection at the commencement of the cycle. Using the inspection evidence for these schools as an indicator of quality and standards in English schools including comparisons with earlier years was, therefore, straightforward.

In the case of secondary schools, there were 645 schools inspected during the 1997/98 academic year but these schools were not, overall, representative of English schools as a whole. This year was the first year of the second cycle of school inspections. In planning the programme for this cycle HMCI ensured that schools to be inspected during each year include:

- a balanced sample including all relevant types and displaying the full range of performance as judged in previous inspections;
- within the balanced sample schools which are likely to be models of good practice;
- schools whose performance was weak at the time of the previous inspection or whose performance has declined significantly. These schools are inspected earlier than they would otherwise be.

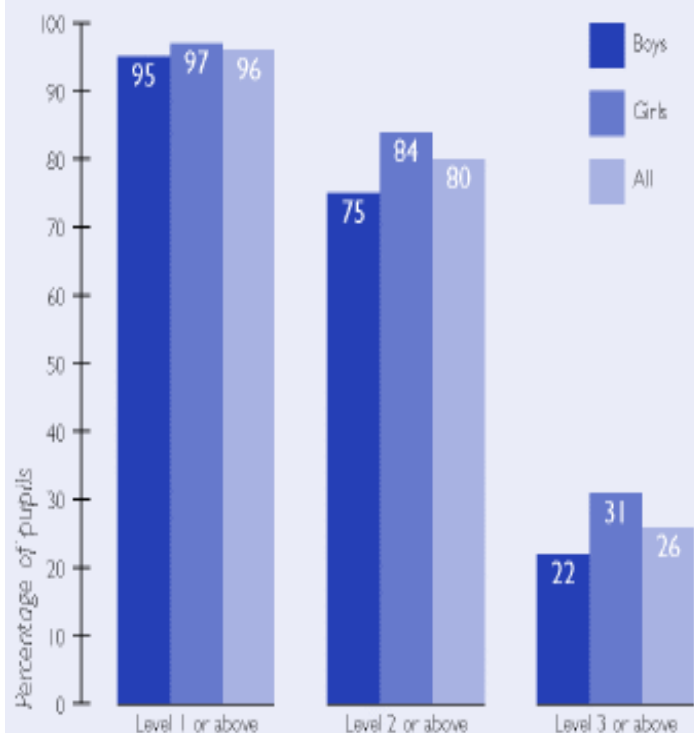
Whilst the earlier inspection of weak schools means that there was a disproportionate number of these schools inspected in 1997/98, the balanced sample of schools has ensured sufficient evidence to enable a full and representative picture of English schools to be obtained from inspection evidence.

To enable a representative picture to be obtained it has been necessary, in the evaluation of the inspection evidence, to weight data about different types of schools in proportion to their numbers in the total school population. At the same time, the higher rate of inspection of weak schools enables a sharper focus on quality and standards in the weakest schools and on the weaknesses in the schools that need to be remedied in order to raise standards.

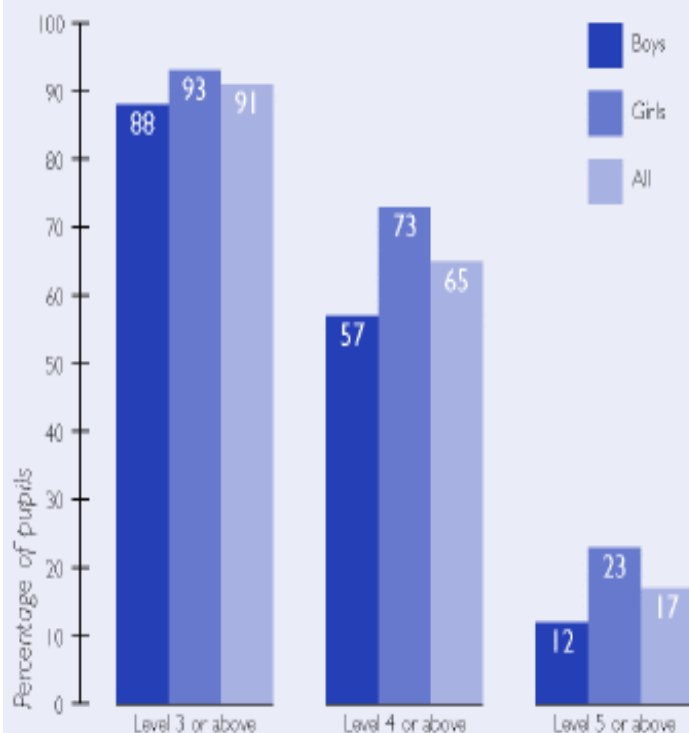
Annex 4

1998 Key Stages 1 and 2 test results

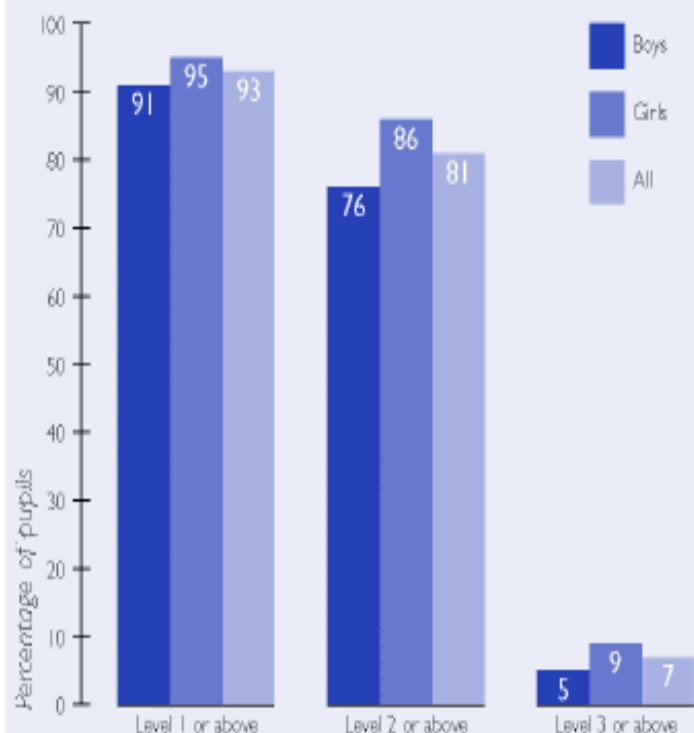
1998 Key Stage 1 test/task results for reading



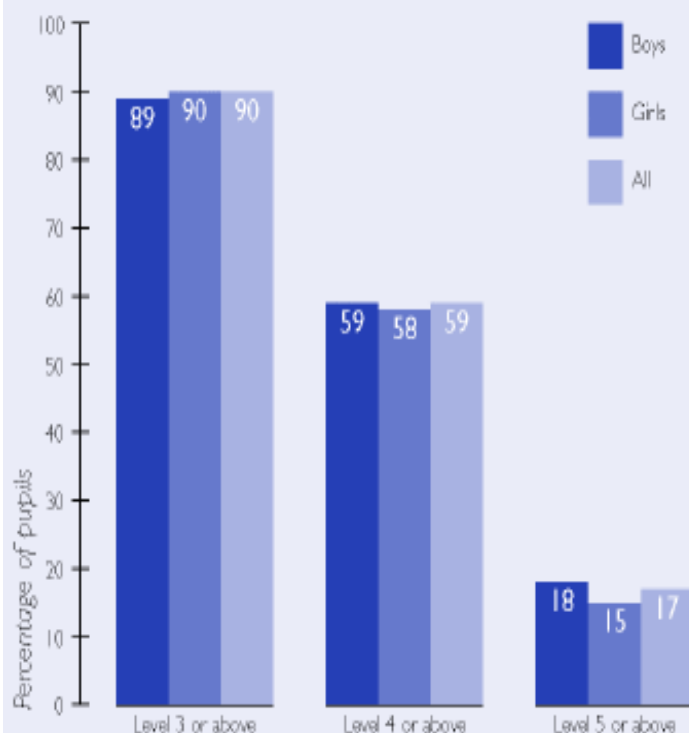
1998 Key Stage 2 test results for English



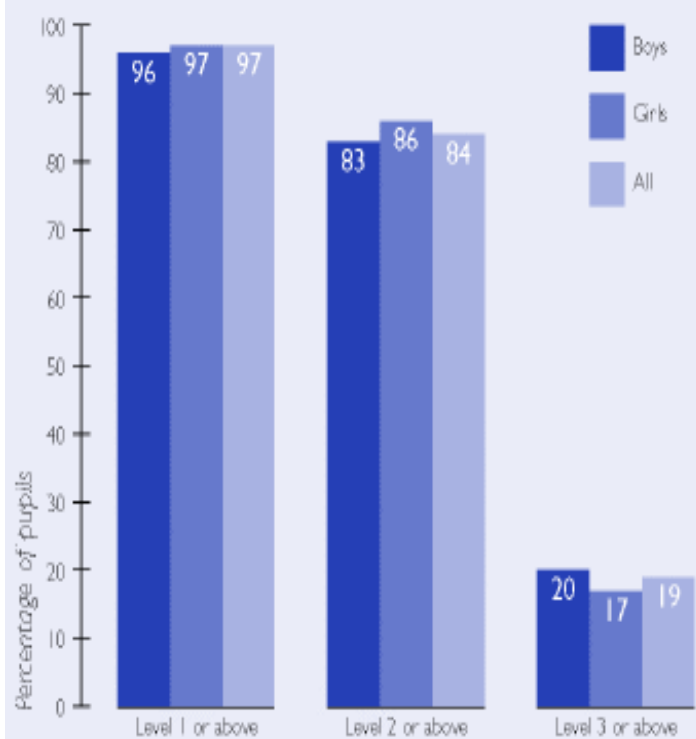
1998 Key Stage 1 test results for writing



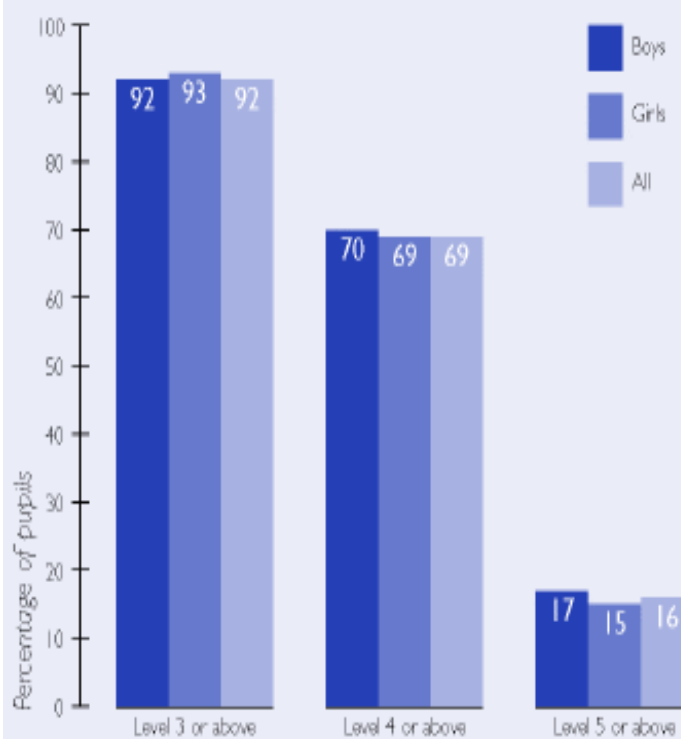
1998 Key Stage 2 test results for mathematics



1998 Key Stage 1 test/task results for mathematics



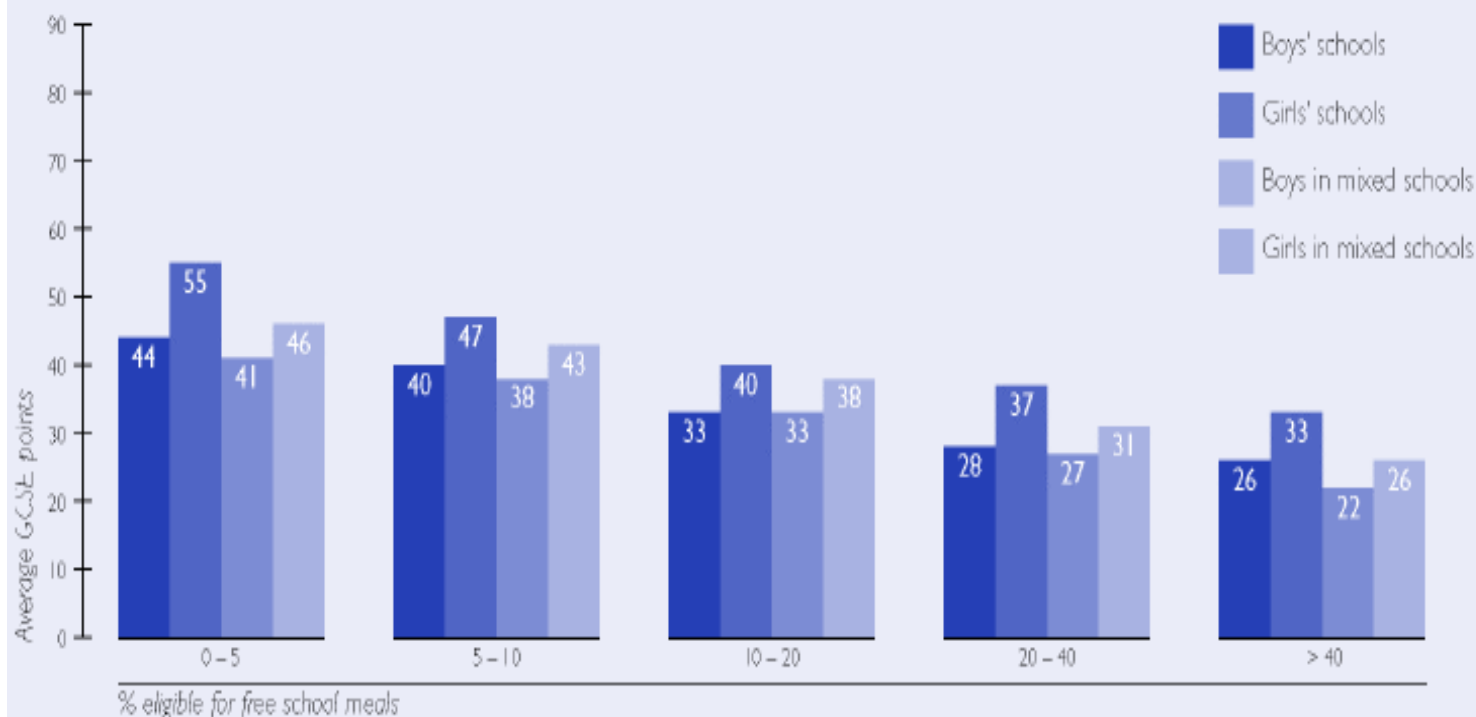
1998 Key Stage 2 test results for science



Annex 5

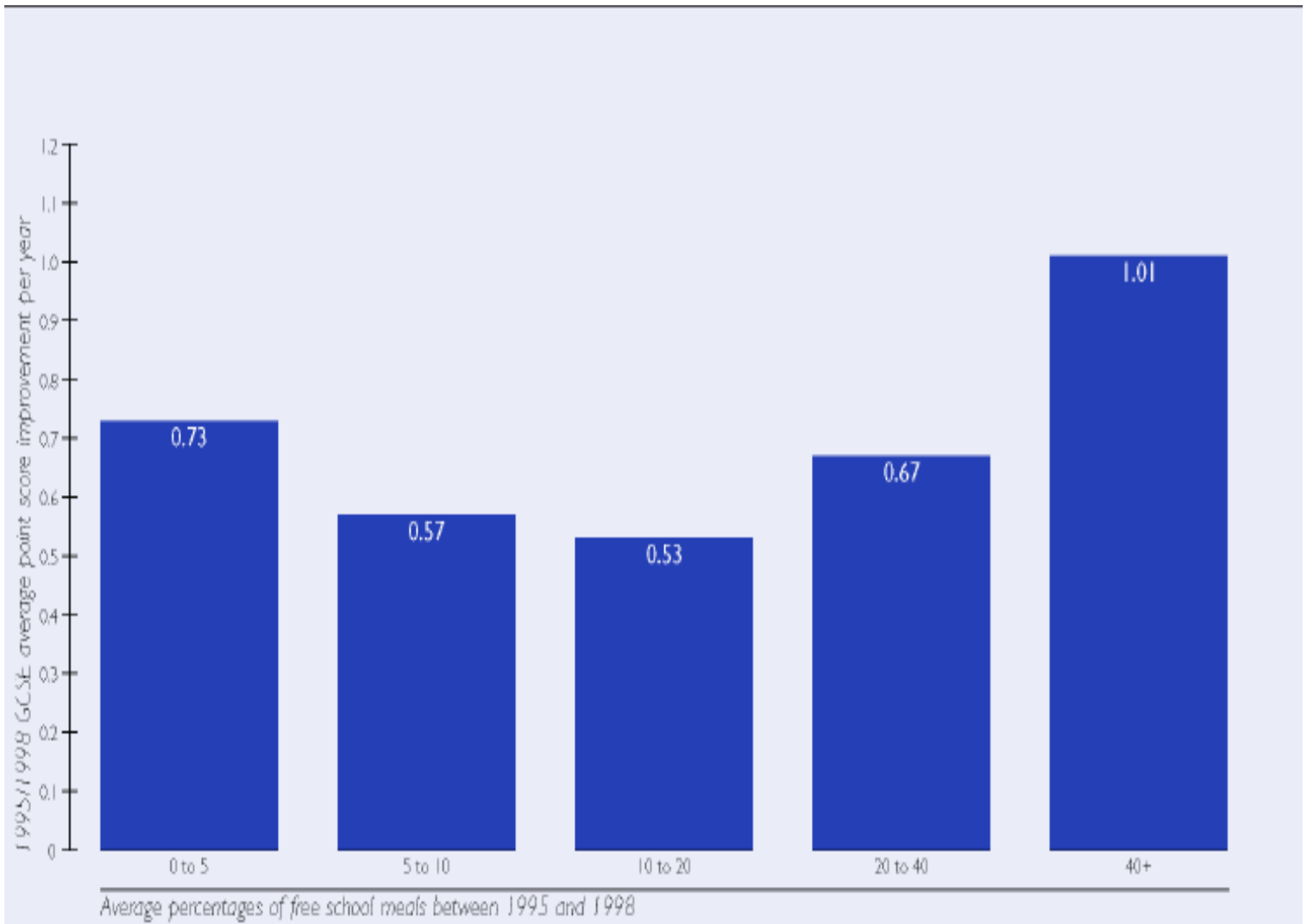
Achievement of boys and girls in single-sex and mixed schools

