

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

Standards and  
Quality in Education  
1996/97

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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February 1998

*Dear David,*

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

The report is 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.

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

**Chris Woodhead**

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## *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 1996/97 Section 10 inspections provide evidence on the standards, quality and efficiency of over one-quarter of our primary, secondary and special schools. HMI have focused their inspections on developments such as courses leading to General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs) and important matters such as the education of pupils with special educational needs, adult education and youth work, teacher education and training and the work of local education authorities (LEAs).

The Report also takes into account OFSTED commissioned research. In our report on the teaching of number in three LEAs we combined inspection findings with the results of tests constructed by the University of Leeds' School of Education.

In 1996 the Framework for inspection was revised and significant changes were made to the way in which lessons are graded by inspectors and the way in which standards achieved by pupils are judged. In addition there were some changes in the criteria used by inspectors to judge other aspects of the quality and efficiency of schools. While this has improved the quality of inspection, it makes precise comparisons with previous years impossible. For this reason my report this year contains few such comparisons.

Full details of the evidence base are given in [Annex 2](#).

As last year, I am identifying a number of schools which, as well as achieving high examination performance in comparison with schools in similar circumstances, are shown by inspection to be providing a good quality of education and delivering 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 both good and improving, given the circumstances of the particular school.

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 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.

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.

## *Commentary*

The progress I described in my last Report continued through 1996-97. There has been some improvement in National Curriculum test results at Key Stage 1 and, in particular, at Key Stage 2, where for example, the proportion of pupils reaching Level 4 in mathematics has risen from 54 to 62 per cent. GCSE and GCE A-level results have also continued to improve. Changes to inspection procedures make exact comparisons with last year's inspection findings impossible, but there is clear evidence that more teachers are teaching more effectively. Inspectors judged the quality of teaching to be good or better in almost half of lessons, and less than satisfactory in one in eight lessons. Given the widespread media coverage when things do go wrong, it is also worth stressing that the vast majority of schools are safe and orderly places. Only 0.04 per cent of primary and 0.34 per cent of secondary school pupils are permanently excluded from school. Attendance figures in most schools are above 90 per cent. Pupils generally have a positive attitude to school and behaviour is judged to be unsatisfactory in three per cent of primary and five per cent of secondary schools.

Perhaps most encouraging of all, the culture, as I noted in my last Report, continues to change. Teachers rightly expect parents and politicians to recognise the real achievement listed in the previous paragraph. On occasion, they feel that those who comment on education fail to appreciate the extent to which some teachers have, on a day-to-day basis, to deal with the tragic consequences of family breakdown, long-term unemployment, and poor housing. Conversely, there is now a recognition that parents have a right to know what is happening in schools, that standards in some schools have for too long been unacceptably low, and that standards generally must rise if we are as a nation to have any hope of competing economically in the 21st century. There is, moreover, an understanding that schools must take responsibility for their own performance. Some schools in the most difficult of circumstances are achieving excellent results. Their success is making it ever more difficult for less successful schools to blame failure on factors beyond the school's control. There is a way yet to go, but the climate is changing.

The fact that the teacher unions agreed to the government's new procedures for the dismissal of incompetent teachers is one highly significant manifestation of this change. Four years ago the idea that any teacher might be incompetent was dismissed as a ludicrous, right-wing plot. Nobody now tries to defend the indefensible.

The evidence displayed in this Report suggests that the drive to raise standards should focus on four issues in particular.

There is, first, the need to raise standards in literacy and numeracy. If primary school teachers fail to teach a child to read, they are denying that child access to all further education and training. A boy or girl who leaves primary school unable to deal with the demands of the secondary school curriculum is a boy or girl who is likely to misbehave and truant and whose long-term employment prospects are bleak. The roots of social exclusion lie for many in the early years of primary education. The government is absolutely right, therefore, to set its demanding but realisable targets for literacy and numeracy and is to be congratulated on its comprehensive and systematic approach to raising standards in these basic skills.

Second, in both primary and secondary schools there is too much variation in the performance of schools with broadly similar intakes of pupils. This is true both of inner-city schools serving disadvantaged communities and schools in leafy suburbs which draw their pupils from affluent homes. The problem in each case is the same: expectations are too low, complacency and/or defensiveness is rife. Put bluntly, education remains too much of a lottery. Some children have access to wonderful state education; others, through an accident of geography, do not. It is naïve to pretend that the achievement of all schools can be raised to that of the best, but the gap at present is too wide. There is a key message here for headteachers and their governing bodies, and, given the new role which the government envisages for Local Education Authorities (LEAs), also for elected members and their Chief Education Officers.

Third, in about one in ten schools at Key Stage 1, one in eight at Key Stage 2, one in ten at Key Stage 3 and one in fourteen at Key Stage 4 there is substantial underachievement. Urgent action is needed to improve levels of attainment in these schools. In that their resources are finite, there is, again, an important message for LEAs.

Fourth, there are significant differences in the achievement of boys and girls, particularly at GCSE, where the average points score for girls is 39.2 compared with 34.7 for boys. This gap in achievement shows no signs of narrowing. Boys' relatively poor performance is often linked to weaknesses in their basic skills and a lack of commitment to school. Primary schools need, in particular, to develop a structured approach to the teaching of basic skills. Secondary schools for their part must make every effort to combat an anti-achievement culture which can develop in Key Stage 3, alienating some boys from all academic work.

There is no doubt that if standards of pupil attainment are to be raised, then the quality of teaching must be the focus of everyone's efforts. Every government initiative ought to be tested against this key imperative. Will it help teachers teach better or might it distract them from their key task? This must always be the question. So, too, at the level of the LEA and the individual school. Children will learn more when teachers teach better.

Teachers are, as I have already noted, teaching better. In primary schools, we are seeing more challenging direct teaching, often to the whole class, thus engaging the attention of all pupils. More primary schools are moving away from the traditional reliance on the single class teacher in order to utilise the particular subject knowledge and enthusiasms of individual teachers. Setting pupils according to ability is also becoming more common. More systematic attention is being given to the teaching of literacy and numeracy. It is too early to come to any definitive judgement on the impact of the National Literacy and Numeracy projects, but the evidence so far is very positive. Teachers certainly appreciate detailed schemes of work which set out what they should teach and when. They are gaining confidence in teaching crucial knowledge and skills such as phonics and mental arithmetic. The fact that they are working to a clear lesson structure means they can concentrate upon their proper task of teaching.

The challenge now, with regard to literacy and numeracy and the drive more generally to improve the quality of teaching, is to build upon these solid foundations. Particular attention needs to be given to weak teaching in primary schools in Years 3 and 4 and

in secondary schools in Key Stage 3. LEAs need to be able to deliver top-quality advice and support when schools request it and to ensure that relevant training opportunities are available to their teachers. Good practice needs to be spread within and across schools in a more purposeful and systematic way than has usually been the case in the past. One way in which this can be done is to make more effective use of outstandingly successful schools. Such schools can, and should, as the government intends, make a very significant contribution to initial teacher training, to in-service education and training, and to preparation for headship.

Above all, expectations must be raised as to what is possible. The key figure here must be the headteacher, who needs to know what is happening in the classrooms of his or her school so as to be in a position to take appropriate action if standards are not high enough. The demands of tests and examinations are also a major influence on what teachers expect their pupils to achieve. It is vitally important that these demands are kept under review. The OFSTED/SCAA review of GCSE and A-level standards (*Standards over Time*) revealed that in GCSE mathematics, for example, the content of the syllabuses and the examination procedures had changed over the years. The time and emphasis given to the consolidation and practice of numerical and algebraic manipulative skills have reduced and candidates find it difficult to answer examination questions that require them to demonstrate these skills. Such issues need to be acted upon as a matter of urgency.

There are issues, too, in the key stage tests. It may well be that the Key Stage 1 test results produce too optimistic a picture of pupil progress. Take reading; Level 2 is the national expectation for seven year olds. Level 2 covers a broad range of attainment and is subdivided into three grades. Four-fifths of pupils reach grade 2C which is the least demanding, about three-fifths reach grade 2B and only about two-fifths reach the most demanding grade 2A. If, as many believe, grade 2C is pitched too low, then the test does not represent a proper stepping-stone to Key Stage 2 and may be depressing teacher and pupil expectation.

There is clear evidence now that many primary schools are moving away from wide-ranging topics such as Autumn or Food where pupils dip into several subjects. Some schools have retained the topic approach, but now root the topic firmly in the requirements of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study for a particular subject. Others teach some or all of the National Curriculum subjects as separate lessons. The latter approaches may give less emphasis to the supposed needs of individual pupils, but there is no evidence that children are less interested in and challenged by their learning. However, schools are finding it difficult to focus as required on literacy and numeracy and cover the totality of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. The government was right, therefore, to relax National Curriculum requirements in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 for two years. It is, of course, true that the effectiveness of the teaching methods used is as important as the time available for the teaching. But there are issues here to be resolved and there are very few primary schools that will not need over the next two years to concentrate above all else on raising pupil achievement in the basic skills.

Primary schools have spent a great deal of time writing general policy statements on the subjects of the National Curriculum. These are helpful, but in themselves do not necessarily ensure that pupils receive increasingly demanding work in a subject as

they move up through the school. These policies, therefore, need to be backed up by schemes of work which provide detailed statements about what is taught to particular year groups. About two-fifths of primary schools lack effective schemes of work. Schemes of work are generally more developed in secondary schools; nevertheless, they are inadequate in about one in six schools at Key Stage 3.