Average GCSE points score of boys and girls in single-sex and mixed schools banded by eligibility for free meals 1998 (*Non-denominational comprehensive schools*)



Annex 6

Average GCSE improvement trend per year between 1995 and 1998 against eligibility for free school meals



Annex 7

Statistical Summary

Progress in Primary Schools 1997/98 (percentage of schools)

Statistical Summary

Teaching in Primary Schools 1997/98 (percentage of schools)

Statistical Summary

Progress in Secondary Schools 1997/98 (percentage of schools)

Statistical Summary

Teaching in Secondary Schools 1997/98

Statistical Summary

Inspection Grades for Primary Schools - 1997/98

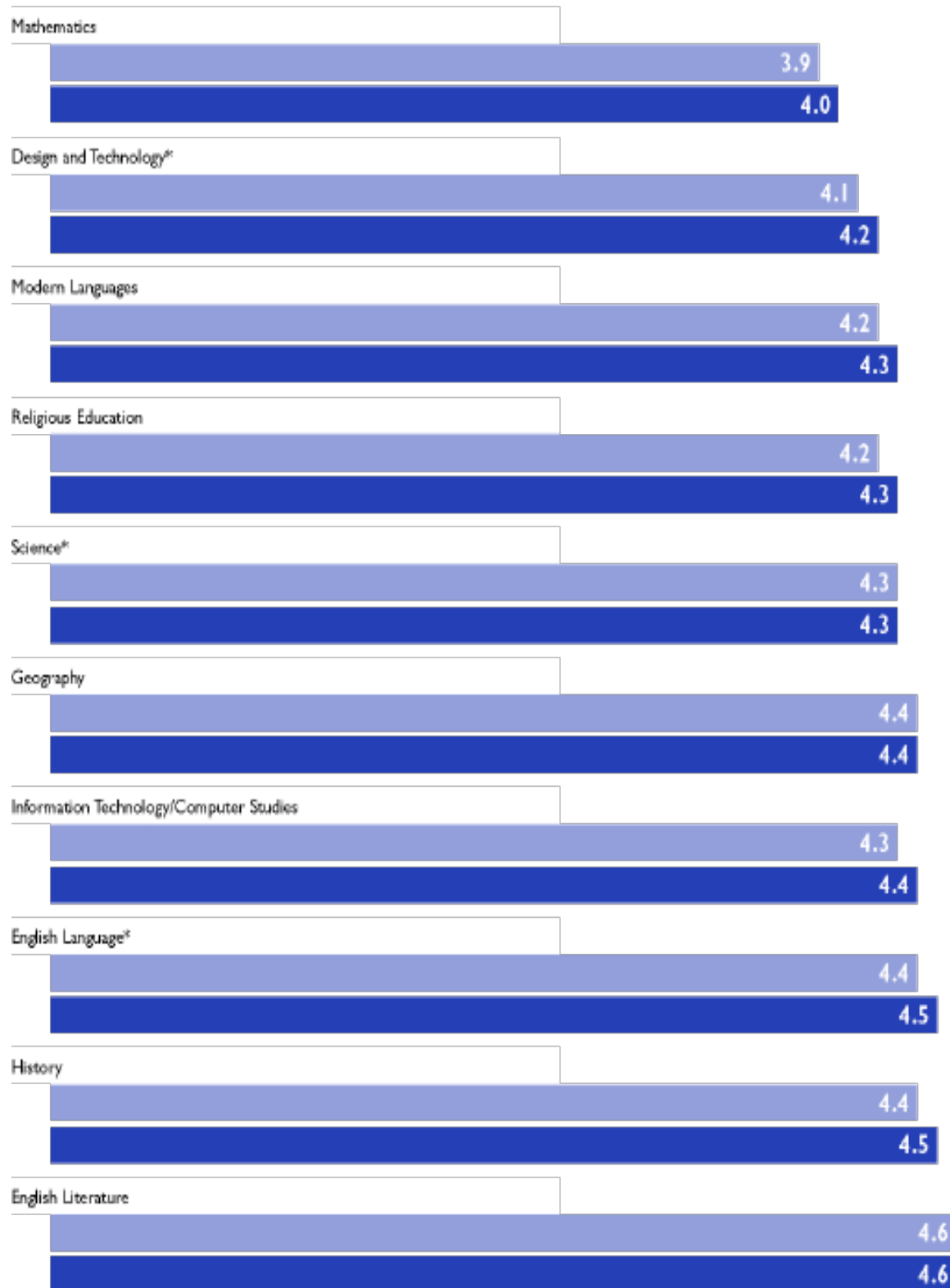
Statistical Summary

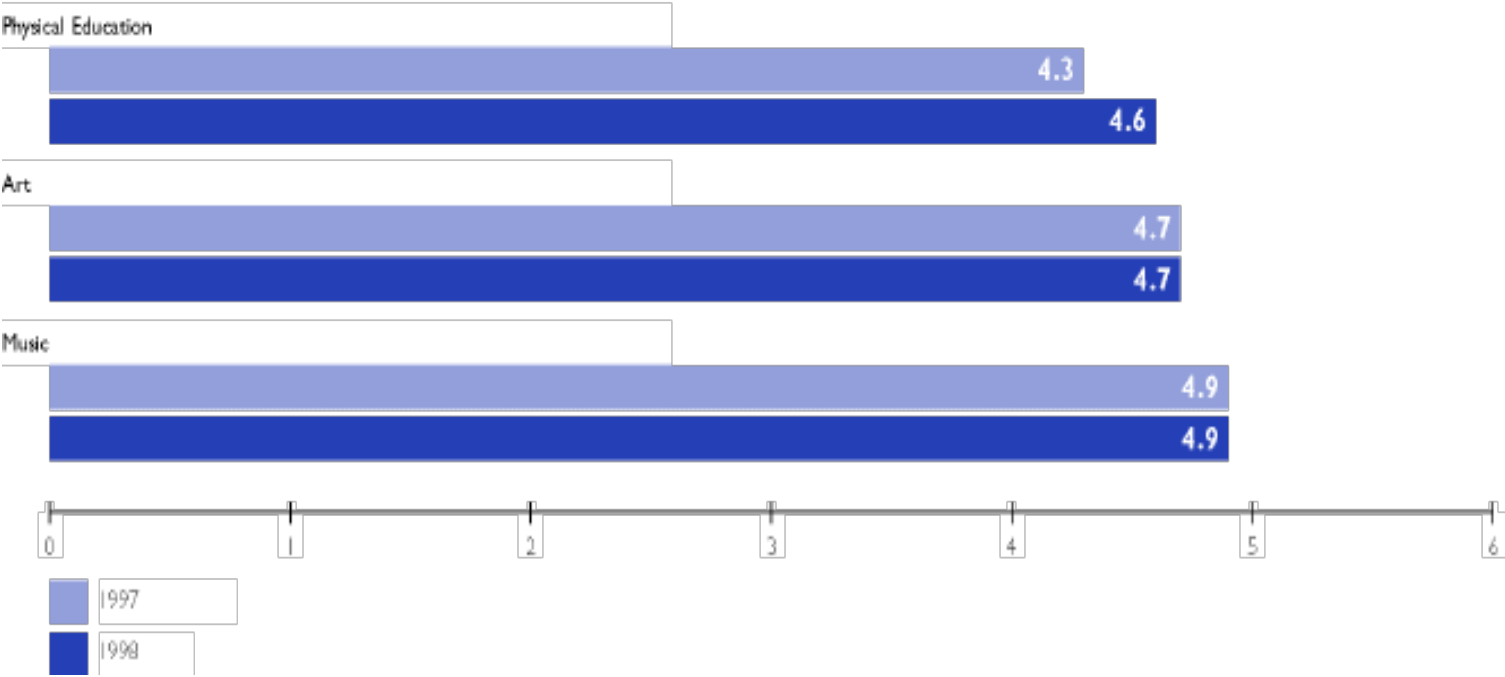
Inspection Grades for Secondary Schools - 1997/98

Annex 8

GCSE scores for different subjects in secondary schools

Average GCSE points per entry in 1997 and 1998





*** Subject definitions for these subjects have changed since 1997.**

Annex 9

OFSTED Publications 1997/98

PRICED PUBLICATIONS

The Annual Report of Her Majesty's
Chief Inspector of Schools

0 10 283598 5 £10.30

Secondary Education 1993-97:
a review of secondary schools
in England

0 11 350099 8 £22.95

Guidance on the inspection of Nursery
Education Provision in the Private,
Voluntary and Independent Sectors

0 11 350101 3 £9.95

Educating the Very Able

0 11 350110 5 £10.95

Recent Research on Gender and
Educational Performance

0 11 350102 1 £10.95

Artists in Schools: A Review

0 11 350103 X £9.95

Standards of Achievement in Advanced
GNVQs in Sixth Forms 1997

0 11 350098 X £4.95

The Arts Inspected: Good Teaching in
Art, Dance, Drama, Music
(Available from Heinemann,
telephone 01865 311366)

0 43 530232 9 £14.99

Homework: Learning from Practice

0 11 350104 8 £11.95

Part One General National Vocational
Qualifications: Final Report

0 11 3500105 7 £6.95

UNPRICED PUBLICATIONS

Corporate Plan 1998

HMI 164

School Evaluation Matters

HMI 127

Standards in the Primary Curriculum 1996-97
(pack of subject leaflets)

HMI 129K

Changes to the National Curriculum in
Key Stages 1 and 2 in Primary and Special Schools

HMI 128

Assessing the Core Subjects at Key Stage 2

HMR/050/98/DS

How Teachers Assess the Core Subjects
at Key Stage 3

HMR/1/98/NS

Making Headway

HMI 143

The Quality of Education in Institutions
inspected under the Nursery Education
Funding Arrangements

HMI 142

Making Complaints to OFSTED

HMI 144

Educational Research: A Critique,
by James Tooley

HMI 147

Inspection 98: Supplement to the inspection
handbooks containing new requirements
and guidance [for inspectors]

HMI 145

Inspection 98: Briefing for Schools on the
New Inspection Requirements

HMI 149

Inspecting Subjects 3-11

HMI 148

Making the Most of Inspection:
fully revised version 1998

HMI 088

School Inspection:
A Guide for Parents: revised 1998

HMI 089

Inspection of Manchester LEA

HMR 88/98/LEA

Accent on Adults: A Survey of Modern
Foreign Language Learning by Adults

HMI 152

Work Related Aspects of the Curriculum
in Secondary Schools

HMI 160

National Survey of Careers Education
and Guidance: Secondary Schools

HMI 150

National Survey of Careers Education
and Guidance: Special Schools and
Pupil Referral Units

HMI 151

Setting in Primary Schools

HMI 163?

Proposals for a Differentiated System
of Inspection: Consultation Paper

HMI 153

The Training of Part-Time Youth Workers

HMI 162

The Teaching of Reading to Hearing
Impaired Children in Mainstream Schools

HMI 159

The National Literacy project: An HMI Evaluation

HMI 157

The National Numeracy Project: An HMI Evaluation

HMI 158

The Teaching of Physical Education in
Primary Schools

HMI 161

The Inspection of Initial Teacher Training:

HMI 165

Unless otherwise stated, priced publications are available from The Stationery Office Publications Centre
PO Box 276
London SW8 5DT

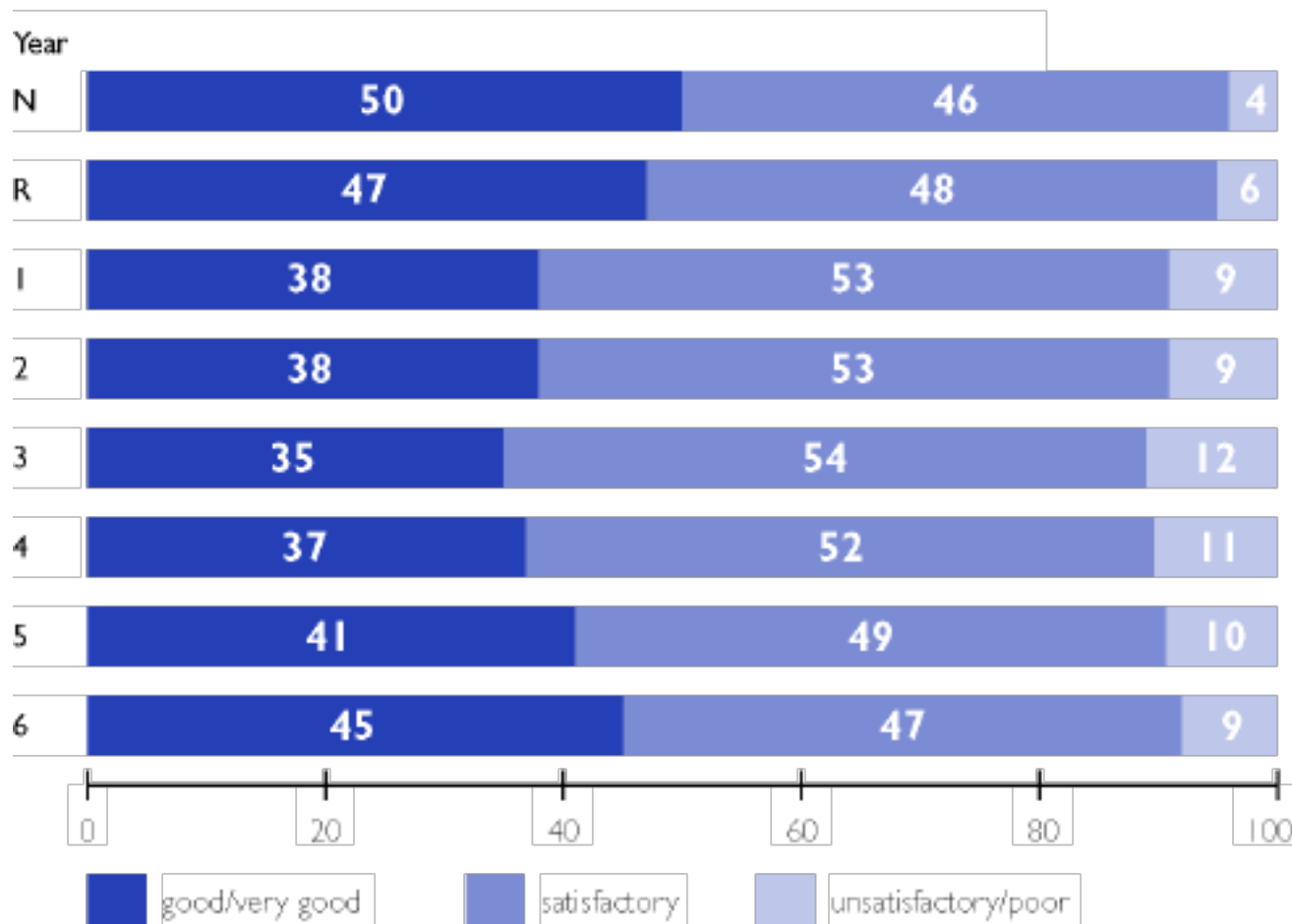
or from any Stationery Office bookshop and most other booksellers. The Stationery Office produces a regular catalogue of its education publications including OFSTED titles. Telephone 0171 873 9090.

Unpriced OFSTED publications are available from:
OFSTED Publications Centre
PO Box 6927, London E3 3NZ
Telephone 0171 510 0180

Reports on individual state-funded schools are available from the schools themselves or on the Internet. The OFSTED website is at: **<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk>**

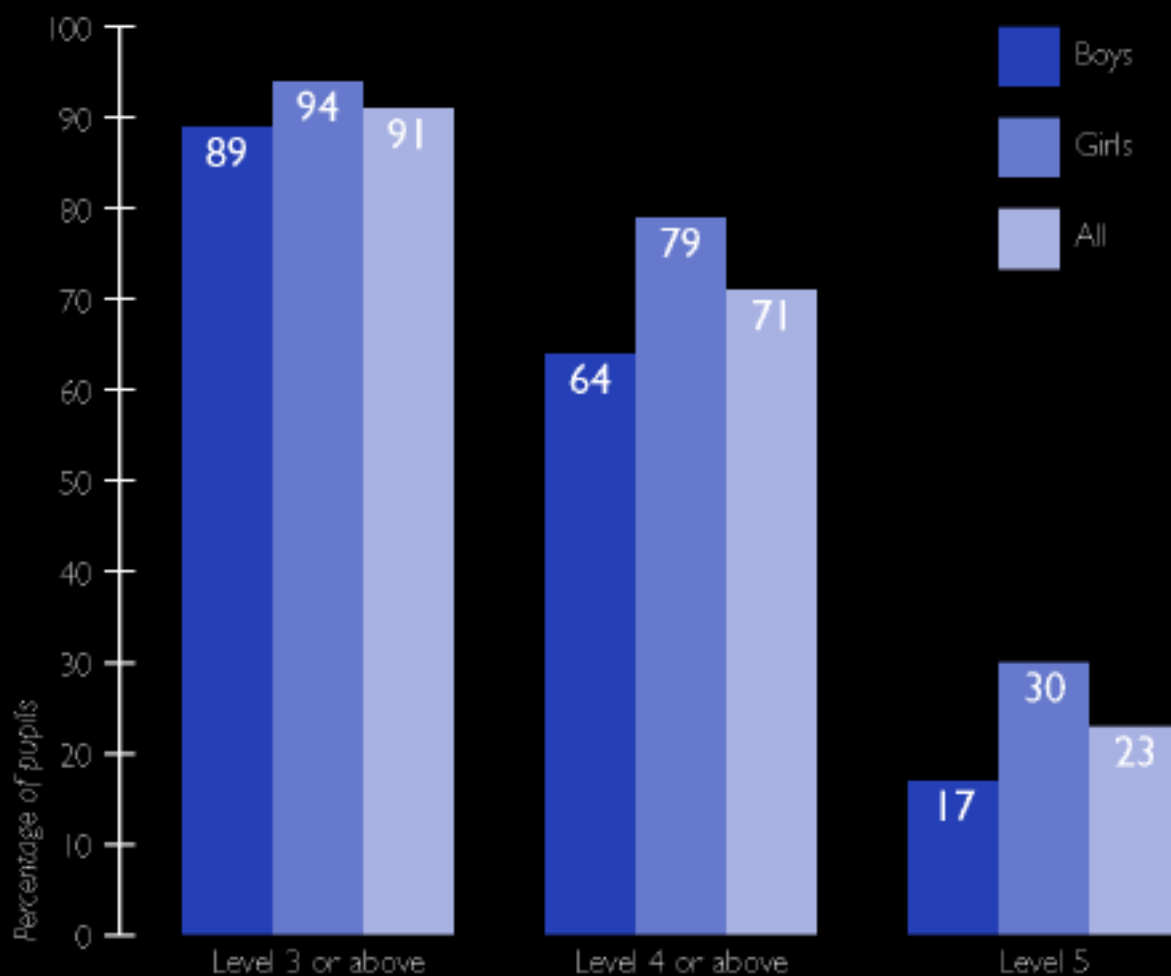
The website also carries OFSTED reports on nurseries, teacher training institutions and certain LEAs, as well as a selection of Inspection Guidance and other publications.

Lessons in Primary Schools: Progress (percentage of lessons)

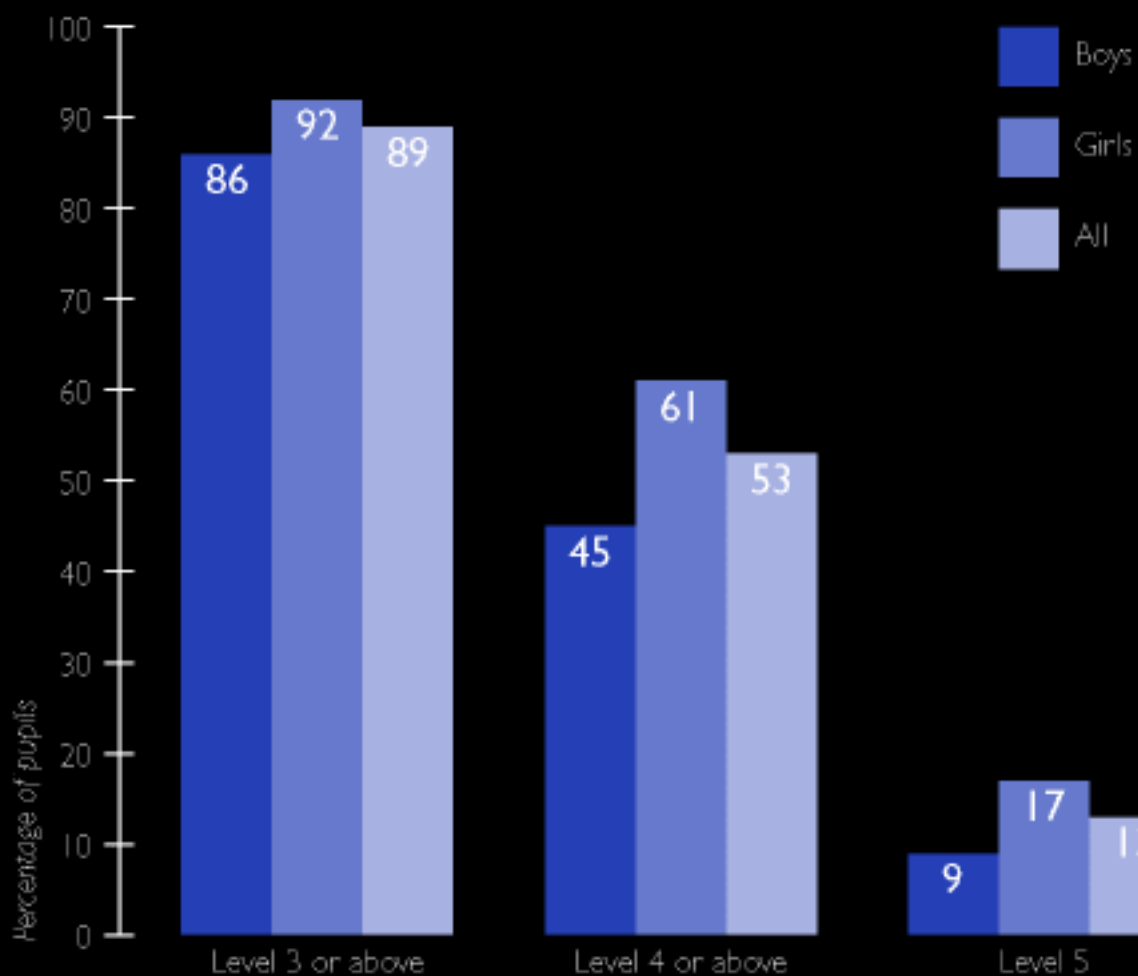


These figures have been rounded and may not add up to 100 per cent

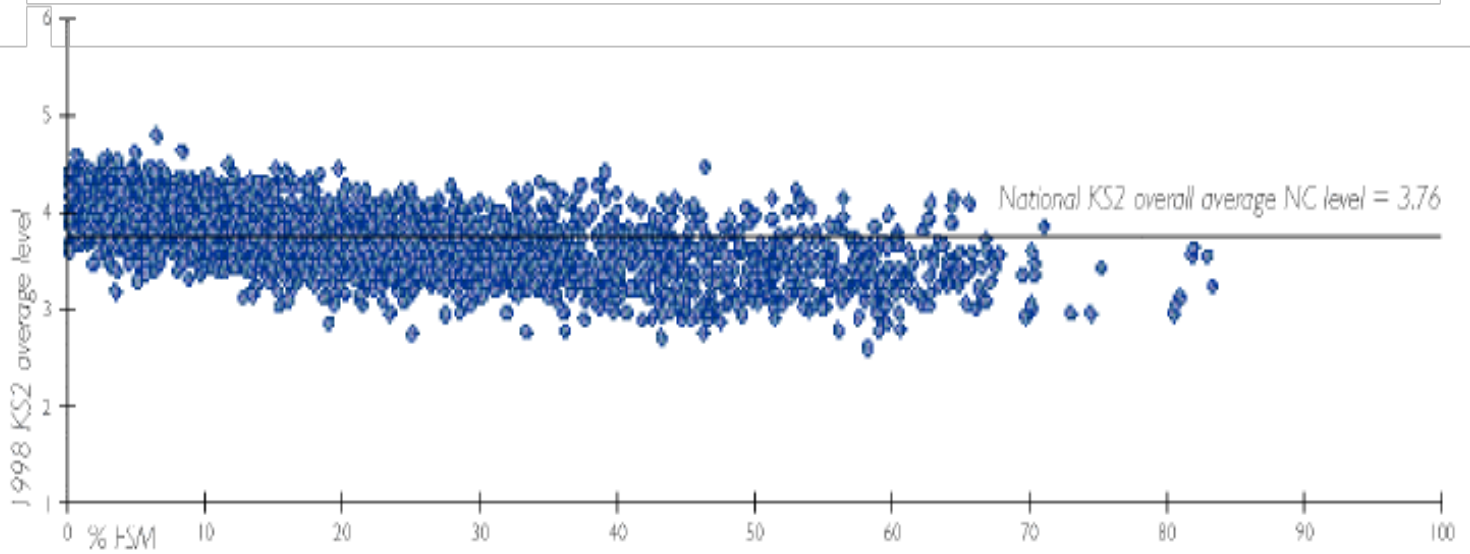
1998 Key Stage 2 test results for reading

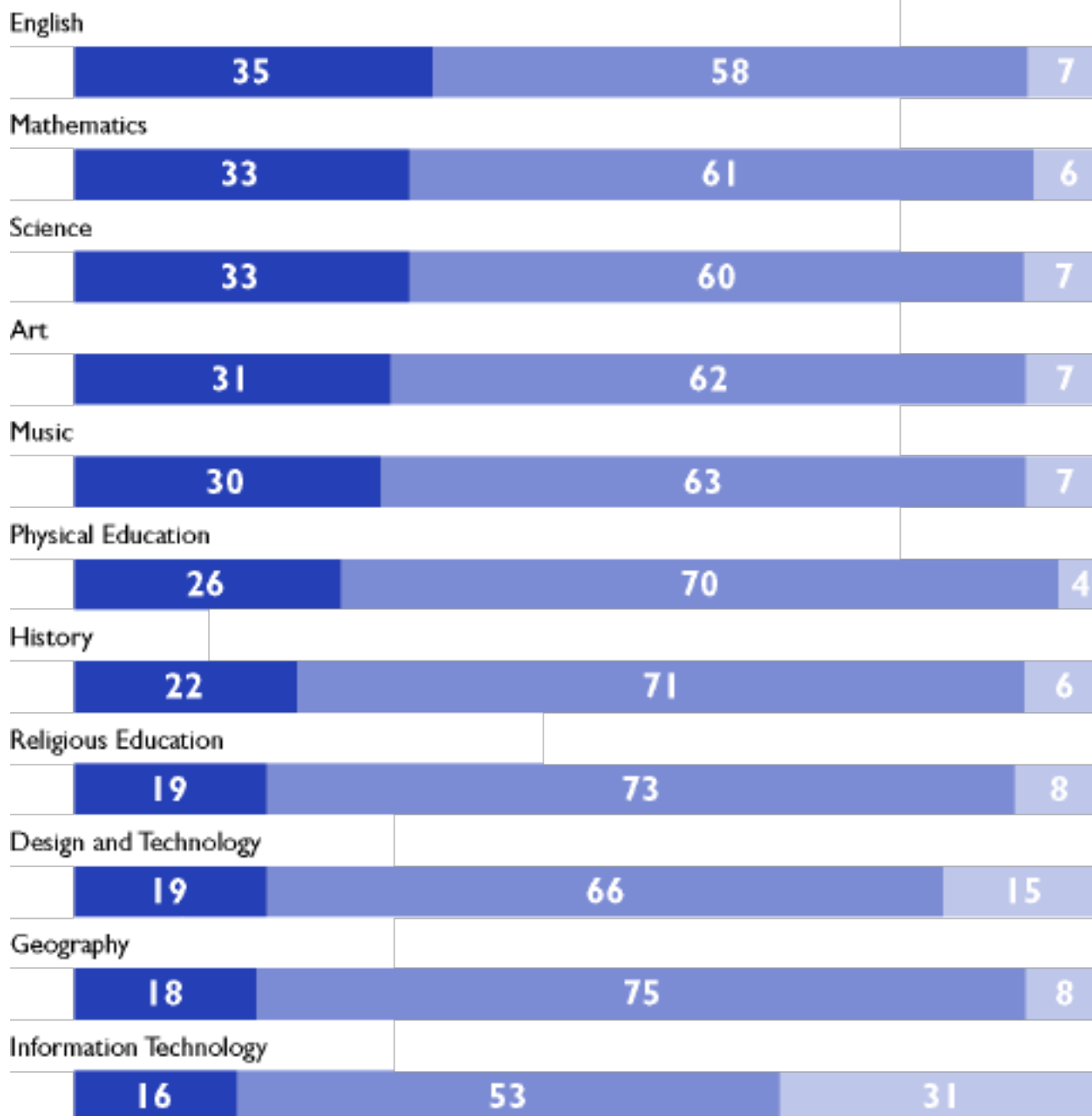
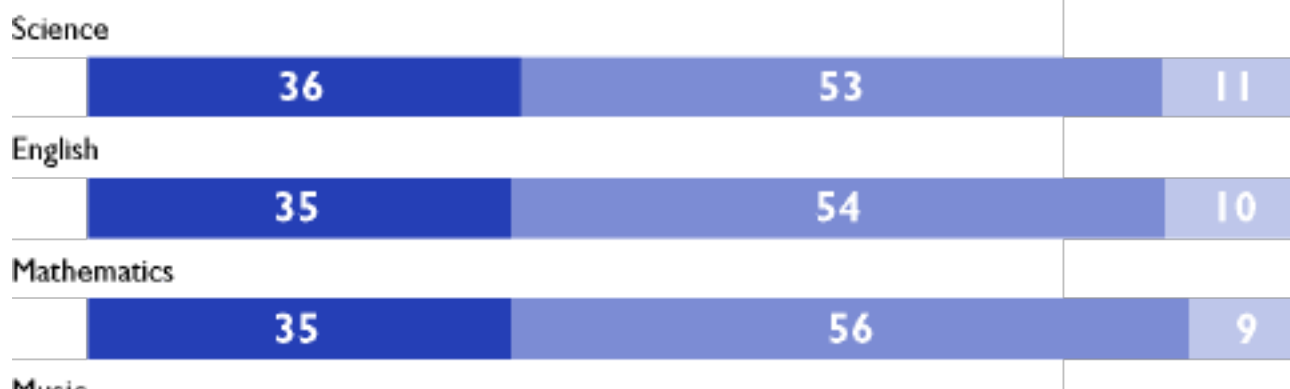


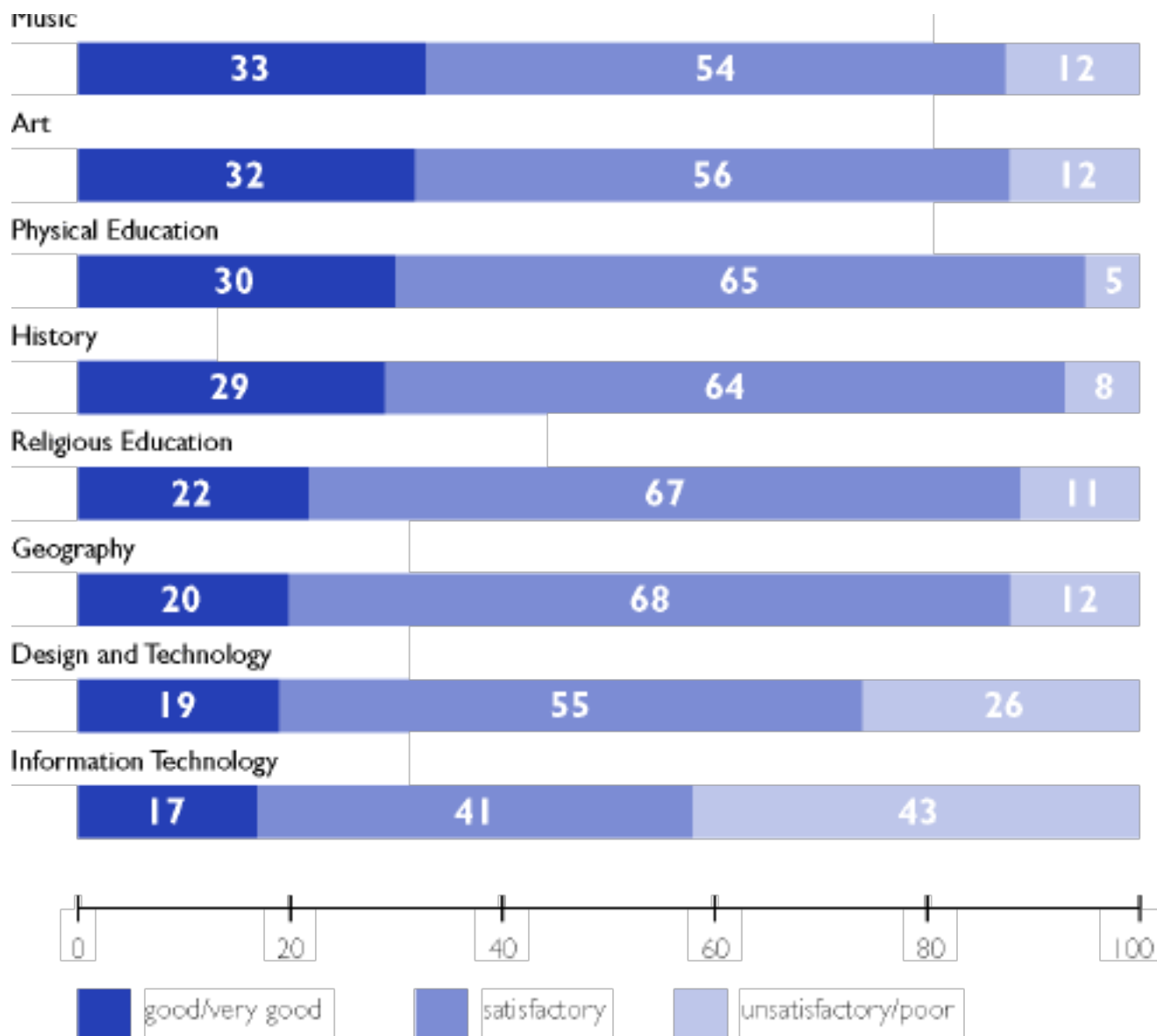
1998 Key Stage 2 test results for writing



Average National Curriculum level achieved by pupils in KS2 tests against eligibility for free school meals for a random selection of primary schools