Too many secondary schools are failing to comply with National Curriculum requirements, particularly in Information Technology and Design and Technology. If the requirements are wrong-headed, as some headteachers believe, then they should be changed. If not, the law should be obeyed.

Vocational courses, pre- and post-16, have broadened the curriculum and succeeded in motivating students from a wide range of ability. The Part One GNVQ has succeeded in providing sufficient challenge to pupils to be introduced nationally. The assessment system for GNVQs still has significant weaknesses. Considerable efforts are now being made to improve things, but continued vigilance will be needed if the system is to be rigorous and manageable.

Day-to-day assessment is weak in about one-third of primary schools and a quarter of secondary schools. If pupils are to make better progress, they need to be clear about the strengths and weaknesses of their work and what they need to do to improve. Both primary and secondary schools have rightly moved away from complex assessment and recording systems but many have yet to find an approach to the revised National Curriculum that is both effective and manageable. Teachers in about half of primary schools and over one-third of secondary schools need to make better use of assessment information in planning future work.

Homework is important at all stages in a child's education. Used properly, it extends the challenge open to the pupil and ensures that teaching time is used to maximum effect. Homework makes a positive contribution in one-third of secondary schools; in one-sixth it is ineffective. In many secondary schools it should be set more regularly and consistently. In all cases it should have a clear purpose which stems from work undertaken in class.

Most schools are well led in the sense that their headteachers create a positive ethos, relate well to parents, set high standards of pupil behaviour, and deal efficiently with everyday administration. One in six primary and one in ten secondary headteachers are not, however, judged to be providing proper educational leadership. They do not, that is, have a strong personal vision of how the school can be improved. Or, if they do have such a vision, they lack the authority to convince others of its validity. They neither evaluate the quality of teaching in their schools nor analyse test and examination data with sufficient rigour. The new requirements on schools ought to help with regard to this last weakness, but this, of course, is only the starting point. The real challenge is to draw up and implement a plan of action which states what is to be done by whom and by when; which is costed and monitored; and, above all, which is grounded in a real determination to support those teachers whose performance is not good enough. Very few schools have, in fact, set in place an effective appraisal system. Too often, the important issues are evaded and the process becomes bogged down in a morass of paper and wasteful bureaucracy. Appraisal ought to translate into in-service education and training (INSET) opportunities for the



appraisee. In fact, in one in six primary schools and one in four secondary schools the arrangements for INSET are judged to be weak.

The Headteachers' Leadership and Management Programme (HEADLAMP) provides support for newly appointed headteachers. While the training programmes provided are generally suitable and of good quality, there are also significant weaknesses. There is little evidence that many headteachers who have participated in the programmes have, as yet, made fundamental changes to their styles of leadership and management. Urgent attention needs to be given to ensuring that the needs of participating headteachers are more effectively assessed.

Most schools have at least adequate learning resources, but shortages in books and equipment affect teaching adversely in one in four secondary and one in ten primary schools. OFSTED's recent inspection of schools judged to have inadequate resources showed that in about half of the schools money had not been spent wisely. In the other half, the vagaries of resource allocation meant that the school had not received sufficient funding to do the job it was expected to do. The message is clear in each case.

The situation with regard to schools subject to special measures is worrying in that the proportion of schools being placed in this category has not reduced. A minority of these schools have not, moreover, made much, if any, improvement. More positively, most schools subject to special measures have made satisfactory or good progress. There have been examples of dramatic improvement, where strong leadership, commitment and perseverance have led to improved teaching and higher standards. The high proportion (seven per cent) of special schools subject to special measures remains worrying. The quality of teaching in schools for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties has improved, but the poor control of difficult behaviour remains a particular weakness in these schools.

OFSTED carried out five LEA inspections in 1996-97. In addition, HMI evaluated the use of performance data in 12 LEAs and carried out a survey of the quality of planning in 13 new unitary authorities. One of the LEAs which were inspected was poorly managed and ineffective in its support to its schools. The others had significant strengths, but also displayed weaknesses in their planning for school improvement. General principles, specific objectives, the resources to be deployed and the means of evaluating their own performance were not set out with sufficient clarity. Rhetoric about 'partnership' with schools often obscured a lack of detail about the obligations and accountability implied for both sides. Objectives were often too broad and/or optimistic. On occasion, the pursuit of too many different initiatives meant that strategic focus was lost. If LEAs are to fulfil the new tasks the government has set out for them, on this evidence, there will need to be substantial improvement in their performance and a significant change in their perception of their key roles.

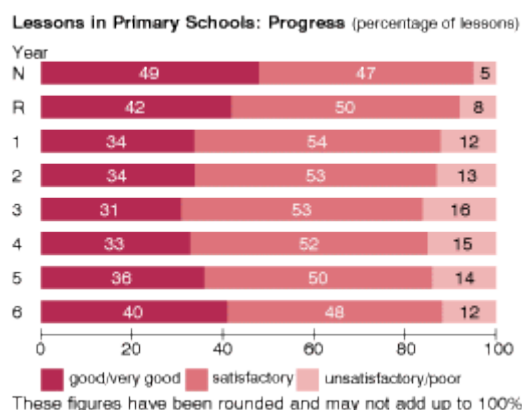
The main focus of primary initial teacher training (ITT) inspection in 1996-97 was on the training of students to teach reading and number. A sample of about a quarter of providers was visited. Much provision was adequate or good, but in some important areas quality is less than satisfactory. In particular, the assessment of students is not always reliable, rigorous or even accurate. A minority of students observed had serious weaknesses in their ability to teach either reading or number or both, despite

the fact that they had been judged to be at least adequate by the providers. It is also clear that some students did not know enough about fundamental issues, such as the use of phonic knowledge to plan a structured programme for the teaching of reading. The situation appears to be improving as institutions plan for the introduction of the National Curriculum for English and mathematics in primary teacher training, but this is clear evidence of the need for that curriculum.

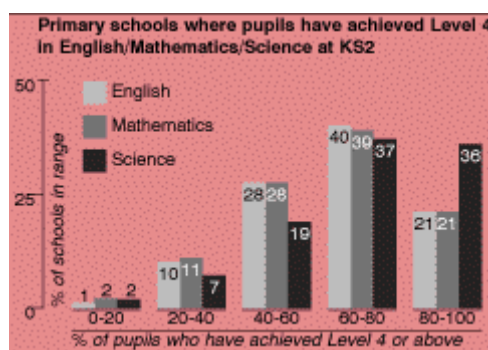
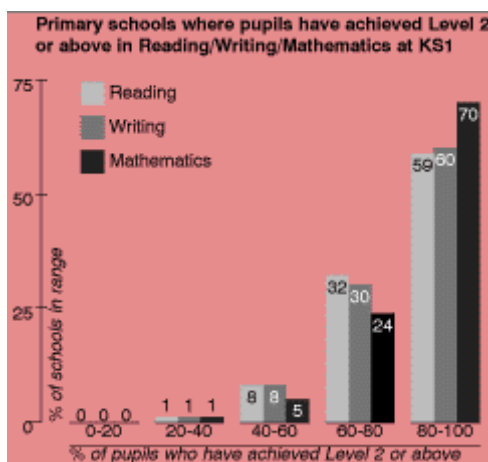
## Primary schools

### Educational standards achieved

1. As in previous years, inspection shows that pupils make a good start to their primary education. By the end of Key Stage 1 about four-fifths of pupils achieve or exceed the levels of attainment in the core subjects expected of a seven year old<sup>1</sup>. National Curriculum assessment results show that pupils' attainments in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are improving, particularly at Key Stage 2. Much more systematic attention is being given to the teaching of literacy and numeracy. However, despite these improvements, by the end of Key Stage 2 only about three-fifths of pupils achieve or exceed the levels expected of an eleven year old<sup>1</sup> in English and mathematics, with rather higher proportions achieving national expectations in science. Weak performance of pupils in important aspects of mathematics, particularly number work, is highlighted by the recent international survey of nine year olds<sup>2</sup> which shows pupils in English schools lag behind those in most other countries in the survey. On the other hand, in science, our eight and nine year olds achieve well when compared with pupils in most other countries.
2. Inspectors judge that in about three in ten primary schools pupils make good and consistent progress<sup>3</sup> across the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. In about three-fifths of schools, pupils make reasonable progress, but it is often uneven as they move up through the school. Continued improvement will be needed in these schools if national targets are to be achieved in English and mathematics. However, in about one in ten schools in Key Stage 1 and one in eight in Key Stage 2, pupils' progress is considerably worse than expected. In particular, pupils' progress in these schools in literacy and numeracy is far too slow, leaving them poorly equipped to meet the demands of secondary education. There is substantial underachievement in these schools and urgent action is needed to improve levels of attainment.
3. The dip in the performance of pupils in Years 3 and 4 identified in previous Annual Reports remains (see chart above). Pupils make best progress in the early years and worst in Years 3 and 4 where it is unsatisfactory in one in six lessons. Although progress improves in the last two years of Key Stage 2, and is good in two-fifths of lessons in Year 6, the cumulative effect is that only about three-fifths of pupils reach the nationally expected levels in English and mathematics by the end of the key stage.



4. The charts below show the considerable variation between schools, most marked in Key Stage 2, in the proportion of pupils who achieve expected levels in the core subjects of the National Curriculum<sup>4</sup>. In most schools, over 80 per cent of pupils in Key Stage 1 achieve Level 2 or above in National Curriculum tests for reading, writing and mathematics. About one in ten schools falls substantially below this figure in reading and writing.



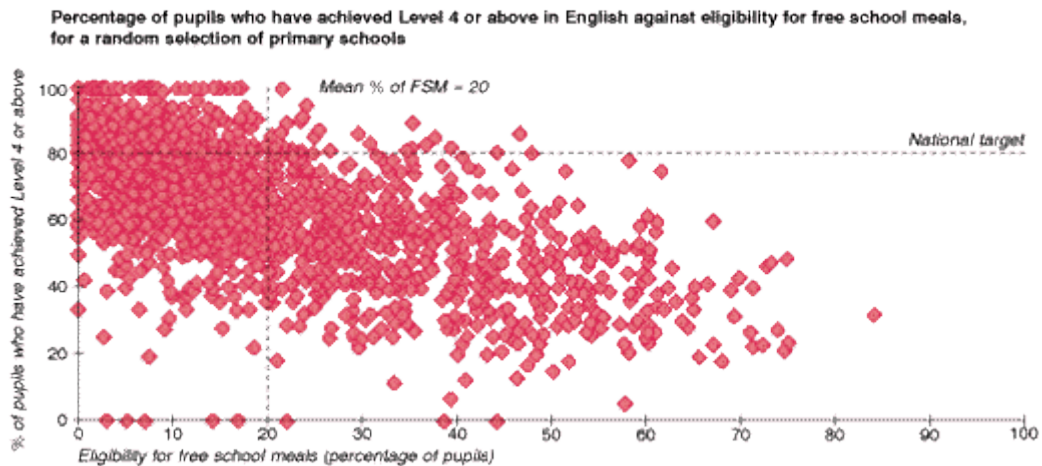
5. There is a very different picture in Key Stage 2. Only one in five schools has more than 80 per cent of pupils at Level 4 in English, a further two in five schools come close to this figure, but about two in five schools fall well short. The picture is similar in mathematics. Over one in four schools has at least three-quarters of pupils at or above Level 4, but about two in five schools fall substantially short of this figure. In science, more than one-third of schools have more than 80 per cent of pupils at Level 4 or above; this is substantially better than the other core subjects.

<sup>1</sup>DfEE data, 1997

<sup>2</sup>Third International Mathematics and Science Study, 1997

<sup>3</sup>See [Annex 2](#) for explanation of the interpretation of the inspection data

<sup>4</sup>OFSTED analysis of DfEE data, 1997



6. The wide variation in pupils' achievement between schools is striking. The chart above shows how the test scores vary with eligibility for free school meals for a sample of primary schools. Eligibility for free school meals is the most useful single available indicator of the level of disadvantage of pupils in a school. As the proportion of free school meals increases, test scores tend to fall. It is, however, also very clear that schools where there are similar proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals achieve very different results. Some schools with many such pupils achieve very good results. Conversely, there are some very advantaged schools where less than a half of Year 6 pupils achieve Level 4 for English. Three thousand of the 5,300 schools in which the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below 10 per cent fail to achieve the national target for Year 6 pupils in English.

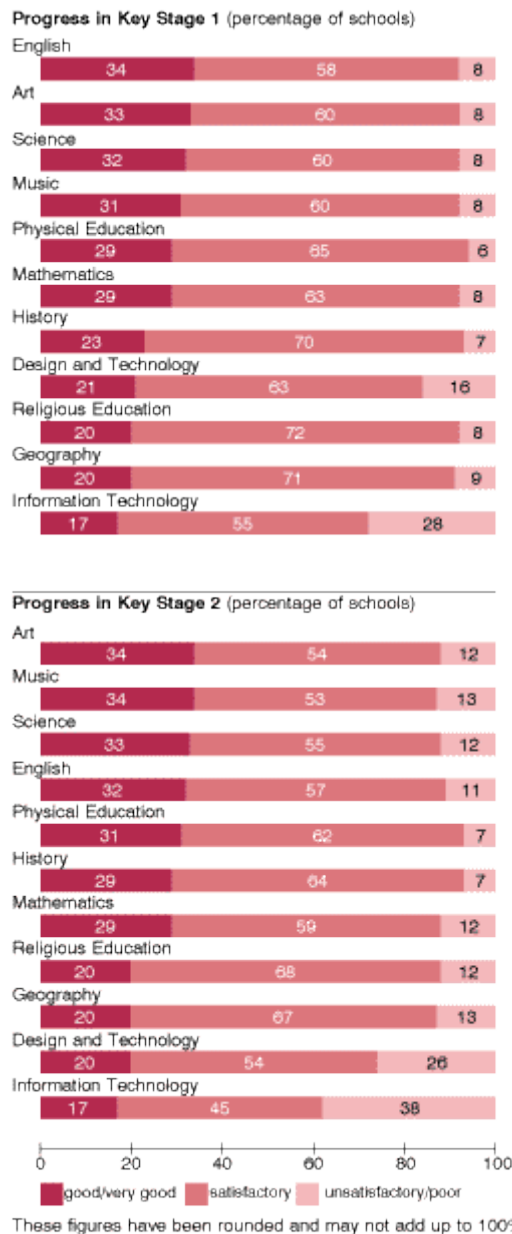
Taken together, inspection evidence and key stage test results indicate an improvement in standards. Three key issues need to be tackled to build on this:

- standards in literacy and numeracy must continue to improve in most schools if government targets for 11 year olds are to be achieved by 2002; expectations need, as a matter of urgency, to be raised in many schools serving advantaged communities;
- urgent action is needed in the one in ten schools at Key Stage 1 and the one in eight at Key Stage 2 where there is substantial overall underachievement;
- particular attention needs to be given to Years 3 and 4, where progress is inadequate in too many lessons.

### **Educational standards achieved in the National Curriculum subjects and religious education**

7. The charts below show inspectors' judgements of pupils' progress in the National

Curriculum subjects and religious education. They show that there are considerable variations across subjects. Good progress is more common in English and science than it is in mathematics. Nevertheless, there is substantial underachievement in Key Stage 2 in over one in ten schools in English and one in eight schools in mathematics and science. At both key stages there are fewer schools where pupils achieve well in design and technology, religious education, geography and information technology than in other subjects. At Key Stage 2 there is overall underachievement in one-quarter of schools in design and technology and in over one-third of schools in information technology. Progress in history is much better than in geography.



8. In **ENGLISH**, National Curriculum test results have improved this year, especially at Key Stage 2, where the proportion of pupils achieving Level four or above has increased from 58 to 63 per cent. Pupils' skills in **SPEAKING AND LISTENING** are generally good. They listen well, describe experiences clearly and discuss their work confidently. However, drama, especially role play and improvisation, is underused in many schools as a way of strengthening pupils' skills in speaking and listening.

9. Four-fifths of pupils acquire sufficient reading skills to achieve Level 2 or above in the reading assessment at the end of Key Stage 1. It is important, however, to note that Level 2 of the National Curriculum represents a broad range of attainment, and that only 62 per cent of pupils at age seven achieve grade 2B and above and 42 per cent achieve grade 2A<sup>5</sup> and above. Many pupils are not developing the skills they need if they are to read widely and independently. In particular, phonic work still needs to be strengthened as the key element in a coherent approach to the teaching of reading. The lack in many schools of a structured programme of reading for Key Stage 2 pupils is unacceptable. Greater attention must be given by teachers to the range and progression of reading material to make sure that pupils who have gained good reading skills and have an appetite for reading by the end of Key Stage 1 extend and improve their reading sufficiently throughout Key Stage 2. **WRITING** skills are weaker than those in speaking and listening, and reading. Too many pupils are unable to produce sustained, accurate writing in a variety of forms. This has been a pervasive weakness in many primary schools, which should be addressed more urgently.

10. In **MATHEMATICS**, National Curriculum test results have improved, especially at Key Stage 2, where the proportion of pupils achieving Level 4 or above has increased from 54 to 62 per cent. However, across all ages, more able pupils are insufficiently challenged and few achieve as well as they should. In many schools there are shortcomings in the planning for progression and continuity in mathematics across the two key stages. In Years 3 and 4, pupils are often re-taught work below the level they have attained in the Key Stage 1 assessments.

11. Schools are giving greater attention to mental work, in part owing to the pilot mental arithmetic tests. This is having a positive impact on pupils' mental arithmetic skills. Even so, many pupils are unable to recall number facts and have poor strategies for undertaking mental calculations. Recent international tests highlight number as the content area where the performance of English pupils is most disappointing in comparison with that of many of our economic counterparts. Pupils' skills in calculating with decimals, fractions and percentages vary too much and are often poor: division is the operation where they are least successful. Estimation is also often weak so that few pupils are able to check that their answers are reasonable. By contrast, recent international tests indicate that pupils in England score better than most countries in data representation, analysis and probability, and geometry. Sustained direct teaching in which pupils participate is a strong characteristic of the one in three lessons in which pupils make good progress in mathematics, but many pupils spend too long working on their own, completing repetitive written exercises, while making few gains in understanding the concepts underlying the work.

12. The improvements in **SCIENCE** identified in previous Annual Reports have continued and pupils' achievement in science is better than in most other subjects. In Key Stage 1 pupils acquire a sound base of scientific knowledge and skills and four-fifths of pupils achieve or exceed the expected National Curriculum level. As in other core subjects, however, progress falters in Years 3 and 4 and is unsatisfactory in one in five lessons. Too often the tasks set for pupils fail to build on previous learning and too little new knowledge is encountered. Pupils make substantially better progress in Years 5 and 6, and by the end of the key stage two-thirds of pupils achieve or exceed the expected National Curriculum level. International surveys show that Year 5 pupils in England achieve well in science compared to pupils in other countries.