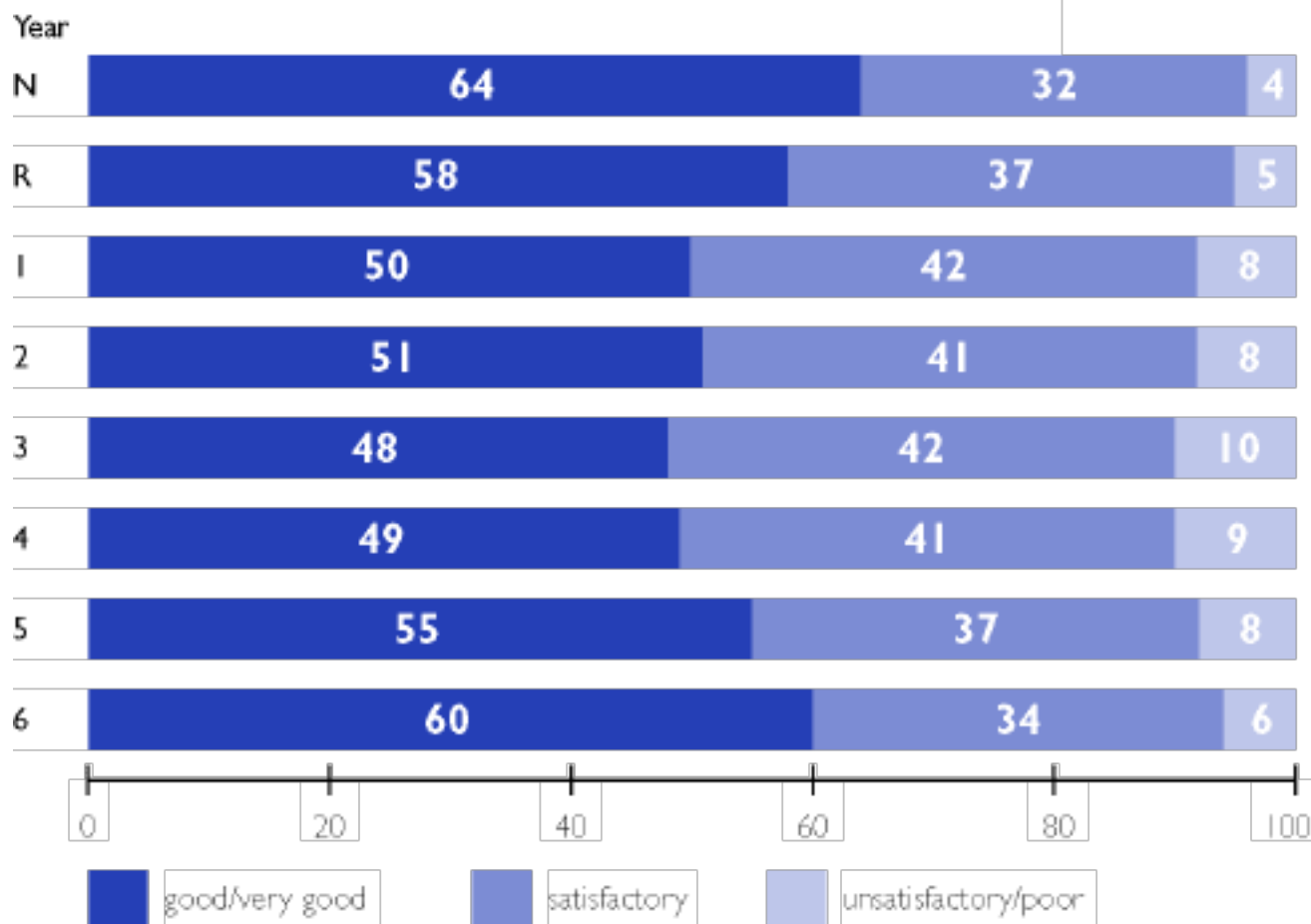


Progress in Key Stage 1 (percentage of schools)**Progress in Key Stage 2** (percentage of schools)



These figures have been rounded and may not add up to 100 per cent

Lessons in Primary Schools: Teaching (percentage of lessons)



These figures have been rounded and may not add up to 100 per cent

Quality of Teaching in Primary Schools: qualified teachers with more than one year's experience and newly qualified teachers *(percentage of lessons)*

Qualified teacher with more than one year's experience

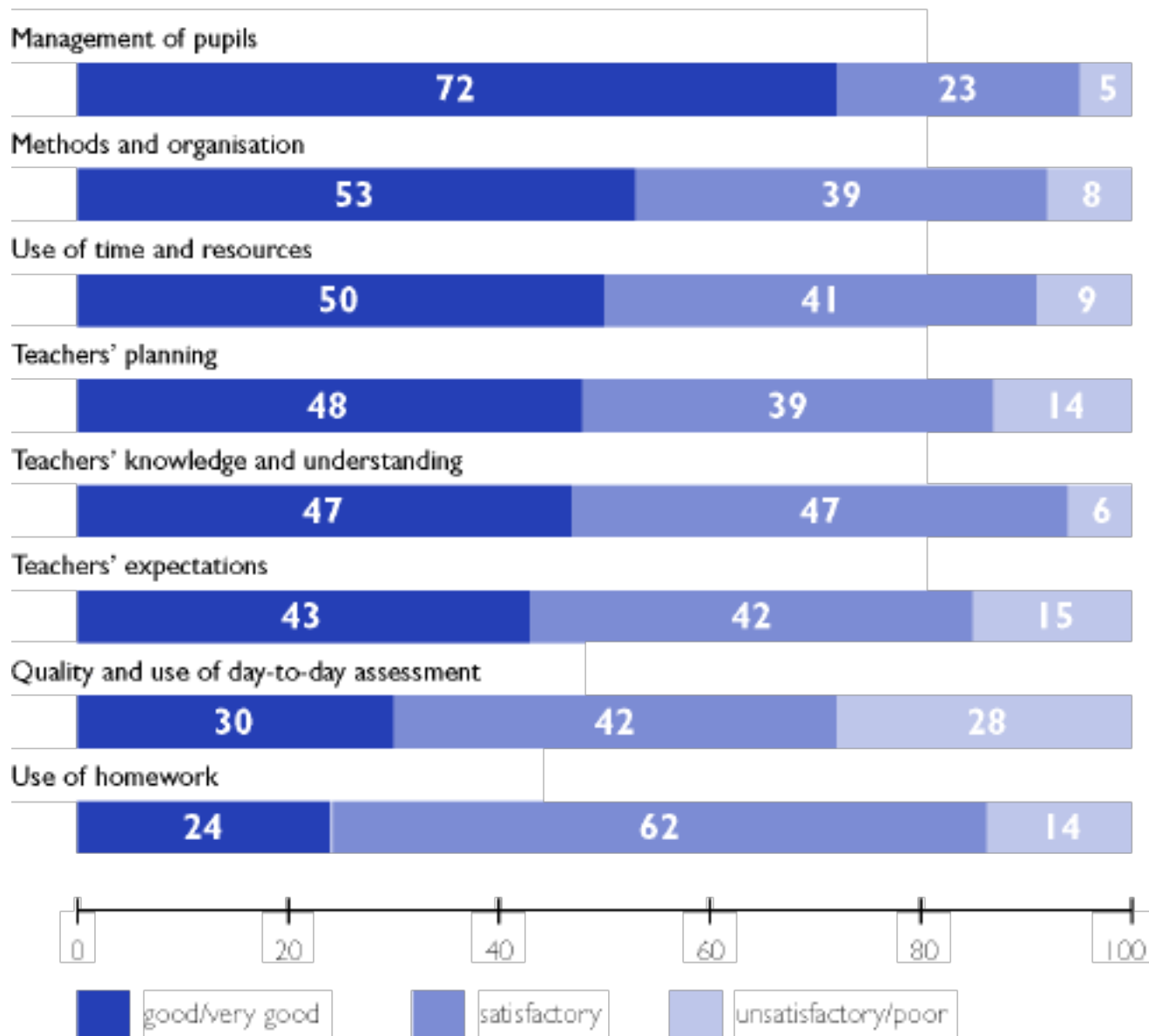


Newly qualified teacher



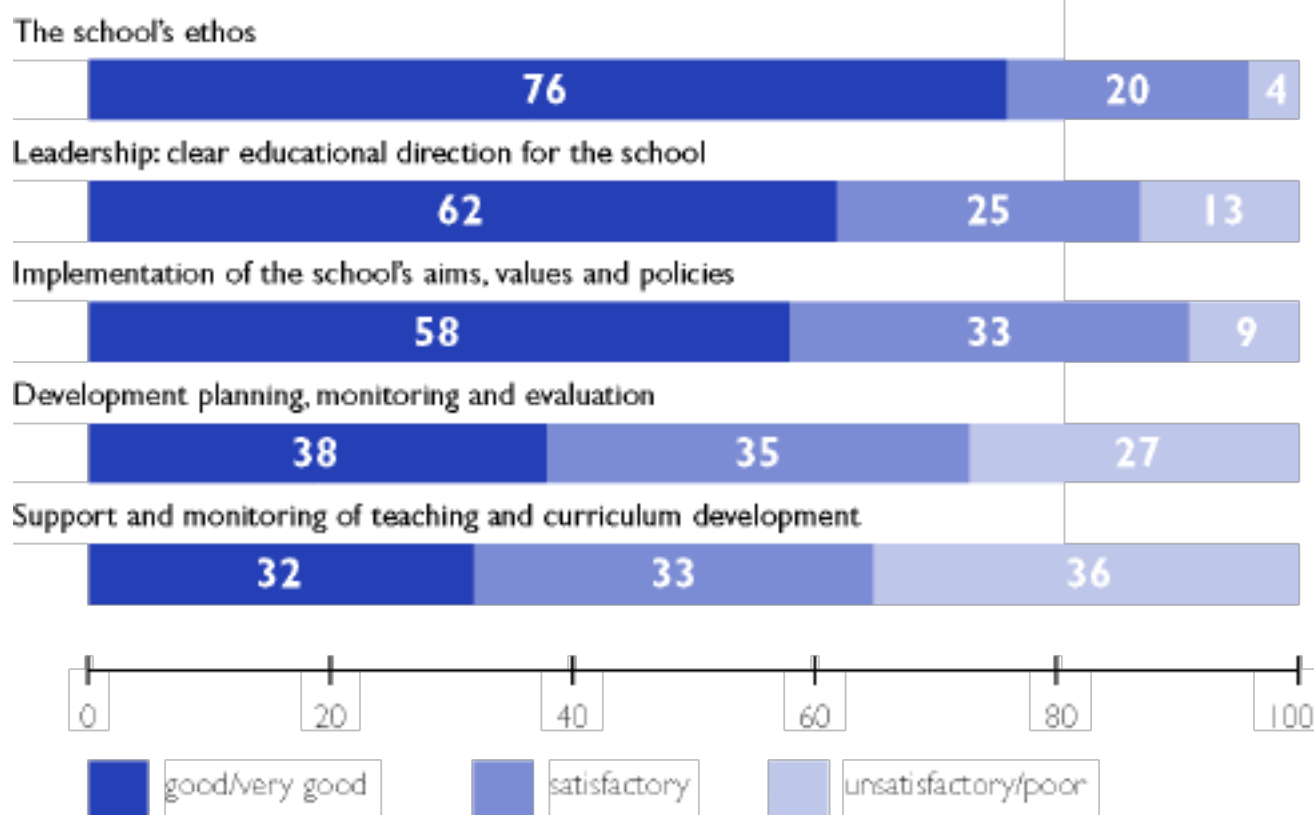
These figures have been rounded and may not add up to 100 per cent

Quality of Teaching: Key Stage 1 and 2 *(percentage of schools)*



These figures have been rounded and may not add up to 100 per cent.

Leadership and Management: Primary Schools *(percentage of schools)*



These figures have been rounded and may not add up to 100 per cent

Progress in Key Stage 3 *(percentage of schools)*

Physical Education

50

46

4

English

48

46

7

Art

47

40

13

Science

44

46

10

History

43

50

7

Design and Technology

43

45

12

Mathematics

39

50

10

Geography

37

57

7

Music

37

42

20

Religious Education

36

48

16

Modern Languages

34

50

16

Information Technology

34

38

29

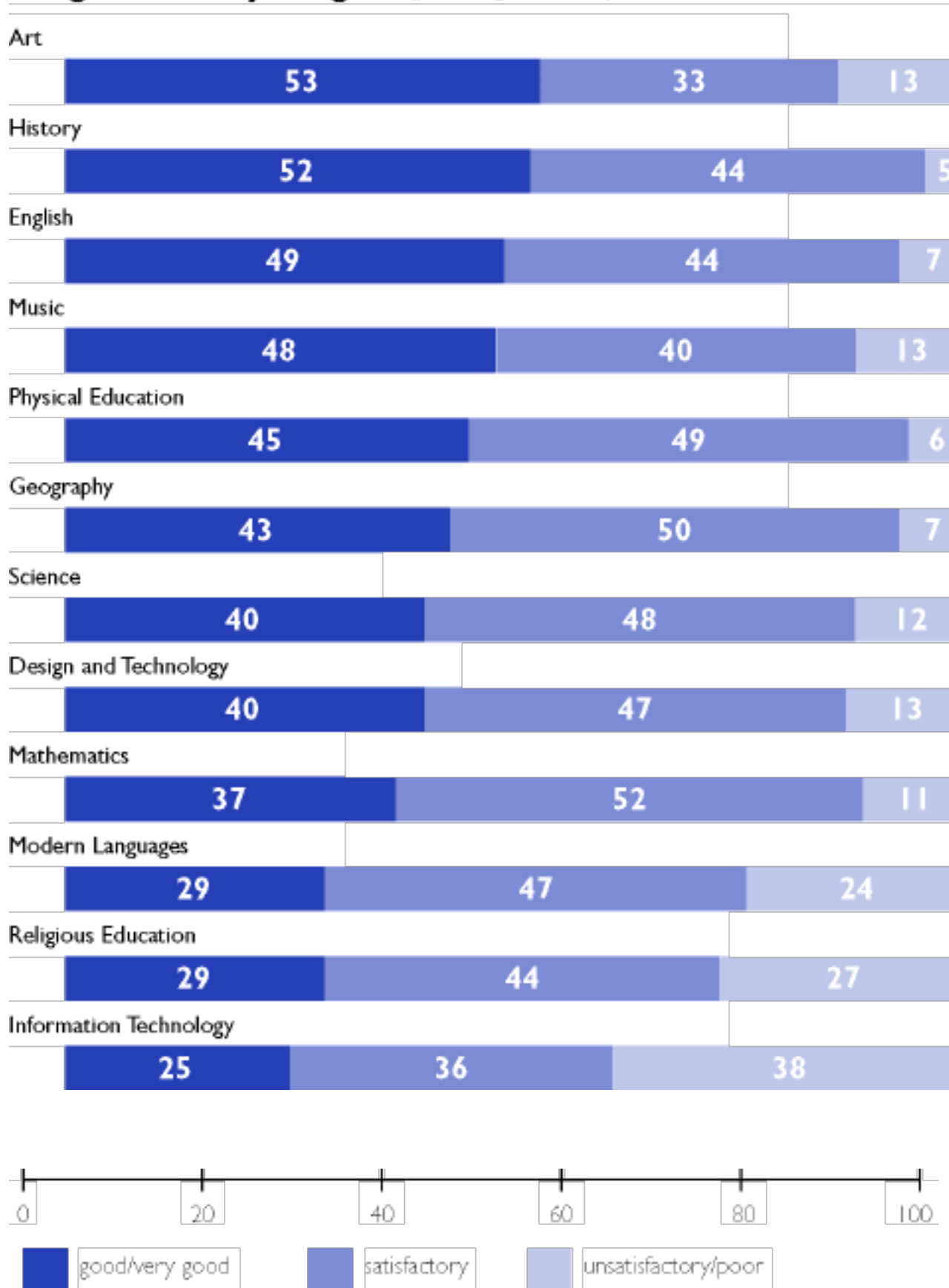
Information Technology

25

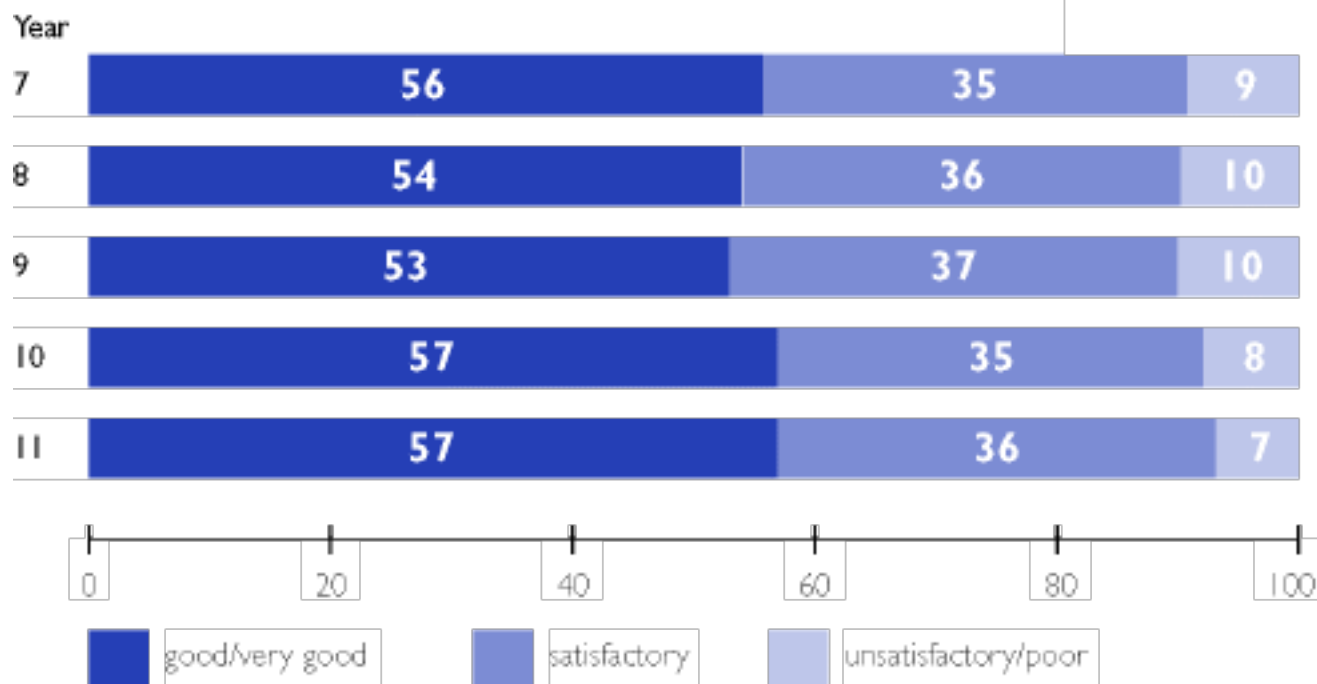
36

38

Progress in Key Stage 4 *(percentage of schools)*



These figures have been rounded and may not add up to 100 per cent

Lessons in Secondary Schools: Teaching *(percentage of lessons)*

Quality of Teaching in Secondary Schools: qualified teachers with more than one year's experience and newly qualified teachers *(percentage of lessons)*