13. Those schools which teach **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY** well and where many



pupils also have access to computers at home stand in sharp contrast to those where these conditions do not exist. Some pupils attain well and make very good progress but others lack opportunities for learning information technology, either at school or at home, and as a consequence their achievement is seriously depressed. Arguably, this relatively new subject continues to present the greatest challenge to primary schools. It places major demands upon primary teachers to acquire sufficient knowledge and skills to teach it effectively. In addition, keeping up to date with developments in the hardware and software makes substantial demands upon school budgets. It is not surprising, therefore, that achievement in information technology continues to lag behind that of other subjects. In large measure, unsatisfactory achievement reflects the high proportion of schools, one in three at Key Stage 1 and half at Key Stage 2, that do not fully cover the programmes of study. Coverage of control applications, for example, is frequently neglected. The use of **CD ROM** for information retrieval has increased substantially, and some schools are beginning to use information from the Internet to support school topics. Although the quality of much interrogation of **CD ROM** data and of Internet searches is superficial, the activity helps to raise pupils' awareness of the uses and range of electronic information.

14. The achievement of pupils in **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY** continues to improve, albeit slowly. Overall achievement remains lower than for other subjects with the exception of information technology. Pupils usually make a good start in their nursery and reception years. This early progress slows, however, in Key Stage 1, and more so in Key Stage 2. Low attainment and slow progress are often associated with teachers' lack of subject knowledge and expertise in the subject. Pupils' skills in making things are often better than their ability to design. Design and technology calls for particularly thorough planning and preparation, and a careful assessment of standards of work to inform pupils about how to improve. While these requirements are invariably met in the best work, weaknesses in one or other of them are commonly associated with poor work. Many primary teachers have had to teach design and technology from scratch and there is a continuing need for in-service training.

15. Pupils' progress in **GEOGRAPHY** does not compare well with other subjects, including history. The strengths in primary geography lie in the suitable use of geographical terms and vocabulary; in the development of investigative and enquiry skills; and in the good quality of practical and field study, which gives understanding of the local area. Weaknesses, particularly at Key Stage 2, exist where pupils' knowledge of contrasting localities is patchy and there is shallowness in their understanding of human and physical processes.

16. In **HISTORY**, in more than one-quarter of schools pupils' progress is good or very good and the proportion of schools where pupils underachieve is lower for history than for almost all other subjects. Inspectors frequently report the pupils' enthusiastic and interested response to history, often encouraged by the use of historical artefacts, resources, visits to local historical sites and the use of role play, sometimes supported by period costumes.

17. Achievement in **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION** has shown an improvement in recent years. There are now fewer schools where pupils underachieve. However, good standards are less common than in most other subjects. Most pupils are attaining some but not all of the end-of-Key Stage statements set out in the majority of LEA Agreed Syllabuses. In schools where progress in religious education is satisfactory or better, pupils are developing a knowledge of the richness and diversity of religions. Most



know that the religious traditions of Great Britain are mainly Christian, and they have some awareness of other world religions. In some schools pupils are taught aspects of Christianity alongside up to five other major world religions; this approach too often leads to superficial coverage of topics, preventing pupils from attaining a sufficiently deep understanding of any one tradition.

18. In **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**, progress is generally satisfactory or good. Pupils improve their skills in the major activities of games and gymnastics and in the understanding of rules and basic tactics in games, but too little attention is paid to the development of planning and evaluating physical activities. Achievement in swimming is generally good, but weaknesses persist in the provision for outdoor and adventurous activities, which are associated with lack of teachers' knowledge and expertise in providing a sufficiently challenging programme.

19. As with last year, achievement in **ART** at Key Stage 1 is generally good and compares very well with other subjects. Pupils make good progress in learning to handle a range of two- and three-dimensional materials, and begin to learn how to draw, using both observation and imagination. At Key Stage 2 progress is slightly slower, but by Year 6 most pupils have developed an appropriate range of skills, particularly drawing, and show an increasing awareness of composition and design. In **MUSIC**, pupils' skills in composing, performing, listening and appraising have improved markedly since the implementation of the National Curriculum Orders in 1995. There is, however, an unduly wide difference in the experience of Key Stage 2 pupils and in one in eight schools progress is unsatisfactory. There remain a few schools where there is very little music at all and the curriculum for music has barely been touched by the National Curriculum; on the other hand, there are schools where by Year 6 pupils are competent composers and critics. Overall, achievement in music compares well with other subjects.

20. **DANCE** is taught in most primary schools but achievement varies. Its inclusion in the programme of activities is often highly dependent on the confidence and knowledge of individual teachers. Where it is taught well, pupils show a good sense of rhythm and timing, can interpret mood expressively in movement and make sensitive responses to musical accompaniment. When taught by a skilled teacher, **DRAMA** enriches work in all three English attainment targets and in many other subjects. Particularly at Key Stage 2, good teaching ensures that pupils have a clear understanding of drama as a separate art form and that they are beginning to acquire specific skills, including movement and gesture.

21. Many bilingual pupils make good progress and some attain high standards. In general, however, pupils who need to be taught English as an additional language are frequently hindered by their lack of competence in English and underachieve but, not surprisingly, their attainment in subjects which are less dependent on the use of the English language is closer to the national expectations.

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<sup>5</sup>Level 2 is subdivided in grades C, B and A. Grade A is the most demanding.

### **Progress towards Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning<sup>6</sup> for pupils under five**

22. In the large majority of schools, pupils make at least satisfactory progress towards

achieving the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. Many, particularly those entering school with low levels of attainment, make particularly good progress in their first year or so at school. However, in some schools there is a continued focus on the Desirable Outcomes when pupils, particularly the more able, have already achieved them. For these pupils, more advanced skills should be developed.

23. Provision for pupils' **PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT** is a major priority and a considerable strength of the work of most schools. Schools place a high priority on the promotion of a positive attitude to learning, good behaviour and a lengthening concentration span. Schools are particularly successful at helping young children to settle to the routines of school life.

&NBSP;

24. Attainment in **LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**, and **MATHEMATICS**, is generally satisfactory. Appropriate attention is given to the early stages of reading and writing, although the systematic planning of the work is sometimes weak and leads, for example, to a haphazard introduction of letter names and sounds. In the large majority of schools a proper emphasis is given to the development of mathematical language through the use of practical activities, sorting and naming basic shapes, number rhymes and songs.

25. The weakest aspect of academic provision for under fives is that for the broad area of pupils' **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**. The focus is most frequently on the study of the natural world, and emphasis is also given to visits in the local area. The early stages of scientific and geographical understanding are developed by such work, but the historical dimension is too frequently missing. Computers are used appropriately in two in three schools, but there are still schools which do not make sufficient use of their computers or, indeed, have no computers or programmable toys.

26. **CREATIVE AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT** are almost always at least satisfactory, and pupils benefit from a wide range of activities. For example, good work is frequently seen in model-making and in the investigation of patterns, textures, colour and shape. Music, particularly the use of instruments, is well established in around half the schools. Physical development is constrained in a minority of schools by a lack of a designated area for under fives' play, or poor outdoor space.

### **Attitudes and behaviour**

27. One of the strengths of English primary schools is the quality of the relationships and the positive attitudes pupils have to school. Almost all schools are orderly communities. Pupils settle quickly to the routines of school life in the nursery and reception classes. At both key stages, primary pupils are enthusiastic about their work, and co-operate well with one another. In the best schools the pupils take a considerable pride in the accuracy and presentation of their work. In these schools they take responsibility and can concentrate on their work for long periods of time.

28. Behaviour, too, is good in most schools, and very good indeed in over one-third of schools. Such good standards are often underpinned by clear guidelines for staff which secure consistent practice and systems of sanction and reward which are understood and accepted by everyone. Behaviour is unsatisfactory in only three per cent of schools. In a few schools where there is generally good behaviour, the poor behaviour of a small group of pupils has a depressing effect on learning and reduces

the pace of lessons.

29. Levels of exclusions have increased slightly but remain low. There were 1,600 permanent exclusions from primary schools in 1995/6. This represents 0.04 per cent<sup>2</sup> of primary school pupils. Roughly ten times as many boys as girls are excluded, the vast majority from Key Stage 2.

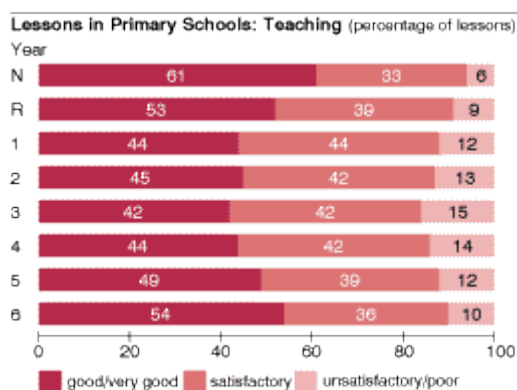
### Attendance

30. Attendance in most schools is good; in only 3.5 per cent of schools is attendance below 90 per cent<sup>3</sup>. Unauthorised absence accounts for less than 1 per cent of the absences in the great majority of schools, and is greater than 3 per cent in about one school in forty. The attendance of Gypsy and Traveller pupils, although gradually improving, is still far too low. By and large, schools' procedures for recording, monitoring and promoting attendance are good. The large majority of lessons start promptly and pupils arrive punctually. Poor attendance, however, is strongly associated with poor schools and is often a prime factor in schools which are subject to special measures.

### Quality of education

#### The quality of teaching

31. While direct year-on-year comparisons are complicated by the change of inspection frameworks, inspectors report that the quality of teaching continues to improve. The chart below illustrates, however, that the quality of teaching varies considerably between year groups.



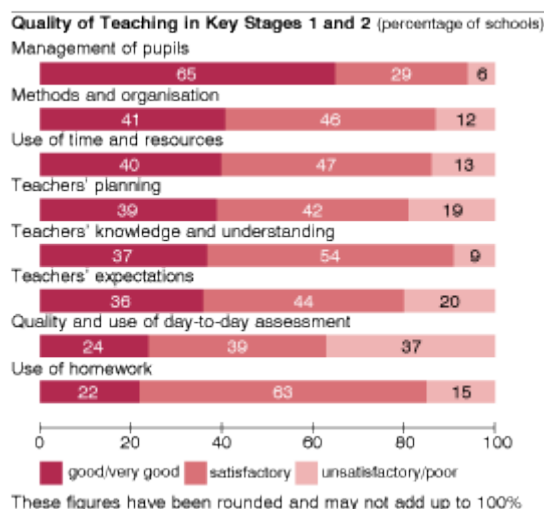
32. The quality of teaching in primary schools is best in nursery and reception classes, and in Year 6; in other words, pupils get the best teaching when they enter school, and in their final year. Although there has been some improvement in the teaching in Years 3 and 4, these two years still have more unsatisfactory teaching and less good teaching than any other years. The quality of the teaching of under fives is rarely unsatisfactory, and is good in half the schools. However, mixed-age reception classes pose particular problems of matching provision to educational need, especially when the age-range is wide, for example from young four year olds to six year olds. Teachers working successfully with assistants often overcome these problems provided the class is of reasonable size and serious account has been taken of the Desirable Outcomes for Learning.

33. Inspectors report the occurrence of more frequent and regular daily sessions of **WHOLE CLASS TEACHING** aimed especially at raising standards of literacy and numeracy. In mathematics, for example, there is greater attention to the rapid and accurate recall of number facts and to learning by heart of multiplication tables through whole class methods. Daily sessions, brisk and sharply focused, in which number facts are taught, practised and used are becoming more widespread.

34. A clearer sense of lesson structure is evident. Many primary schools are anticipating the Government's National Literacy Strategy by introducing a daily "literacy hour" which requires carefully planned and timed elements of direct teaching to the whole class, group work, and a closing plenary session in which the teacher reinforces the main points of the lesson, checks that what has been covered is understood, and requires pupils to share their work with each other. It is, however, very clear that teaching the class together for part of a lesson requires a secure understanding by the teacher of what is to be taught, clear instructive teaching, skilled questioning and discussion if all pupils are to make proper progress.

35. The hardest challenge for many teachers in the central phase of the lesson is to set work which is sufficiently demanding for individuals or groups, but which allows the teacher to teach a group without interruption from other pupils. Where the teacher sets undemanding work for the rest of the class while attending to a particular group of pupils, the value of the group work is undermined. In such sessions the more able pupils usually come off worst, having been set tasks which lack challenge but keep them busy, while the teacher helps the less able pupils.

36. Underpinning successful teaching are high expectations of both standards of achievement and behaviour. In most schools a calm working atmosphere has been established, and there are good relationships between teachers and pupils. High expectations of presentation and accuracy also have a significant impact on standards: pupils who take care with and a pride in their work are usually keen to do well. While teachers are generally successful at setting appropriate expectations of behaviour, too many are less successful at setting sufficiently high academic expectations. This is shown in the chart below of inspectors' judgements of different aspects of teaching. Inspectors report that expectations are too low in one in five schools.



37. It is difficult for teachers to gauge the level at which work should be set without a

clear knowledge of what pupils already know. The weakest aspect of teaching is usually the assessment of progress in a way which is manageable and useful in helping teachers to plan what to teach next: day-to-day **ASSESSMENT** remains problematic in many schools.

38. Teachers' **SUBJECT KNOWLEDGE** is becoming more secure in most schools, although a lack of understanding of the subject being taught is frequently a contributory factor in unsatisfactory lessons. The National Literacy Project, for example, has revealed through the preparatory in-service training courses that many teachers are insecure in their knowledge of the teaching of phonics. These courses focus on the teaching of reading and writing and are helping to improve teachers' expertise and confidence. Similarly, the National Numeracy Project is helping teachers to become more competent in teaching mental arithmetic and is strengthening their knowledge and understanding of the development of number in the curriculum, aspects of numeracy which have been poorly taught in the past.

39. The National Curriculum, in-service training and schemes of work have helped teachers to come to terms with the content requirements of most subjects. There is, however, still a long way to go in some subjects, notably information technology, and design and technology. Teachers' subject knowledge is unsatisfactory in design and technology in over one in five schools, and in information technology in one-third of schools. Underachievement in geography and some aspects of physical education, notably dance and outdoor activities, is frequently attributed to gaps in teachers' subject knowledge. More difficulties with subject knowledge occur at Key Stage 2 than at Key Stage 1 in that weaknesses become more significant as the programmes of study become more complex. In one in eight lessons at Key Stage 2, weaknesses in the teachers' subject knowledge were judged to have an adverse effect on standards.

40. There are some outstanding examples of schools making good use of **TEACHERS' SUBJECT EXPERTISE**, for example by deploying those with specialist knowledge and skills to teach certain subjects in Years 5 and 6. Many opportunities are missed, however, and the overall picture is one in which such expertise is underused, despite considerable investment in recent years in subject-based training. Not surprisingly, teachers with specialist expertise almost always teach the given subject better than non-specialists. Where high standards are achieved, teachers invariably have sound or good knowledge of the subject they are teaching. Influential use of subject specialists is found in schools of all sizes, but most of the best examples are in either small or large schools. Small schools are able to arrange for the exchange of expertise between classes with relative ease; they also recognise the telling impact which a specialist can make in a short space of time. Large schools are more likely to have teachers who do not have a class of their own, allowing for greater flexibility to deploy subject specialists; and they are more likely to have access to a wider range of expertise. However, systematic and carefully managed deployment of specialist teaching is unusual in primary schools. Schools should consider how they might use the subject expertise of their teachers to better effect.

41. The organisation of pupils with similar attainment levels into sets is increasing. This is seen particularly in mathematics and English in Years 5 and 6. **SETTING** reduces the range of attainment within a teaching group and consequently can help teachers to plan work more precisely and select appropriate teaching methods. HMI are to carry out a substantial survey of the use of setting, and its impact on standards of attainment and the quality of teaching, in 1997/98.

42. The increased use of **HOMEWORK** is also having a positive impact on attainment. Many schools have moved beyond seeing homework as solely the routine taking home of reading books and now have a policy statement which makes clear to parents the frequency and type of homework that will be set. As well as reading at home, multiplication tables and spelling are the most frequent topics for homework. Many schools also encourage pupils to undertake research into current work. There are some good examples of schools holding workshops for parents or providing written guidance on how they can help their children with their work. The vast majority of parents support consistent and regular homework and value the strengthening of links between home and school.

43. The National Literacy and Numeracy Projects are strongly supported by detailed **SCHEMES OF WORK** which establish what is to be taught to each year group term by term. Initial feedback is positive. Teachers welcome the clear guidance in the schemes of work about the content they should teach and how they should teach it. Indeed, in an increasing number of schools, schemes of work, generally, are more precise; they pay greater attention to mapping out progression in the subject content to be taught and to learning outcomes based on objectives for each lesson.

44. The extra support provided for pupils speaking **ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE**, funded under Section 11 of the Local Government Act 1966, is generally of a satisfactory quality. When section 11 staff are well deployed they have an important and positive impact on the quality of pupils' learning. The work of bilingual assistants and teachers continues to be greatly valued by schools, especially in three areas: the support of young or early stage learners of English; the improvement of home/school relationships; and the advice they can give in the investigation of bilingual pupils thought to have special educational needs.

In summary, the quality of teaching is good in almost half of lessons in primary schools and unsatisfactory in one in eight. There is evidence of continued improvement. To sustain and build on this schools need to consider the following issues:

- the dip in the quality of teaching in Years 3 and 4;
- teachers' skills and understanding of how to teach literacy and numeracy;
- the deployment and strengthening of subject expertise;
- the importance of direct whole class teaching;
- the value of detailed schemes of work.

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<sup>6</sup>*Nursery Education: Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning on Entering Compulsory Education*, SCAA, 1995. These are not a statutory requirement.