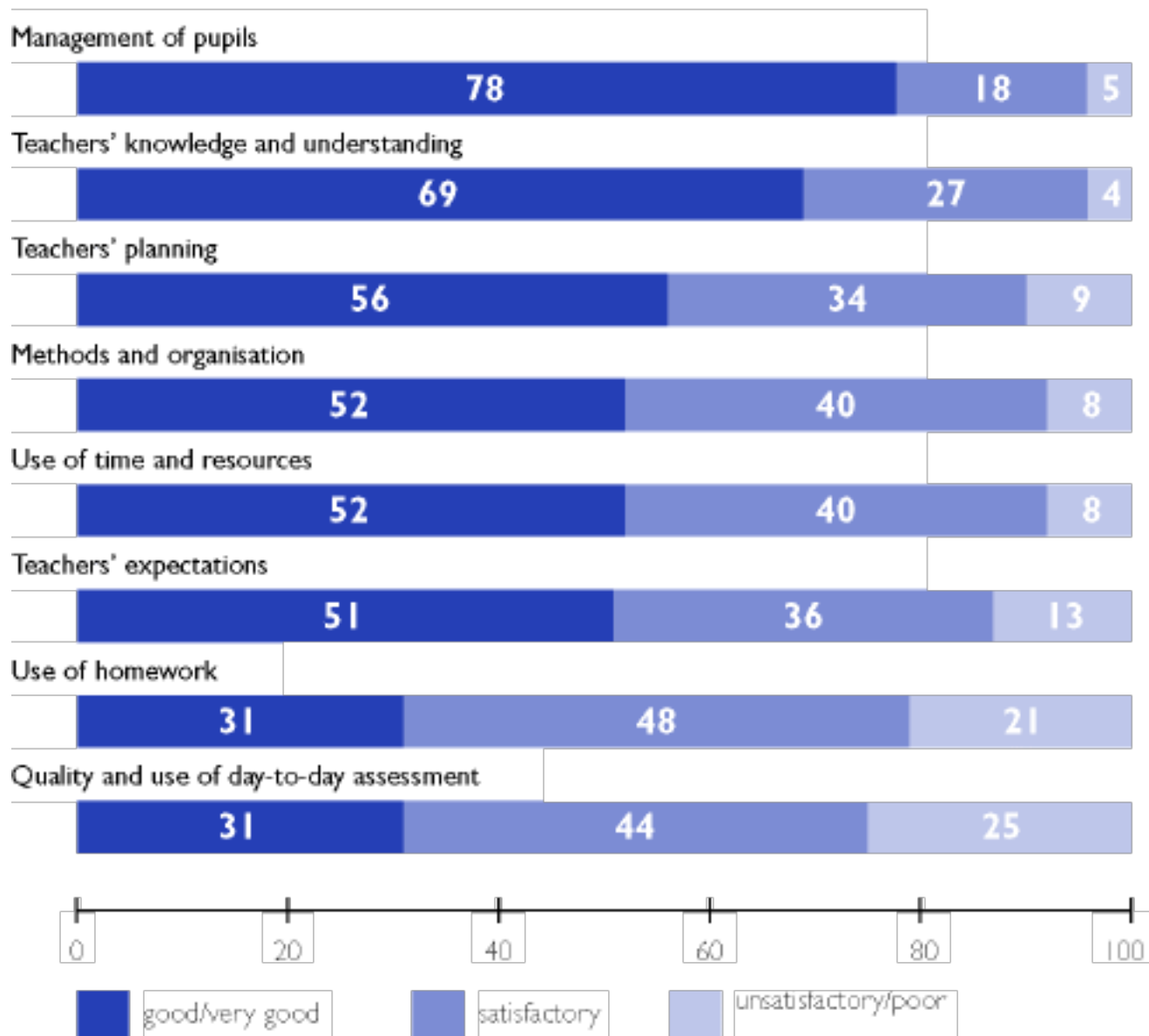
Qualified teacher with more than one year's experience



Newly qualified teacher

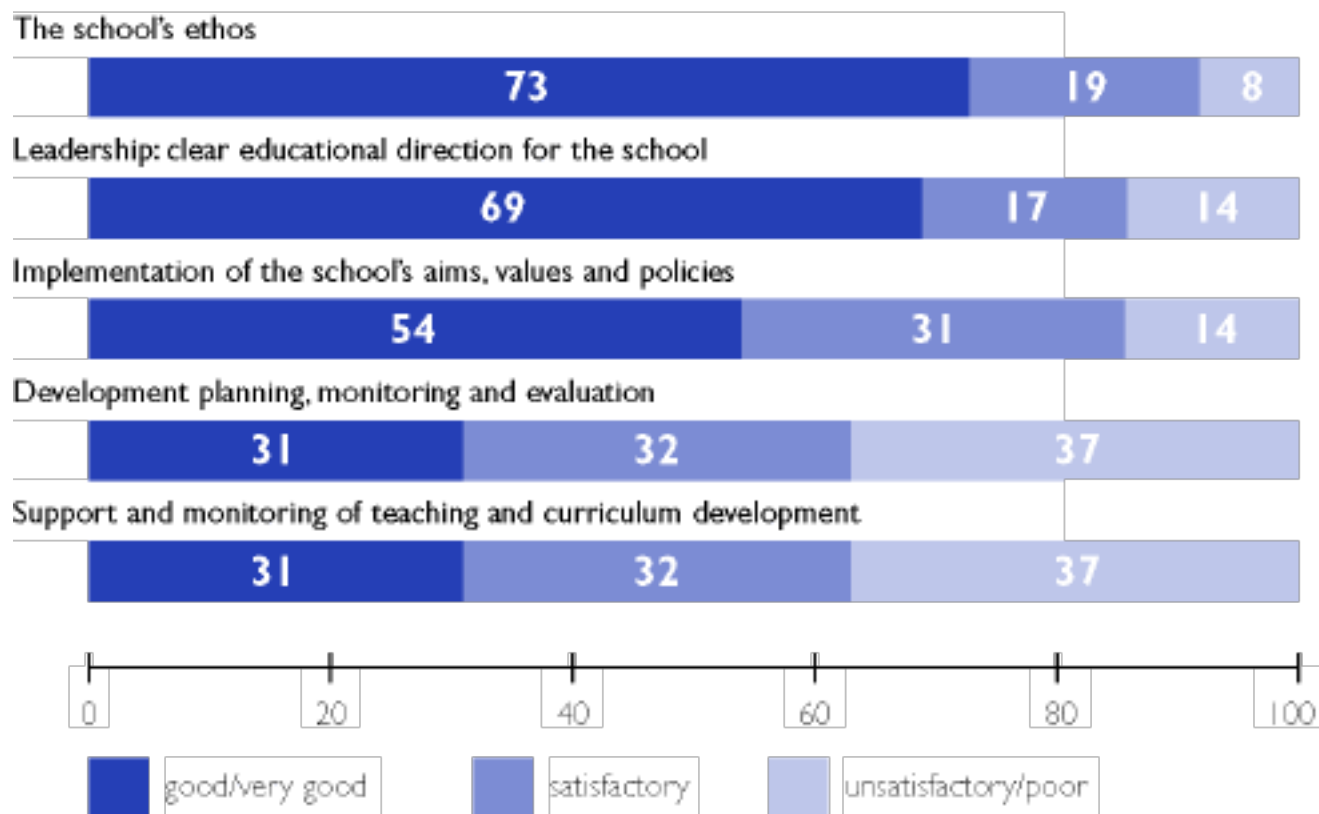


These figures have been rounded and may not add up to 100 per cent

Quality of Teaching: Key Stages 3 and 4 *(percentage of schools)*

These figures have been rounded and may not add up to 100 per cent

Leadership and Management: Secondary Schools *(percentage of schools)*



These figures have been rounded and may not add up to 100 per cent

Lessons in Sixth Forms: Progress *(percentage of lessons)*

GCE AS/A-level



GNVQ Advanced

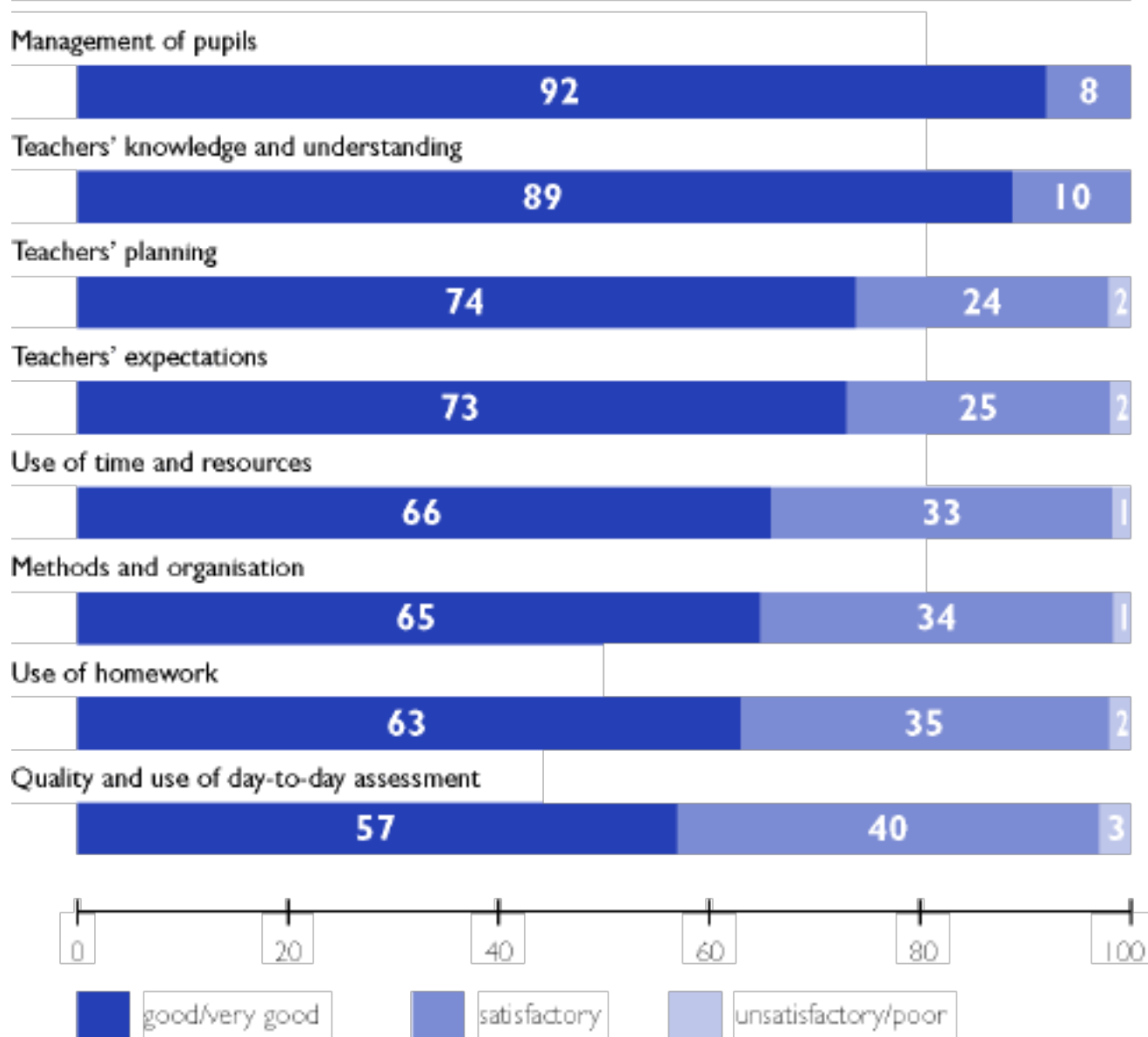


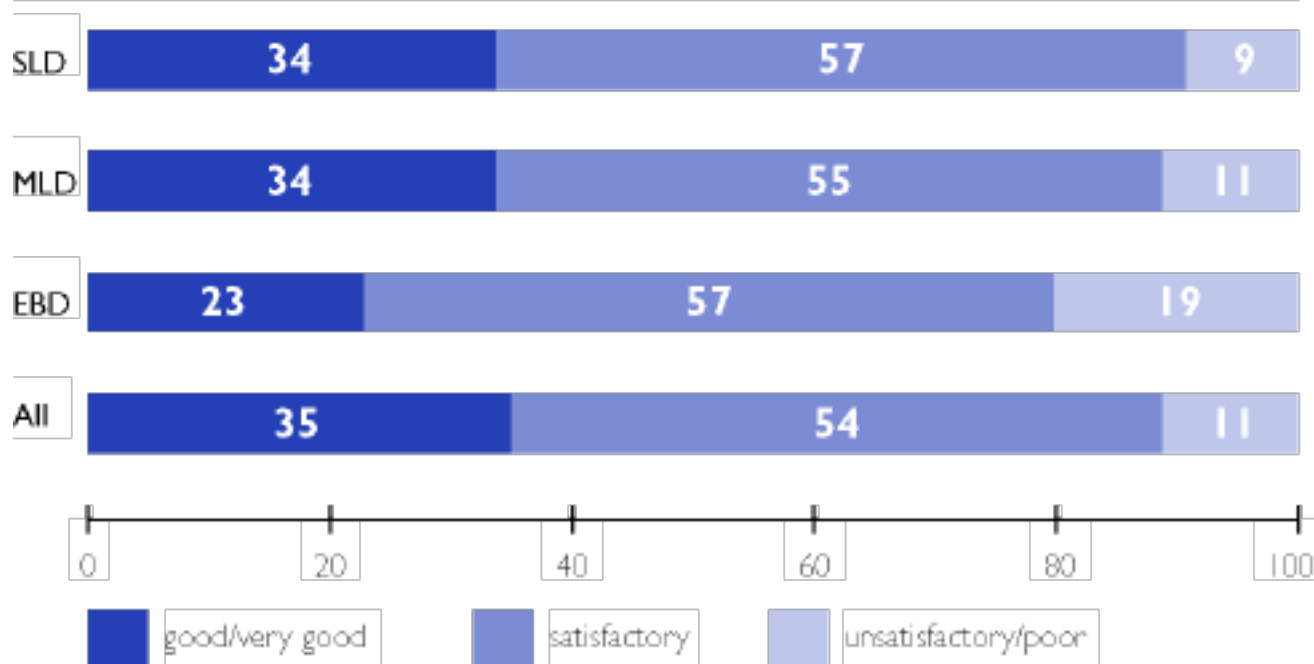
GNVQ Intermediate



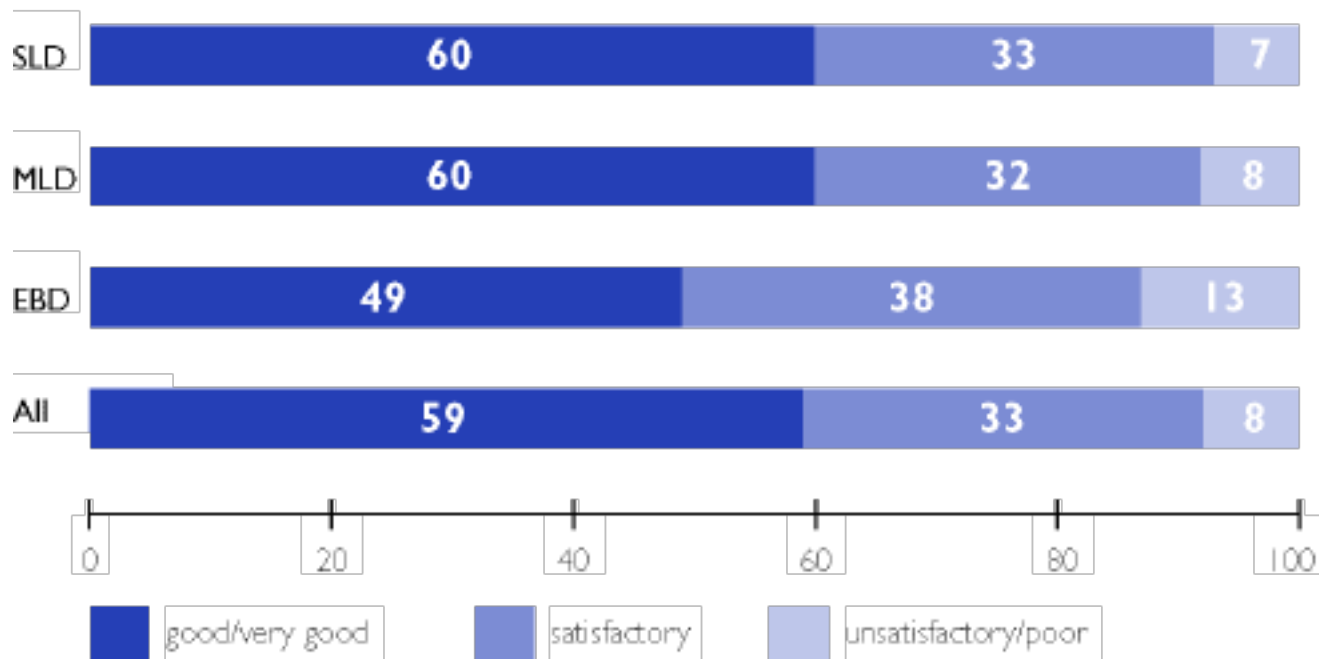
These figures have been rounded and may not add up to 100 per cent