<sup>7</sup>DfEE data, 1997



<sup>8</sup>DfEE data, 1997

<sup>9</sup>*Using Subject Specialists to Promote High Standards at Key Stage 2*, OFSTED, 1997

## The curriculum and assessment

45. It is usual now for the curriculum for the under fives to be planned with the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning in mind. Personal and social development remain a priority. There is no evidence that pupils are being introduced too early to excessively advanced work, such as that at Level 1 of the National Curriculum. However, in some schools there is a continued focus on the Desirable Outcomes when pupils, particularly the more able, have already achieved them and are ready to move on.
46. In most schools the curriculum is broad and balanced and includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Nevertheless, at Key Stage 2 inspectors identified issues relating to the balance and breadth of the curriculum in one in five schools. Where inspectors report an imbalance it is usually through insufficient emphasis on the two elements of technology, but significant issues are raised in one in five schools about art and music, and in around one in six schools about geography and religious education. Almost one in ten primary schools does not meet fully the requirement to teach religious education in accordance with the appropriate Agreed Syllabus. On the other hand, there are signs, especially in schools serving more advantaged areas, that the inclusion of a modern foreign language, usually French, in the curriculum is increasing. About one in five primary schools now teach a modern foreign language.
47. Schools are increasingly concentrating their teaching of English and mathematics into two discrete sessions of about an hour each morning, in line with the focus on **LITERACY AND NUMERACY** prompted by the two national projects. Some schools are finding that this arrangement, though paying off in terms of improved pupil achievement in literacy and numeracy, is putting pressure on the rest of the curriculum, particularly at Key Stage 2. Other schools, however, are achieving good results in English and mathematics at Key Stage 2 while maintaining a reasonably broad and balanced curriculum.
48. The majority of schools provide **EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**, particularly for sports and the arts, mainly in Key Stage 2. This provision is good in over half of schools, but weak or non-existent in one in eight schools. Most schools offer a good range of extra-curricular sport. Team games dominate the programme, with soccer, netball and cricket being the most common, often involving competitions with other schools for older pupils. Good numbers of both boys and girls take part in these activities and parents often provide good support. Many inspection reports refer to the positive impact on standards of school visits or visitors to schools such as writers or artists "in residence". These residential visits are often looked on as among the highlights of the school year, not only having a positive impact on academic achievement but also promoting pupils' social and personal development.
49. Schools have committed a great deal of time and effort to **CURRICULUM PLANNING AND ORGANISATION** and the preparation of documentation in recent years. Most schools now have written policies for most subjects, but these are insufficient in themselves to ensure that pupils receive increasingly demanding work in a subject as they move through the school. General policies need to be backed up

by **SCHEMES OF WORK** which provide detailed statements of what is to be taught to particular year groups or groups of pupils. About two-fifths of schools lack effective schemes of work. In most schools there are few opportunities for subject co-ordinators to monitor what goes on in classrooms in their subject and evaluate the success of their curriculum planning.

50. Wide-ranging topic work dipping into several subjects continues to give way to work which is focused on a single subject where pupils are studying, for example, a topic which is very largely science or largely history-based.

51. The **ASSESSMENT** of pupils' performance continues to be problematic in some primary schools. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are unsatisfactory in about three in ten of schools, and the use made of assessment to inform curriculum planning is weak in around half of the schools. Having moved away from the "ticksheet" approach which characterised the early days of the National Curriculum, many schools have yet to find an approach to assessment which works effectively and is manageable. Greater use is made of standardised tests. Increasingly, schools are able to record the attainment and progress of individual pupils and monitor the overall achievement in the school and the degree to which standards are being raised. However, in many schools assessment data is not yet used to full effect in planning teaching and bringing about improvement. For example, insufficient monitoring, using this information, is undertaken to analyse the attainment and progress of particular groups of pupils such as boys and girls or ethnic groups.

52. Provision for pupils with **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS** is good in six in ten schools and rarely inadequate. The Code of Practice has helped schools to improve the match of the provision to the needs of pupils. Special needs co-ordinators have established appropriate procedures for keeping a register of pupils' special educational needs and for preparing and revising individual action plans. However, many co-ordinators are concerned about the time taken for this and have been unable to complete the recommended termly reviews.

53. In the large majority of schools there is **EQUALITY OF ACCESS** to the full range of the curriculum. Schools work hard to ensure that pupils with special educational needs benefit from the full range of educational provision. Participation in schooling for Gypsy and Traveller children is significantly greater for pupils of primary age than of secondary age but nevertheless remains a cause for concern. Involvement in pre-school education by these children is below average.

### **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

54. Provision for **MORAL DEVELOPMENT** is good in eight in ten schools. From the time the youngest children enter school, teachers emphasise the difference between right and wrong, reinforcing this through the attention given to securing good behaviour, and by discussing or illustrating moral issues, including those in the news, in school assemblies. Where provision of moral development is good there is often evidence of the schools' values in action: for example, schools free of litter and graffiti; good behaviour during lunchtime and playtime; and support for national and local charities. Provision for **SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT** is similarly well developed in eight in ten schools. Relationships are usually positive between staff and pupils, and pupils are encouraged to look after each other and to take some responsibility for



aspects of school life such as the school grounds or their classrooms.

**55.** Provision for **CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT**, on the other hand, is good or better in less than half of all primary schools, and is weak in over one in eight schools. Most teachers stress the importance for all pupils of understanding the cultural traditions of the United Kingdom. Pupils are introduced to the work of composers and great artists through art and music; and they are given opportunities to listen to music, to appreciate works of art, and to visit theatres, museums, art galleries and concerts. Weaknesses in provision usually relate to insufficient opportunities for pupils to learn about cultural traditions beyond their own.

**56.** Less than half of primary schools make good provision for **SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT**; provision is generally better in church schools than in county schools. Spiritual development is most strongly promoted through religious education and collective worship. In the schools with good provision it is usual to find well-ordered, reflective daily worship backed by opportunities within the curriculum for pupils to think about not just the teachings of different religious traditions but their own developing responses to fundamental human issues. Overall, however, this remains an area of considerable confusion. Schools lack clear guidance about what constitutes spiritual development and how it relates to but is different from religious education.

**57.** Characteristics of schools where spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are strong include the clear presentation in the school prospectus of the school's aims and, where applicable, its religious principles; a detailed and well-conceived policy, translated into practice by all staff; a strong sense of community, with all its members fully involved in the life of the school; and supportive governors, parents and members of the local community who work with staff to promote the school values and ethos.

**58.** About one in ten schools fails to provide a daily **ACT OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP** which fully complies with statutory requirements. The routine provision of daily worship does not, moreover, in itself necessarily ensure good provision for spiritual development. The best acts of worship seen by inspectors were those where careful planning took account of the school's aims, the curriculum and major festivals, but were sufficiently flexible about the content of the act of worship to allow the school to respond to current issues. Pupils were involved in the presentation and, while strong, the Christian perspective was balanced by attention to other faiths and opportunities for pupils to offer their own prayers or to reflect quietly on their lives and beliefs, and the needs of others.

### **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

**59.** Virtually every school gives a high priority to the care and welfare of its pupils. Most teachers tackle their pastoral role conscientiously and with commitment. Class teachers know the pupils in their class well and can respond quickly and sensitively to their individual needs. Formal arrangements for monitoring pupils' progress and personal development are weak in one in eight schools.

**60.** Links with families are often established through parent/toddler groups or nurseries, and "baseline" assessment increasingly helps parents and teachers reach a shared view of what the child knows and can do. This allows for early intervention

where additional support is needed.

61. Almost every school has effective child protection procedures in place; these are known to all staff and responsibilities are clear. Health and safety procedures are usually in place, an area in which there is frequently a valuable and informed input from governors.

62. Many schools have responded vigorously to concerns about the vulnerability of school buildings. In particular, many schools have established efficient systems for signing in visitors and ensuring that identity badges are worn; a growing number of schools have security fences and secure, visible entrances; and staff and pupils are increasingly aware of the need for security. Despite the somewhat forbidding external appearance of such precautions, parents appreciate the improved levels of security and staff and pupils feel safer.

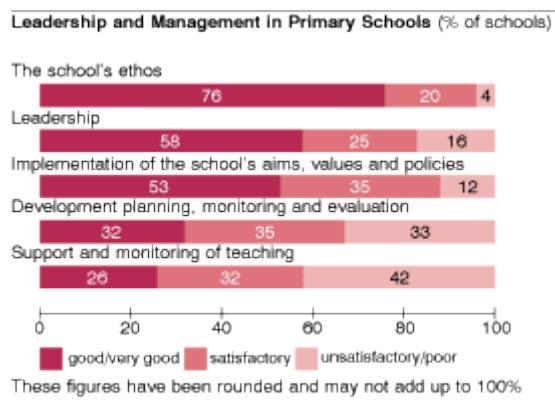
### **Partnership with parents and the community**

63. **LINKS BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND PARENTS** are at least adequate in nine in ten schools. The quality of information provided by schools for parents has improved over recent years, partly prompted in many cases by the questionnaires used and questions asked at pre-inspection meetings with parents. Information about schools is usually well presented in prospectuses, which give a full picture of the routines and priorities of schools. Newsletters add to this picture, and most annual reports from governors give the necessary information, including National Curriculum assessment data. Most parents are satisfied with the amount of information they have about their children's progress. Typically, schools have two parents' meetings a year and at least one written report giving, where appropriate, details of National Curriculum levels of attainment.

64. Most schools, whether through a formally constituted Parent Teacher Association or not, benefit from fundraising and social activities, which bring tangible results in terms of enhanced resources and help establish good links between home and school.

65. **LINKS WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY** enrich the curriculum of many schools, and when these are planned carefully they make an important contribution to the quality of learning and to attainment. Inspection reports give many examples of valuable local links: the celebration of Divali, the Chinese New Year and Christmas; a visit to a Sheffield wire factory; regular contact with local services such as the fire brigade, police, and road safety officers; environmental studies in the local area, often to be contrasted with work further afield; and use of the local library. Though there are some notable exceptions, links with local industry or businesses are the weakest aspect of primary school links with the local community.

### **Leadership and management**



66. Most headteachers are successful at creating a positive ethos in their schools. They establish a welcoming atmosphere, provide good pastoral support, manage behaviour well and forge effective links with parents. Three-fifths of schools are, in addition, well led in the sense that their headteachers and governors provide clear educational direction. However, **LEADERSHIP** is weak in about one in six schools. The monitoring of standards and evaluation of the quality of teaching are the weakest aspects of management. In four in ten schools these functions are judged to be unsatisfactory or poor. Most primary schools have some mechanism for taking stock, but in the main the process of self-evaluation is rarely sufficiently rigorous. Poor overall achievement, particularly persistent in some schools serving disadvantaged areas, is related to poor monitoring of standards and a management team which gives insufficient attention to the raising of achievement. Most headteachers need to give more attention to these aspects of their work in order to make better-informed decisions about how to raise standards.

67. There are signs that schools are increasingly focusing their attention on the standards achieved by pupils, with a view to raising these standards. They are, for example:

- analysing indicators such as National Curriculum assessment results;
- analysing the scores from standardised tests;
- undertaking the structured scrutiny of pupils' work;
- establishing systems for baseline assessments;
- and, above all else, undertaking classroom observation using inspection Framework evaluation criteria.

68. A minority of schools are establishing **CLEAR AND REALISTIC TARGETS** for improvement, sometimes expressed in terms of a percentage increase in National Curriculum assessment results. This is particularly the case with schools in the literacy or numeracy projects. Most schools express their desire to raise standards in a rather vague exhortation to do better, without specific goals against which progress can be measured. Inspectors frequently criticise school development plans for not being precise enough or ambitious enough in these respects.

69. **GOVERNING BODIES** are increasingly aware of their responsibilities and confident in exercising them. They are usually very supportive of their schools and

welcome specific responsibilities such as for special educational needs, a subject or a year group. In many schools the governors have taken the lead in the improvements in site security seen in recent months. Governors are less frequently involved in strategic planning or decisions about the curriculum. Nor are they sufficiently involved in monitoring or evaluating the effectiveness of their schools or the outcomes of their financial decisions. In particular, few governing bodies establish and use rigorously clear and relevant performance indicators to help them make justifiable decisions about the salary of the headteacher.

### **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

**70.** Average class sizes have shown a small increase in recent years. The pupil:teacher ratio has risen from 22.4 in 1993 to 23.4 in 1997. This is often because schools have decided to allocate an increasing proportion of their budget to support and administrative staffing, recognising the value of additional adult support in the classroom. In most cases non-teaching staff are effectively deployed and have a positive impact on the work, especially in classes with younger children. Where Specialist Teacher Assistants have been properly trained and suitably deployed they contribute significantly to raising standards in numeracy and literacy<sup>10</sup>. In about four per cent of schools shortages of staff are so serious that they have a significant impact on the capability of the school to teach the National Curriculum.

**71.** In one in six schools arrangements for the professional development of staff have significant shortcomings. **IN-SERVICE EDUCATION AND TRAINING (INSET)** in such schools is poorly matched to the needs of the school. Staff who have been on training courses often do not have an opportunity to feed back to other staff. On the other hand, there are some good examples of schools developing the role of teachers as trainers and enabling them to make effective use of what they have learned on training courses. The successful INSET courses for the National Literacy Project have demonstrated the positive impact of carefully planned, well-focused INSET on the quality of teaching. Teacher appraisal has yet to make a serious impact on the quality of teaching in the majority of schools. In less than half of primary schools is appraisal well established and meeting statutory requirements.

**72.** The **ACCOMMODATION** is good in nearly half of primary schools, but in one in eight it is inadequate in some respects. The principal weaknesses are: a lack of sufficient outdoor or indoor accommodation for the teaching of physical education; a lack of access to running water, often in temporary classrooms, and particularly affecting the teaching of art; and poor-quality accommodation such as leaking roofs, crumbling plaster, flaking paintwork and bleak, unpleasant outdoor play areas.

**73.** The **QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF LEARNING RESOURCES** are good overall in three in ten schools and are inadequate in about one in ten. One in eight schools has inadequate books for English. Too many book corners, for example, have worn and dated stock. Many schools find it difficult to supervise access to their libraries, with the result that valuable collections of books remain underused. Schools joining the National Literacy Project often find that they need to accumulate, in a short space of time, two particular types of resources: enlarged texts ["big books"] and sets of books. While some additional finance is provided for the project schools, this is rarely enough to buy the considerable quantity of new books required by the project. Outdoor equipment is the weakest element of the resourcing for under fives in

primary schools, and there are shortcomings in the provision of books, language resources and construction materials in nearly one in five nursery schools.

74. Obviously, schools have different priorities for spending. They allocate different proportions of their budgets to resources and vary in effectiveness in the use they make of the funds available to them. HMI conducted a survey of a sample of schools where resources were judged to be inadequate. In half of the primary schools in the survey, the money spent on resources was ineffectively used. For example, several schools continued to spend heavily on improving their already adequate computing facilities even though there were severe shortages of books. Those subject co-ordinators who lacked expertise in their subject often made poor use of the funds available to them, particularly in practical subjects such as art and design and technology. A significant number of the primary schools admitted that they were unaware of the precise nature of resource shortages in subjects other than English, mathematics and science until these were identified through inspection. Insufficient funding partly explained the unsatisfactory learning resources in one-third of the primary schools visited.

### **The efficiency of the school**

75. In nearly three-quarters of schools, the quality of **FINANCIAL CONTROL AND ADMINISTRATION** is good or very good. Many schools are effectively employing the services of a bursar, either as a member of the school staff or as part of a specialist service provided by the LEA. Day-to-day administration is almost always efficient, with effective systems in place for budgetary control. Indeed, in only a very few schools are financial control and administration poor. Good use is made of external audits and schools act quickly and successfully upon recommendations made.

76. By and large, schools use resources and accommodation well. In many schools, sums of money are allocated annually to curriculum co-ordinators who are then responsible for resourcing their subjects in line with agreed policies and development plans.

77. Half of schools are good or very good at **FINANCIAL PLANNING**, with a further one-third satisfactory. Governing bodies are increasingly involved with their senior management teams in setting budgets and distributing funds. However, in about one in six schools, financial planning is insufficiently linked to development planning, and not enough thought is given to establishing procedures for evaluating the cost-effectiveness or opportunity costs of spending decisions. Less than one in ten schools provides poor value for money. Two in five schools provide good value for money. Budget surpluses continue to vary from school to school, from about two to ten per cent of income. In most cases the larger surpluses are intentionally accumulated to pay for specific projects, such as refurbishing or improving a library.

In summary, most primary schools provide a broad and balanced curriculum. The large majority of schools establish a good ethos; well over half are well led, but leadership is weak in one in six schools. In order to improve the quality of education the following issues need to be addressed:

- the use of assessment information;
- the level of detail in schemes of work to ensure that pupils receive increasingly demanding work as they move through the school;
- monitoring standards and evaluating the quality of teaching within schools;
- the quality of leadership in the schools where it is weak;
- the quality and effectiveness of INSET and teacher appraisal.

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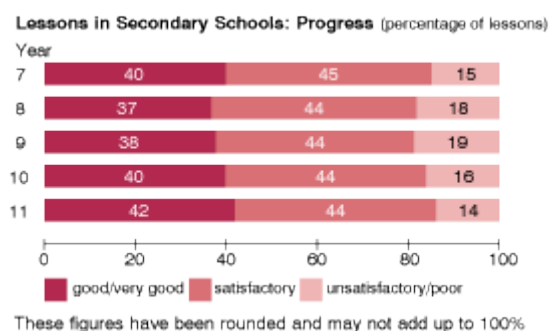
<sup>10</sup>See [paragraphs 295-7](#)

## Secondary schools

### Educational standards achieved

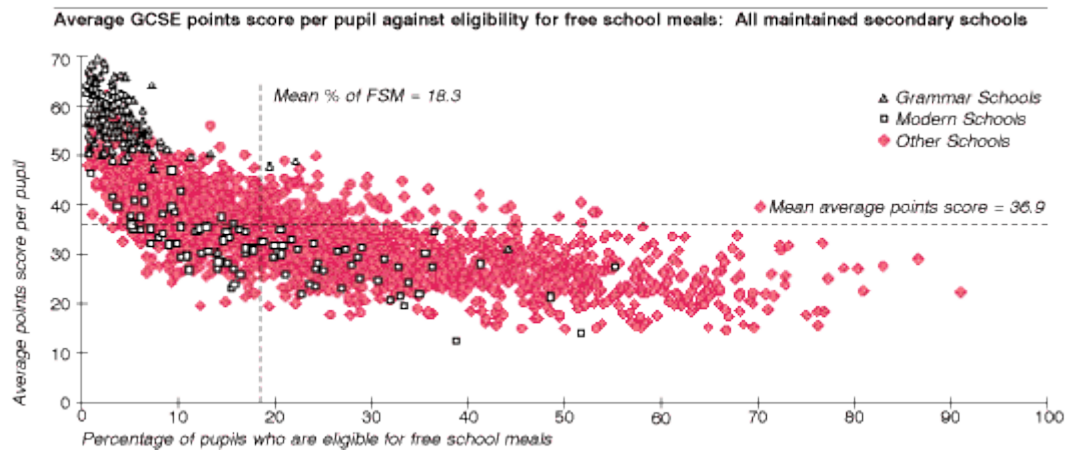
78. Standards of achievement in secondary schools have continued to improve gradually. With the exception of English, GCSE results have shown another slight year-on-year improvement in most subjects. The average points score per pupil has increased from 35.0 points in 1996 to 36.9 in 1997<sup>11</sup>. The proportion of pupils gaining five or more A\* to C grades has increased from 42.6 to 43.1 per cent. The proportion of pupils gaining 5 GCSEs at grade G or above has also improved, but about one in eight pupils still fail to achieve this level and one in sixteen pupils still leaves school without any GCSE qualifications. National Curriculum test results at Key Stage 3 have also improved. Nevertheless, about 40 per cent of pupils failed to reach the level of attainment expected of them in the core subjects at age 14.