Quality of Teaching: post-16 (percentage of schools)

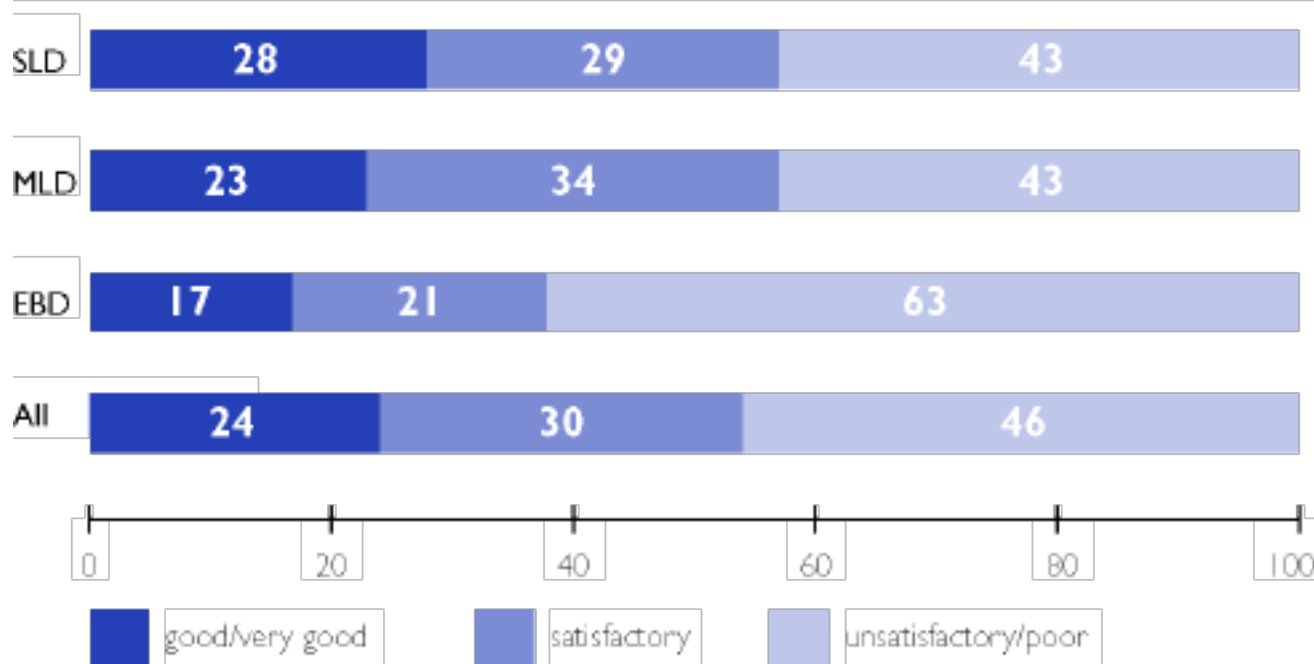


Progress in Special Schools *(percentage of schools)*

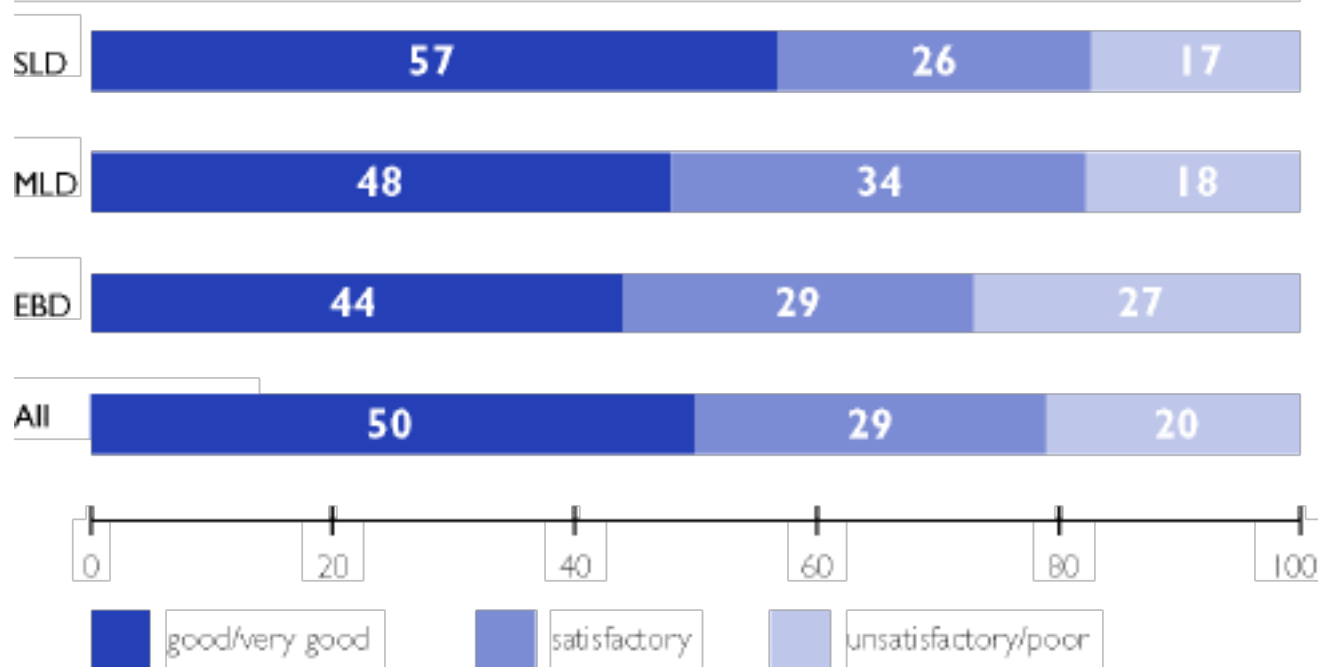
These figures have been rounded and may not add up to 100 per cent

Quality of Teaching in Special Schools *(percentage of lessons)*

These figures have been rounded and may not add up to 100 per cent

Assessment and Recording in Special Schools *(percentage of schools)*

These figures have been rounded and may not add up to 100 per cent

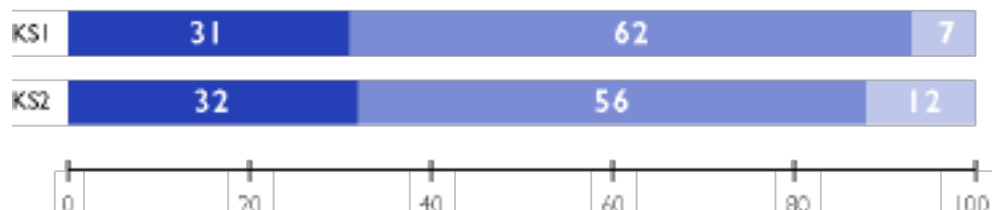
Leadership and Management in Special Schools *(percentage of schools)*

These figures have been rounded and may not add up to 100 per cent

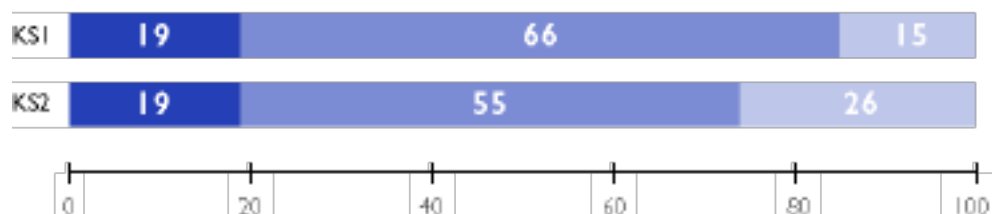
Annex 7: Statistical Summary

Progress in Primary Schools 1997/98 (percentage of schools)

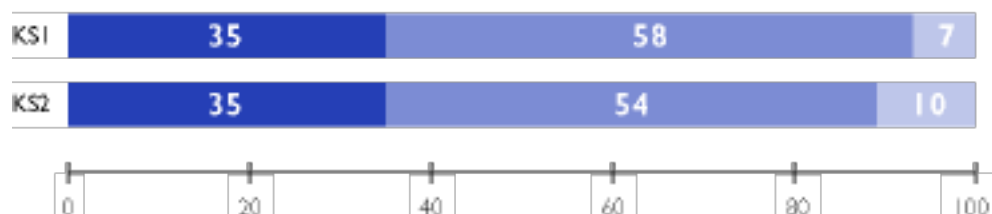
Art



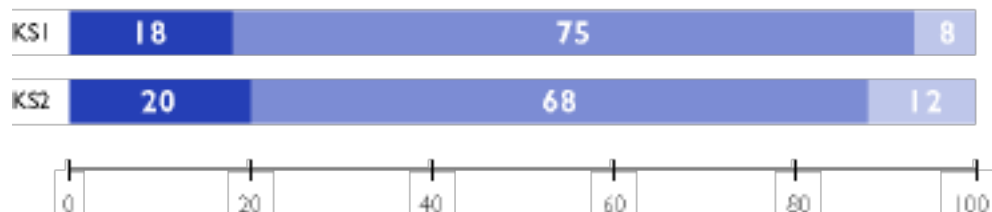
Design and Technology



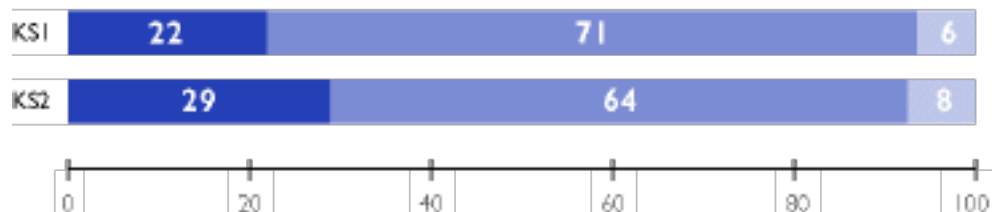
English



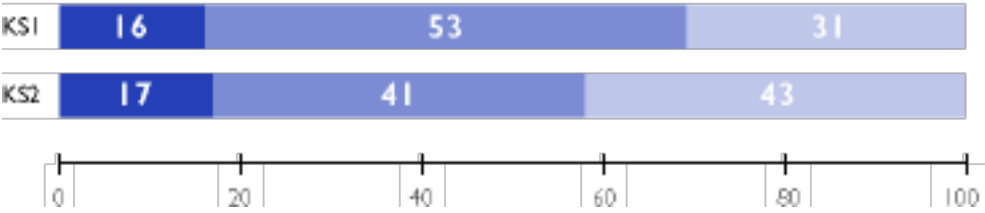
Geography



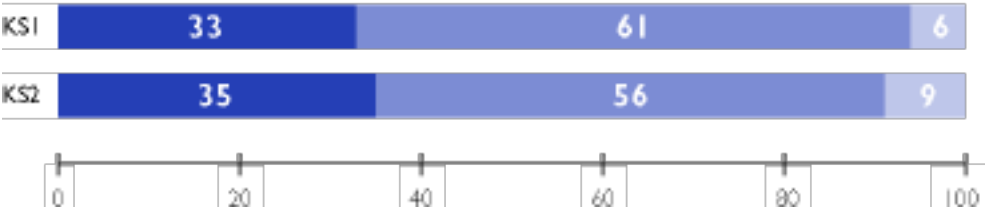
History



Information Technology



Mathematics



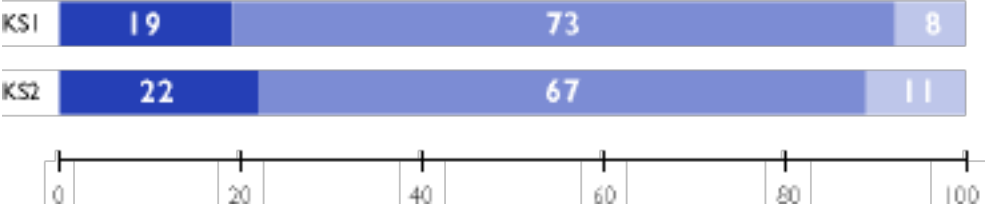
Music



Physical Education



Religious Education



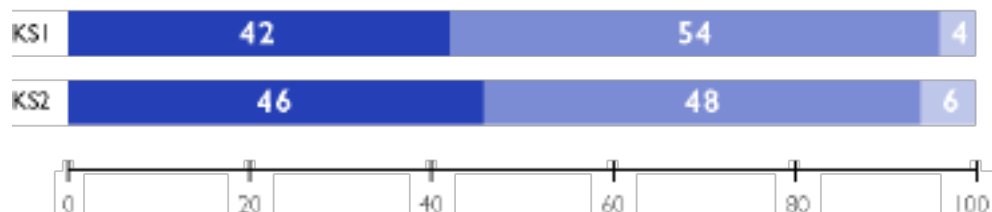
good/very good satisfactory unsatisfactory/poor

Figures have been rounded and may not add up to 100 per cent

Annex 7: Statistical Summary

Teaching in Primary Schools 1997/98 (percentage of schools)

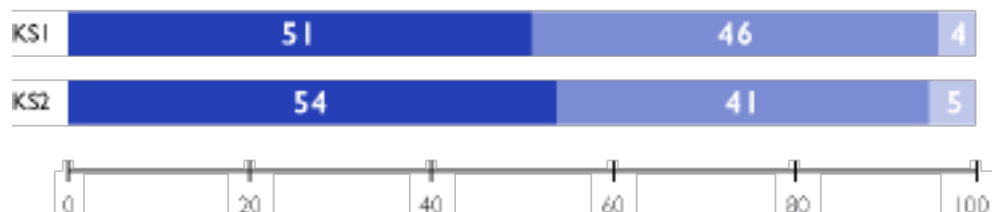
Art



Design and Technology



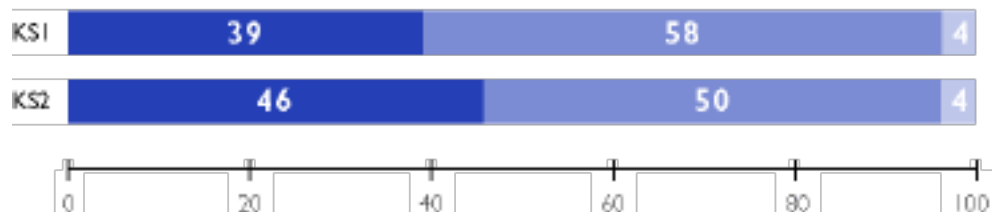
English



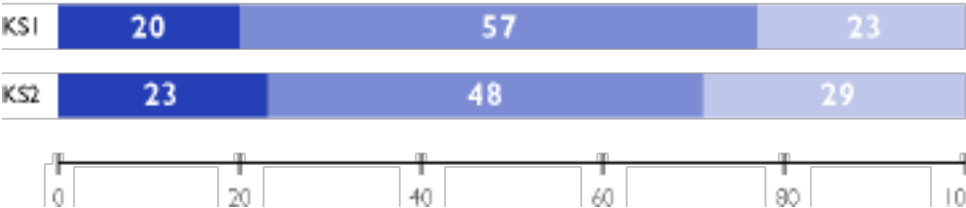
Geography



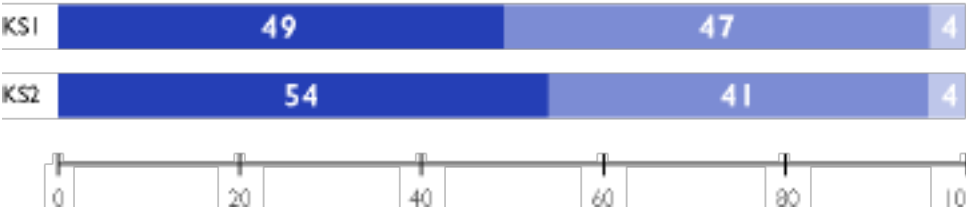
History



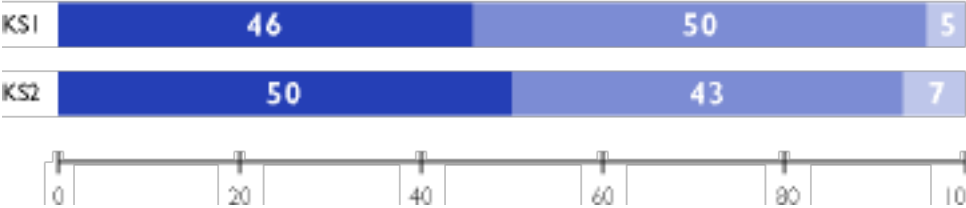
Information Technology



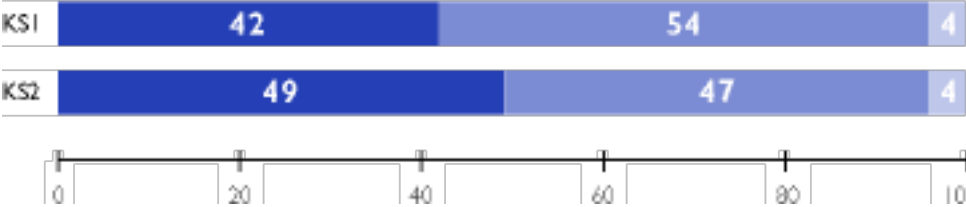
Mathematics



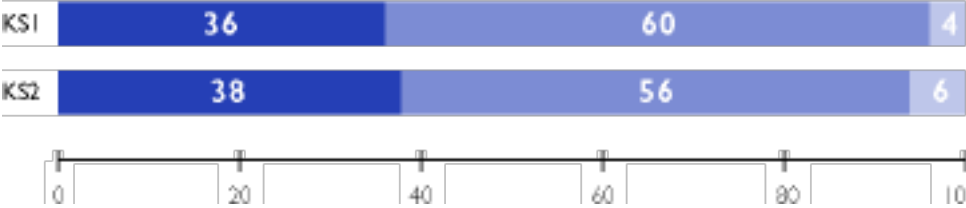
Music



Physical Education



Religious Education



Science



good/very good

satisfactory

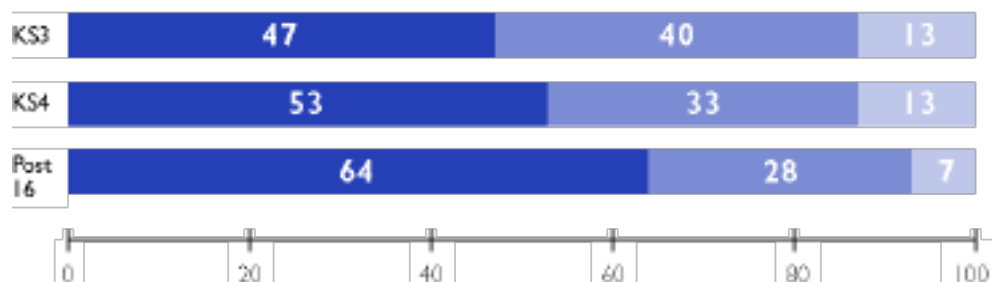
unsatisfactory/poor

Figures have been rounded and may not add up to 100 per cent

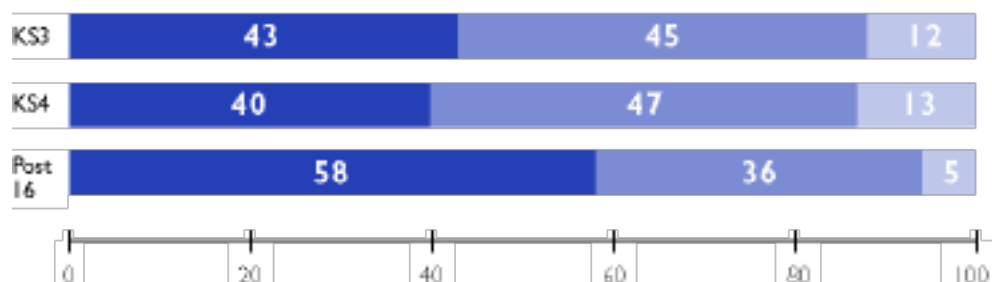
Annex 7: Statistical Summary

Progress in Secondary Schools 1997/98 (percentage of schools)

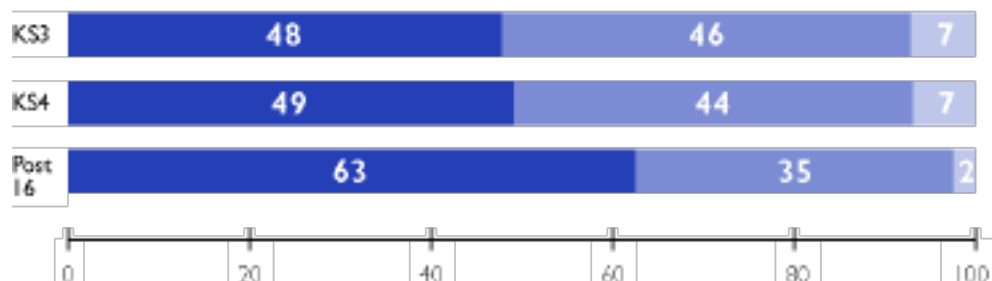
Art



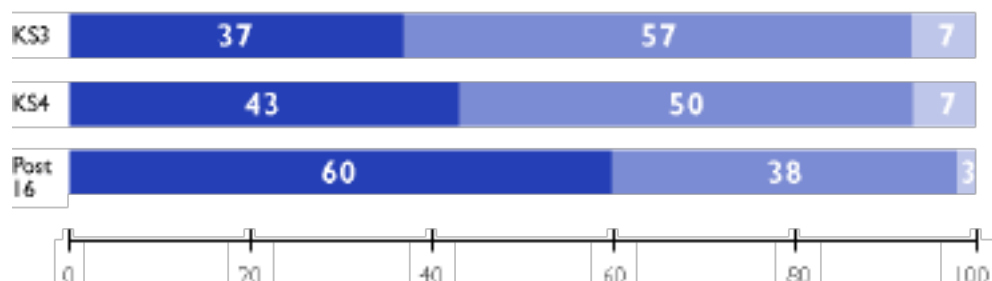
Design and Technology



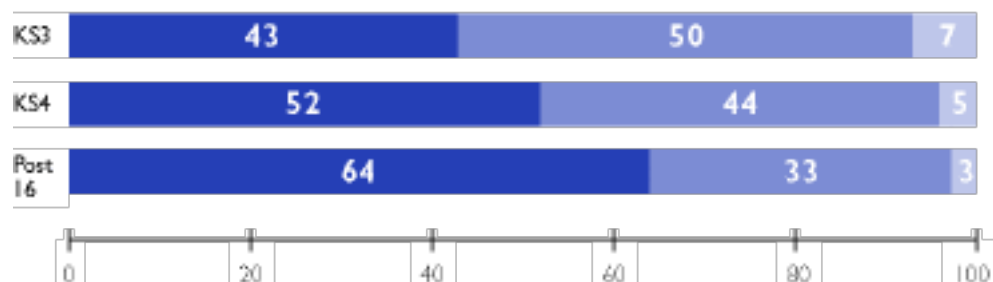
English



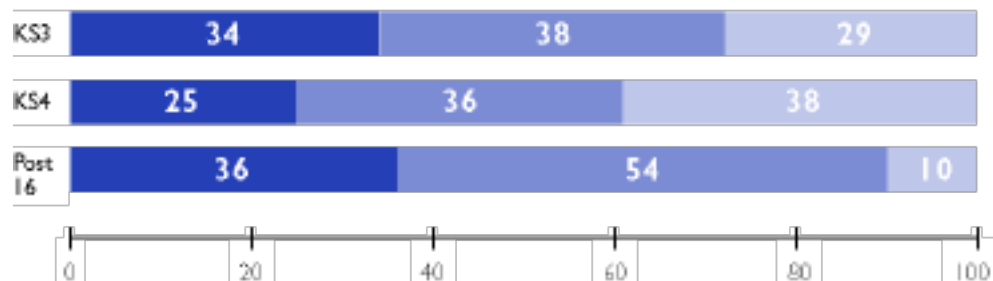
Geography



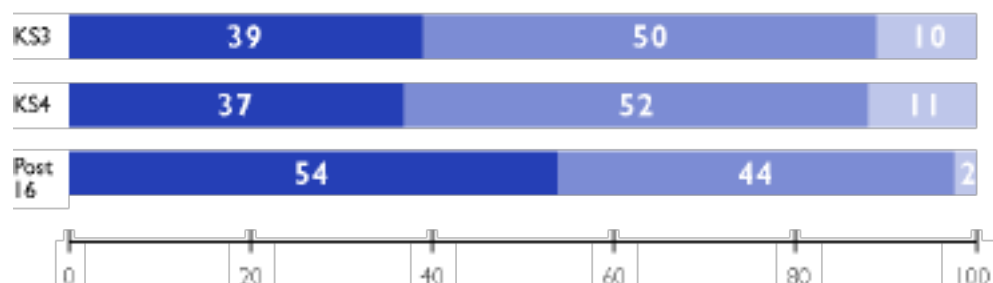
History



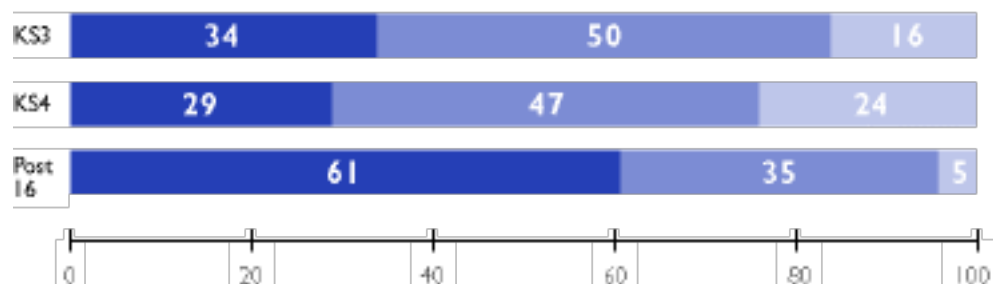
Information Technology



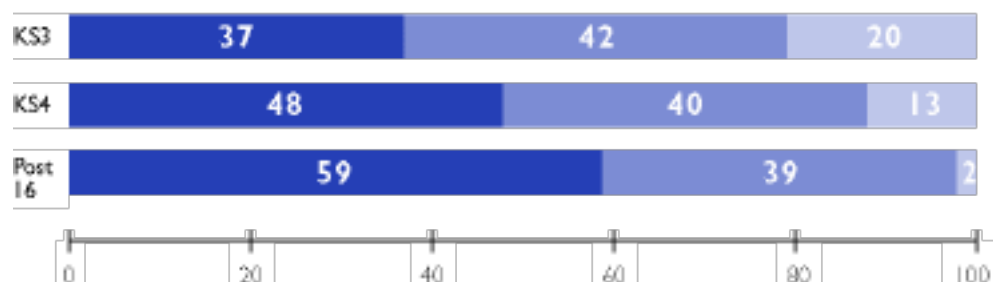
Mathematics



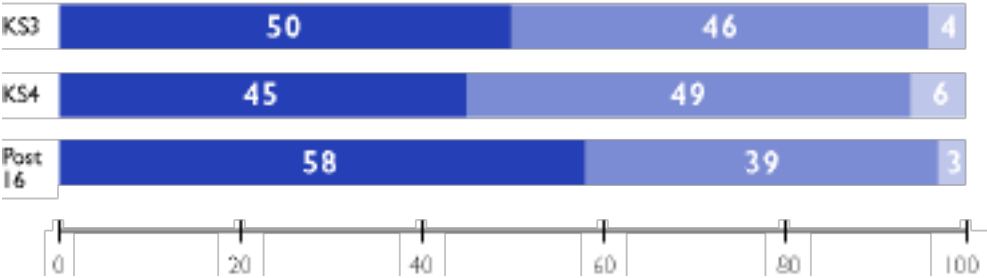
Modern Languages



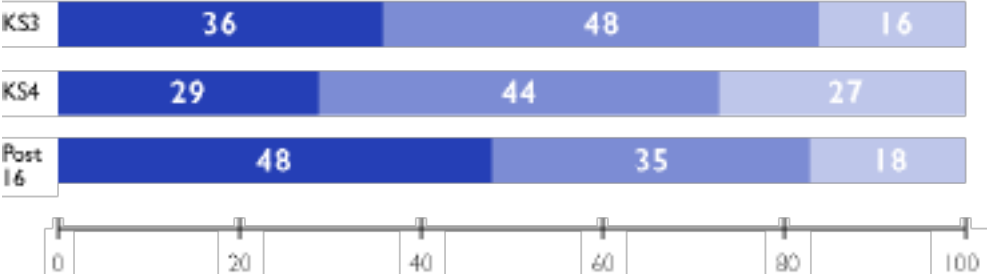
Music



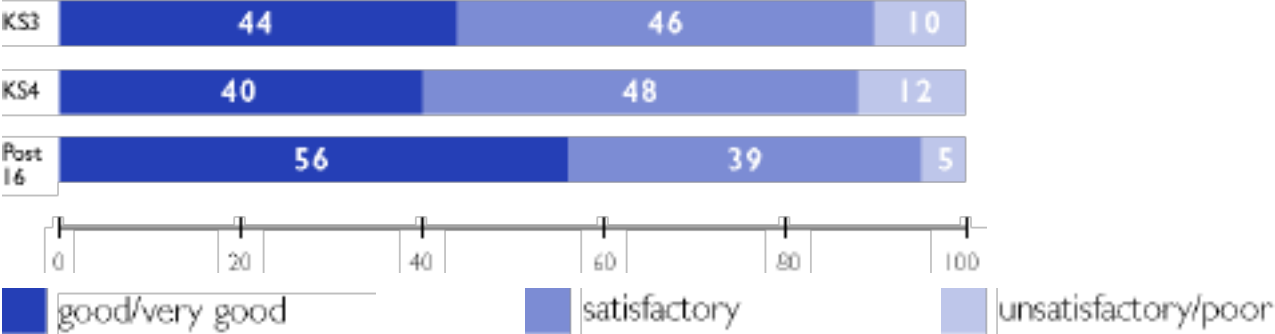
Physical Education



Religious Education



Science

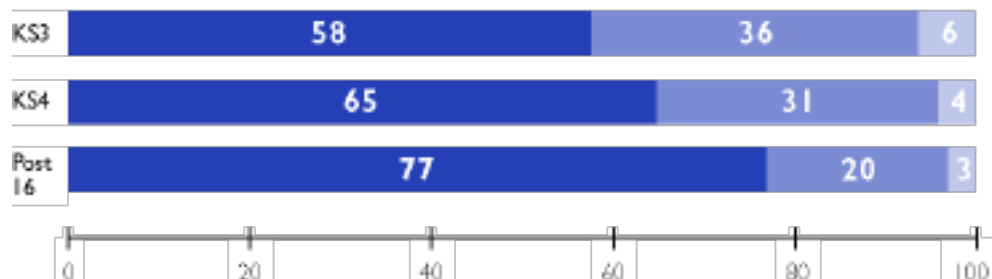


Figures have been rounded and may not add up to 100 per cent

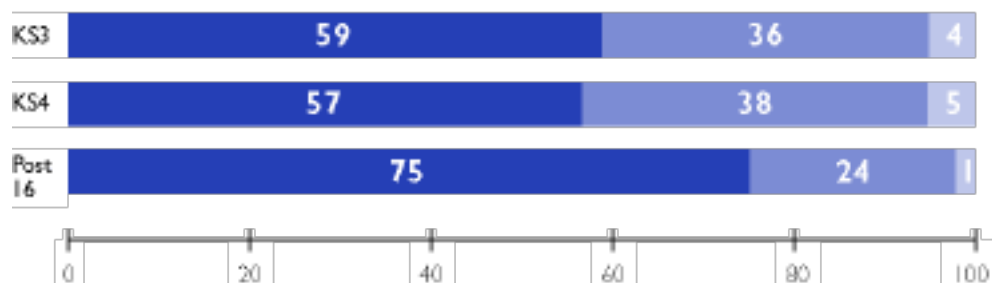
Annex 7: Statistical Summary

Teaching in Secondary Schools 1997/98

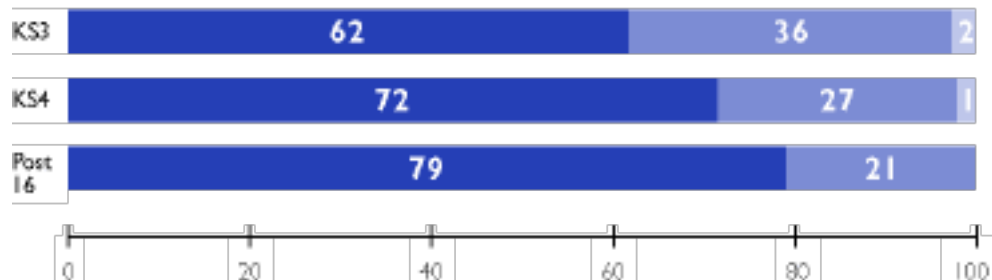
Art



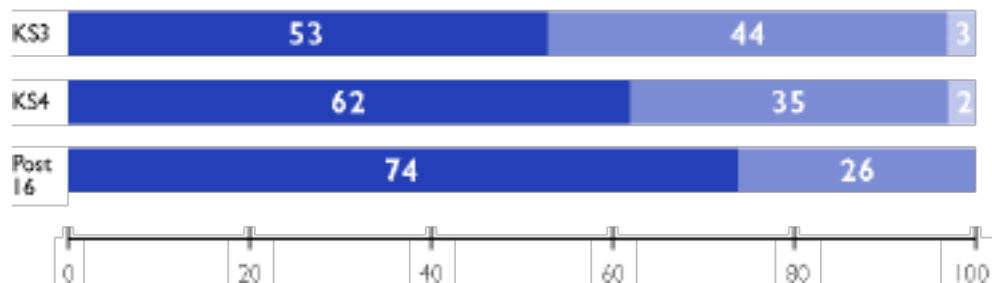
Design and Technology



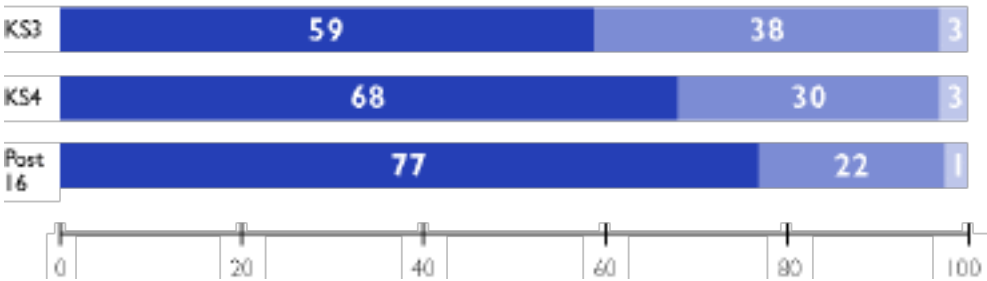
English



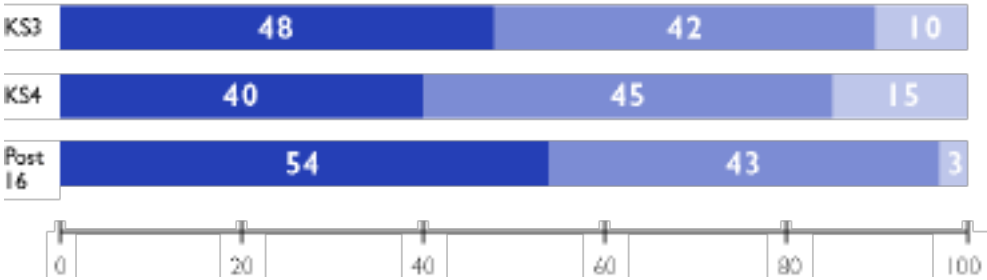
Geography



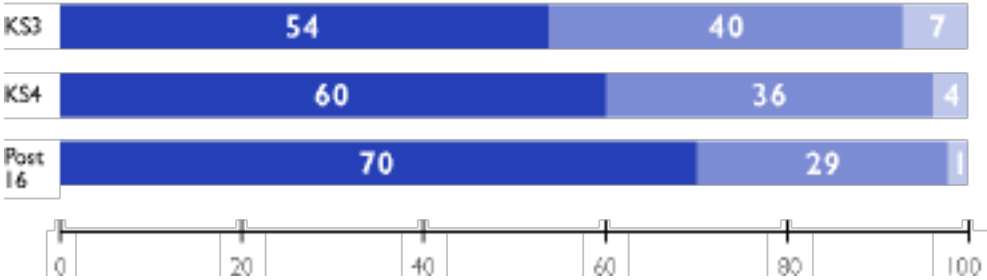
History



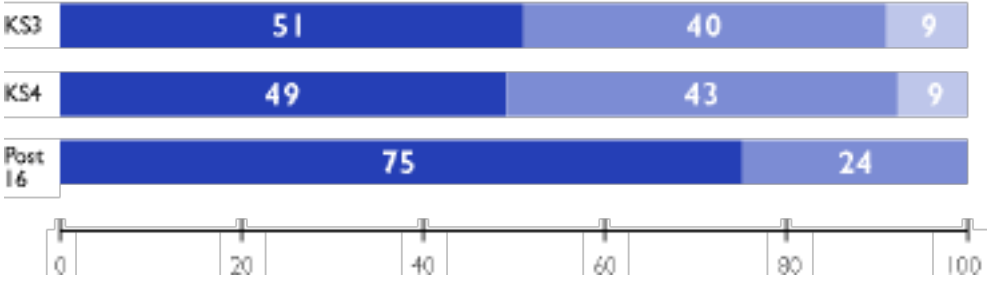
Information Technology



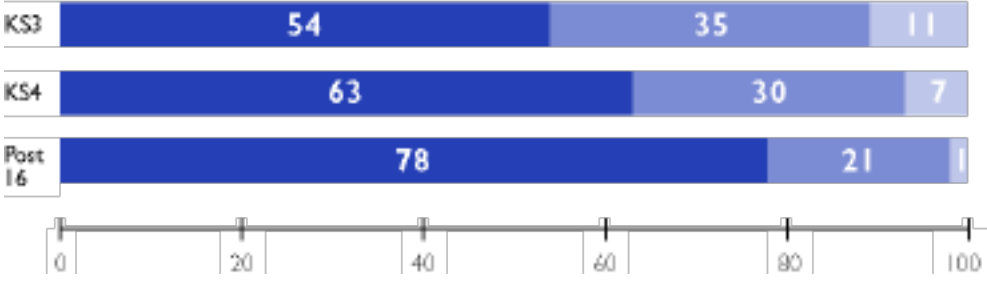
Mathematics



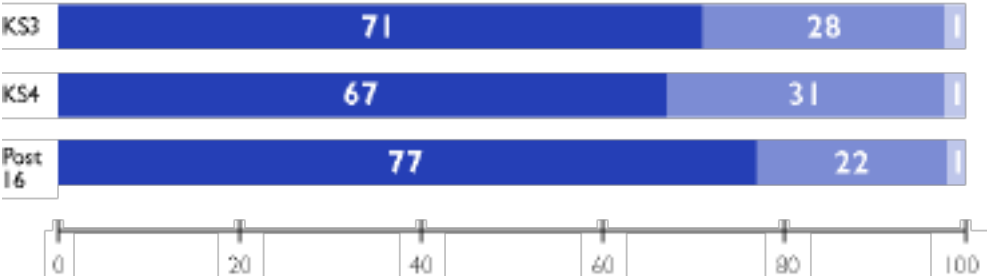
Modern Languages



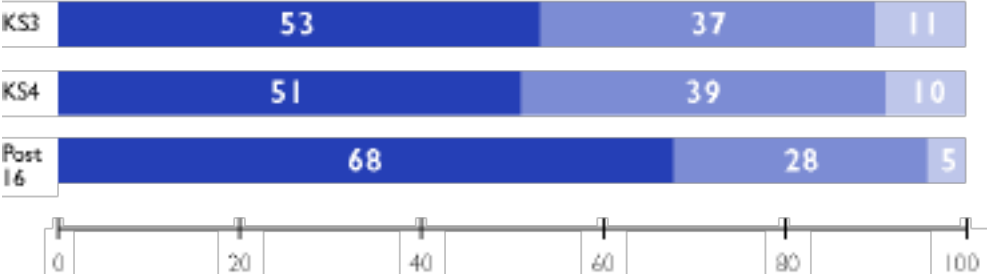
Music



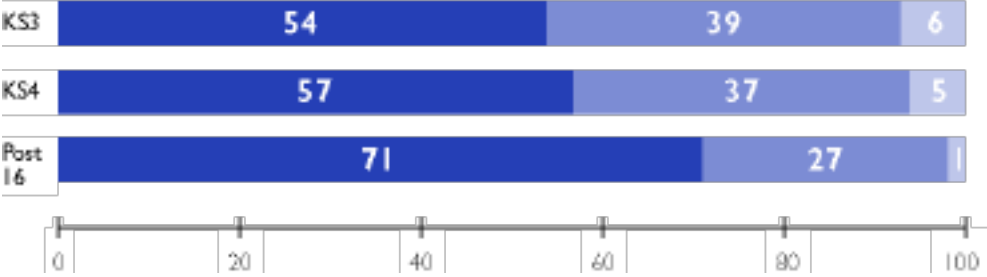
Physical Education



Religious Education



Science



good/very good satisfactory unsatisfactory/poor

Figures have been rounded and may not add up to 100 per cent

Annex 7: Statistical Summary Inspection Grades for Primary Schools - 1997/98

Aspects of the School

Percentage of Schools

	<i>Inspection grade*</i>	<i>Good/very good</i>	<i>Satisfactory</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory/poor</i>
Educational Standards Achieved				
4.1.2 Progress	Under Five	53	44	3
	Key Stage 1	30	64	7
	Key Stage 2	30	60	10
	School	32	61	7
4.1.3 Progress of pupils with SEN	Under Five	51	47	2
	Key Stage 1	50	46	4
	Key Stage 2	49	45	6
	School	51	45	5
4.2.1 Attitude		83	15	2
4.2.2 Behaviour		80	18	2
4.2.3 Relationships		88	11	1
4.2.4 Personal development		63	33	4
4.3 Attendance		51	39	9
Quality of Education				
Teaching				
5.1 Teaching	Under Five	67	28	5
	Key Stage 1	50	44	6
	Key Stage 2	53	39	7
	School	55	40	5
5.1.1 Teachers' knowledge and understanding	Under Five	65	28	7
	Key Stage 1	46	49	5
	Key Stage 2	47	46	6
5.1.2 Teachers' expectations	Under Five	64	29	7
	Key Stage 1	42	44	14
	Key Stage 2	43	41	16
5.1.3 Teachers' planning	Under Five	61	29	10
	Key Stage 1	48	39	13
	Key Stage 2	47	39	14
5.1.4 Methods and organisation	Under Five	64	28	9
	Key Stage 1	51	40	8
	Key Stage 2	54	39	7
5.1.5 Management of pupils	Under Five	81	16	2
	Key Stage 1	71	24	5
	Key Stage 2	72	23	5
5.1.6 Use of time and resources	Under Five	63	31	6
	Key Stage 1	48	43	9

	Key Stage 2	51	41	8
5.1.7 Quality and use of day-to-day assessment	Under Five	55	34	12
	Key Stage 1	31	43	26
	Key Stage 2	29	41	30
Aspects of the School	Percentage of Schools			
	<i>Inspection grade*</i>	<i>Good/very good</i>	<i>Satisfactory</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory/poor</i>
5.1.8 Use of homework	Under Five	36	62	2
	Key Stage 1	23	68	8
	Key Stage 2	24	57	19
Curriculum				
5.2 The curriculum	Under Five	53	39	8
	Key Stage 1	33	55	12
	Key Stage 2	30	53	17
	School	32	54	14
5.2.1 Breadth, balance, relevance of the whole curriculum	Under Five	53	38	10
	Key Stage 1	32	56	11
	Key Stage 2	30	55	15
5.2.2 Equality of access and opportunity	Under Five	53	43	4
	Key Stage 1	43	51	6
	Key Stage 2	41	51	8
5.2.3 Provision for pupils with SEN	Under Five	62	35	2
	Key Stage 1	62	34	5
	Key Stage 2	60	34	6
5.2.4 Planning for progression and continuity	Under Five	48	37	15
	Key Stage 1	29	39	32
	Key Stage 2	26	37	37
5.2.5 Provision for extra-curricular activities, including sport		53	36	11
5.2.6 Careers education and guidance		68	24	8
Assessment				
5.X Assessment	Under Five	47	39	15
	Key Stage 1	25	36	39
	Key Stage 2	21	35	44
	School	24	36	40
5.2.7 Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment	Under Five	54	38	8
	Key Stage 1	33	43	25
	Key Stage 2	29	43	28
5.2.8 Use of assessment to inform curriculum planning	Under Five	45	37	18
	Key Stage 1	23	33	45
	Key Stage 2	20	31	49
Spiritual, Moral, Social, and Cultural Development				
5.3 Provision for pupils' SMSC development		70	28	2
5.3.1 Pupils' spiritual development		48	43	9
5.3.2 Pupils' moral development		83	16	1

5.3.3 Pupils' social development	80	18	2
5.3.4 Pupils' cultural development	48	44	8
Support, Guidance and Pupils' Welfare			
5.4 Support, guidance and pupils' welfare	66	30	4
5.4.1 Procedures for monitoring progress and personal development	43	44	13
5.4.2 Procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour	79	17	4

Aspects of the School

Percentage of Schools

	<i>Inspection grade*</i>	<i>Good/very good</i>	<i>Satisfactory</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory/poor</i>
5.4.3 Procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance	65	28	8	
5.4.4 Procedures for child protection and promoting pupils' well-being, health and safety	58	33	9	
Partnership with Parents and the Community				
5.5 Partnership with parents and the community	61	34	5	
5.5.1 Quality of information for parents	55	36	9	
5.5.2 Parental involvement in children's learning	56	35	9	
5.5.3 Enrichment through links with community	64	32	4	

Management and Efficiency

Leadership and Management

6.1 Leadership and management	54	33	13
6.1.1 Leadership: clear educational direction for the school	62	25	13
6.1.2 Support and monitoring of teaching and curriculum development	32	33	36
6.1.3 Implementation of the school's aims, values and policies	58	33	9
6.1.4 Development planning, monitoring and evaluation	38	35	27
6.1.5 The school's ethos	76	20	4

Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources

6.2 Staffing, accommodation and learning resources	36	60	4
6.2.1 Match of number, qualification and experience of teachers to the demand of the curriculum	35	63	3
6.2.2 Match of number, qualification and experience of support staff to the demand of the curriculum	55	41	5
6.2.3 Arrangements for professional development of all staff	42	43	15
6.2.4 Adequacy of accommodation for effective delivery of the curriculum	46	43	11
6.2.5 Adequacy of resources (including books/materials/equipment) for effective delivery of the curriculum	28	62	10

Efficiency of the School

6.3	Efficiency	56	38	6
6.3.1	Financial planning	52	34	13
6.3.2	Use of teaching and support staff	54	39	7
6.3.3	Use of learning resources and accommodation	53	43	4
6.3.4	Efficiency of financial control and school administration	74	23	3
6.4	Value for money	42	50	8

* As explained in Annex 2, Good/very good includes grades 1-3, Satisfactory is grade 4, and Unsatisfactory/poor includes grades 5-7.

Figures have been rounded and may not add up to 100 per cent

Annex 7: Statistical Summary

Inspection Grades for Secondary Schools - 1997/98

Aspects of the School

Percentage of Schools

	<i>Inspection grade*</i>	<i>Good/very good</i>	<i>Satisfactory</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory/poor</i>
Educational Standards Achieved				
4.1.2 Progress	Key Stage 3	41	50	9
	Key Stage 4	38	54	8
	Post 16	59	39	2
	School	42	50	8
4.1.3 Progress of pupils with SEN	Key Stage 3	47	45	8
	Key Stage 4	41	50	9
	Post 16	48	49	2
	School	43	49	8
4.2.1 Attitude		75	20	5
4.2.2 Behaviour		72	22	6
4.2.3 Relationships		85	13	2
4.2.4 Personal development		62	30	8
4.3 Attendance		44	25	31
Quality of Education				
Teaching				
5.1 Teaching	Key Stage 3	61	32	7
	Key Stage 4	66	30	4
	Post 16	82	18	0
	School	67	28	5
5.1.1 Teachers' knowledge and understanding	Key Stage 3	80	19	1
	Key Stage 4	83	16	1
	Post 16	89	10	0
5.1.2 Teachers' expectations	Key Stage 3	48	38	14
	Key Stage 4	50	39	11
	Post 16	73	25	2
5.1.3 Teachers' planning	Key Stage 3	62	32	6
	Key Stage 4	65	31	4
	Post 16	74	24	2
5.1.4 Methods and organisation	Key Stage 3	50	42	8
	Key Stage 4	52	42	6
	Post16	65	34	1
5.1.5 Management of pupils	Key Stage 3	80	15	5
	Key Stage 4	80	17	4
	Post16	92	8	0
5.1.6 Use of time and resources	Key Stage 3	51	43	7
	Key Stage 4	53	42	5

	Post 16	66	33	1
5.1.7 Quality and use of day-to-day assessment	Key Stage 3	27	50	23
	Key Stage 4	33	51	16
	Post 16	57	40	3
Aspects of the School	Percentage of Schools			
	<i>Inspection grade*</i>	<i>Good/very good</i>	<i>Satisfactory</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory/poor</i>
5.1.8 Use of homework	Key Stage 3	36	49	14
	Key Stage 4	39	51	11
	Post 16	63	35	1
Curriculum				
5.2 The curriculum	Key Stage 3	38	49	13
	Key Stage 4	30	52	18
	Post 16	50	44	6
	School	34	52	14
5.2.1 Breadth, balance, relevance of the whole curriculum	Key Stage 3	38	47	14
	Key Stage 4	29	47	24
	Post 16	52	36	12
5.2.2 Equality of access and opportunity	Key Stage 3	48	42	11
	Key Stage 4	40	42	18
	Post 16	57	38	5
5.2.3 Provision for pupils with SEN	Key Stage 3	54	31	15
	Key Stage 4	45	40	16
	Post 16	47	49	4
5.2.4 Planning for progression and continuity	Key Stage 3	33	49	18
	Key Stage 4	37	50	13
	Post 16	55	41	3
5.2.5 Provision for extra-curricular activities, including sport		75	21	4
5.2.6 Careers education and guidance		65	32	3
Assessment				
5.X Assessment	Key Stage 3	25	48	27
	Key Stage 4	31	50	19
	Post 16	50	46	4
	School	28	50	21
5.2.7 Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment	Key Stage 3	39	43	18
	Key Stage 4	47	43	10
	Post 16	65	33	2
5.2.8 Use of assessment to inform curriculum planning	Key Stage 3	17	43	40
	Key Stage 4	23	47	30
	Post 16	41	49	9
Spiritual, Moral, Social, and Cultural Development				
5.3 Provision for pupils' SMSC development		55	36	8
5.3.1 Pupils' spiritual development		22	35	43
5.3.2 Pupils' moral development		80	18	2

5.3.3 Pupils' social development	77	20	3
5.3.4 Pupils' cultural development	48	39	13

Support, Guidance and Pupils' Welfare

5.4 Support, guidance and pupils' welfare	69	25	6
5.4.1 Procedures for monitoring progress and personal development	55	35	11
5.4.2 Procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour	78	16	6

Aspects of the School

Percentage of Schools

	<i>Inspection grade*</i>	<i>Good/very good</i>	<i>Satisfactory</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory/poor</i>
5.4.3 Procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance	67	22	11	
5.4.4 Procedures for child protection and promoting pupils' well-being, health and safety	54	33	13	

Partnership with Parents and the Community

5.5 Partnership with parents and the community	55	39	6
5.5.1 Quality of information for parents	52	40	8
5.5.2 Parental involvement in children's learning	39	43	18
5.5.3 Enrichment through links with community	68	28	5

Management and Efficiency

Leadership and Management

6.1 Leadership and management	54	29	17
6.1.1 Leadership: clear educational direction for the school	69	17	14
6.1.2 Support and monitoring of teaching and curriculum development	31	32	37
6.1.3 Implementation of the school's aims, values and policies	54	31	14
6.1.4 Development planning, monitoring and evaluation	31	32	37
6.1.5 The school's ethos	73	19	8

Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources

6.2 Staffing, accommodation and learning resources	28	56	16
6.2.1 Match of number, qualification and experience of teachers to the demand of the curriculum	55	38	7
6.2.2 Match of number, qualification and experience of support staff to the demand of the curriculum	42	43	15
6.2.3 Arrangements for professional development of all staff	37	37	26
6.2.4 Adequacy of accommodation for effective delivery of the curriculum	31	49	20
6.2.5 Adequacy of resources (including books/materials/equipment) for effective delivery of the curriculum	20	53	27

Efficiency of the School

6.3	Efficiency	58	33	8
6.3.1	Financial planning	58	25	17
6.3.2	Use of teaching and support staff	52	37	11
6.3.3	Use of learning resources and accommodation	56	39	5
6.3.4	Efficiency of financial control and school administration	81	16	3
6.4	Value for money	49	41	10

* As explained in Annex 2, Good/very good includes grades 1-3, Satisfactory is grade 4, and Unsatisfactory/poor includes grades 5-7.

Figures have been rounded and may not add up to 100 per cent