79. Inspection shows that pupils make good overall progress in nearly half of secondary schools, but there is substantial underachievement in about one in ten schools in Key Stage 3 and one in sixteen at Key Stage 4<sup>12</sup>. The chart below shows inspectors' judgements of progress in lessons. This shows that pupils get off to a sound start in Year 7 but progress slows in Years 8 and 9 before picking up in Key Stage 4.



80. This overall picture of sound progress and gradual improvement in standards masks the significant variation in the performance of schools in broadly similar circumstances. On the chart below, the average points score per pupil is plotted against the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals for each school in the country. Two things stand out. First, as eligibility for free school meals increases, the average points score tends to decrease. The more disadvantaged the intake, the lower the average score.





81. The second important point is the wide range of scores for schools with broadly similar intakes. For example, schools with the average eligibility for free school meals have scores ranging from about 25 to 45 points. Variation in the performance of individual pupils remains very wide. The average points score of the highest attaining quarter of pupils in 1996 was 58.4, whilst that of the lowest attaining quarter was 8.3 points. This wide gap shows no sign of narrowing.

82. In a range of subjects, inspectors report the difficulties which arise where pupils do not have sufficient grasp of the accumulating body of **FACTUAL KNOWLEDGE** necessary to make further progress in the subject and especially to support the development of conceptual understanding. For example, in mathematics where pupils' knowledge of number facts is weak, and in both science and geography where knowledge is fragmentary, progress is, not surprisingly, impeded by pupils' inability to recall and apply their knowledge in new circumstances or make generalisations. Pupils' progress in history suffers when their knowledge is narrowly based, and insufficient revision has taken place to reinforce and widen their understanding of the past. In modern foreign languages the range of language used by pupils in Key Stage 4 is often limited, partly because their grasp of grammar is too weak and consequently they lack confidence in applying language to new situations. In modern foreign languages and science in particular, but also in other subjects, pupils need strategies for committing key material to memory, and drawing on it. Teachers need to give the necessary time to ensure that this learning takes place.

83. Additionally, in several subjects, particularly in Key Stage 3, standards in **WRITING** are constrained by pupils' limited technical ability and drafting skills and by the narrow range of styles that they use. These deficiencies threaten higher attainment, for example, in interpretation, evaluation and explanation in mathematics and science, in analysing causal factors in history, in exploration of geographical phenomena and interrelationships, and in interpretation and evaluation of religious language and symbolism. This problem is compounded when subject teachers do not sufficiently play their part in providing opportunities for extended writing for particular purposes. The development of writing skills is therefore, as the Bullock Report<sup>13</sup> noted in 1975, a matter requiring attention across the curriculum in many schools.



In summary, there is evidence of a gradual improvement in standards achieved by pupils in secondary schools. To continue this improvement, secondary schools need to consider these issues:

- how to raise attainment towards the level of the highest achieving schools with similar intakes;
- how to narrow the wide gap between the attainment of different pupils by improving the performance of low attaining pupils;
- the dip in pupils' progress in Years 8 and 9;
- ensuring pupils have a sufficient grasp of an accumulating body of knowledge and are able to draw upon it with confidence, across the curriculum;
- taking concerted action to improve pupils' writing skills across a range of subjects.

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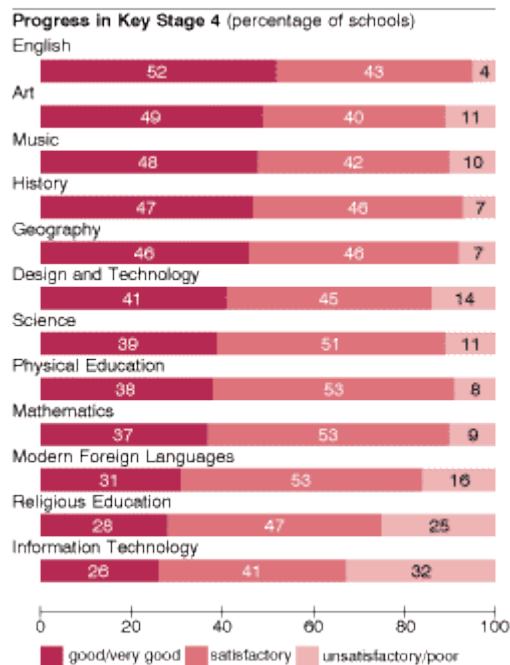
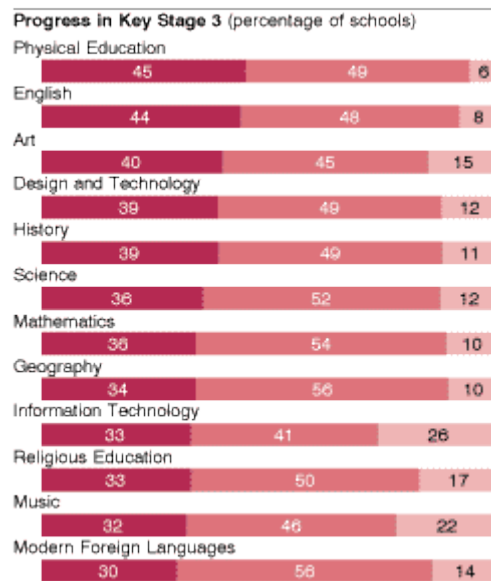
<sup>11</sup>OFSTED analysis of DfEE data 1997. The points score per pupil is calculated by allocating 1 point for a G; 2 points for an F; up to 8 points for an A\*, for each subject taken.

<sup>12</sup>See [Annex 2](#) for explanation of the interpretation of the inspection data

<sup>13</sup>*A Language for Life: a report under the chairmanship of Sir Alan Bullock*, HMSO, 1975

### **Standards in National Curriculum subjects and religious education**

84. The charts below show inspection judgements of the progress made by pupils in different subjects. In most subjects pupils make better gains in knowledge, understanding and skills in Key Stage 4 than in Key Stage 3. Information technology, religious education and physical education are exceptions. There are considerable variations across subjects. Progress is often good in English, history and art. On the other hand, religious education and information technology are unsatisfactory in one in four and one in three schools respectively in Key Stage 4.



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

**85.** In **ENGLISH**, speaking and listening skills are generally good, but some pupils do not listen with concentration and find it difficult to distinguish between the need for formal and informal speech in different situations. Some pupils continue to develop as independent, responsive readers, with good comprehension skills and the ability to appreciate literature from different times and cultures. However, other pupils reach a plateau in their reading skills in Key Stage 3. They no longer enjoy reading and they find it difficult to use reference books. Writing is the weakest aspect of English. While many pupils develop a mature, accurate style, others continue to make basic mistakes in grammar, spelling and punctuation. Other weaknesses include a limited vocabulary and an inability to write well in a sufficiently wide range of styles.

**86.** In **MATHEMATICS**, progress in upper sets is generally good, but too many low attaining pupils make little or no progress. Most pupils make satisfactory progress in

number using pencil and paper methods for calculation. In too many schools progress in mathematics is impeded by pupils' inability to retain and recall basic number facts quickly and accurately, and to perform routine calculations mentally. Where pupils use calculators for simple calculations, mental arithmetic is often weak. Pupils' estimation skills are generally weak, and many pupils lack the strategies needed to determine whether their answers are correct. Progress is better in shape and space and in data handling, sometimes aided by good use of computers. Although pupils practise routine algebraic manipulative skills, progress is hampered by poor understanding of algebraic concepts and of the relationship between algebra and arithmetic. Standards in using and applying mathematics are weaker than other aspects, reflecting the lack of attention given to this area in many schools. Nevertheless, international surveys<sup>14</sup> show that English pupils perform better in practical tests in mathematics than pupils from most other countries.

87. National tests and examination results in **SCIENCE** show that attainment is rising slowly. Pupils progress rapidly, adjusting to the demands of laboratory-based science at the start of Key Stage 3, but many repeat work encountered in primary school. Progress is more rapid in Key Stage 4, although here too there is some unproductive repetition of topics covered earlier. There is wide variation between schools in the emphasis given to investigative science, especially at Key Stage 3. Nevertheless, international comparisons show that pupils' investigative skills compare well with their counterparts in other countries.

88. The spread of attainment and differing rates of progress, both within and between schools, are wider in **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY** than in any other subject. Some work is outstanding, and contributes towards progress in other subjects. Half of schools fail to comply with statutory requirements. In these schools, progress is often unsatisfactory in important aspects of the subject, such as modelling and higher-order aspects of data handling and control. Progress is better in Key Stage 3 than Key Stage 4, where many pupils do not follow the full programme of study, are subject to a relatively narrow diet, and lack the stimulus of statutory assessment. Standards in GCSE full and short courses are, however, good. Overall, pupils' attitudes towards information technology are very positive, and increasing competence and ability to work independently help to develop pupils' self-esteem and confidence in other subjects.

89. Achievement in **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY** continues to improve, particularly in Key Stage 3. Teachers have gained confidence in the revised National Curriculum and use the increasing range of curriculum support materials which have become available. Pupils are increasingly dexterous in handling materials and equipment and, to a lesser extent, confident in the use of information technology in a range of design and technology applications. Overall, however, designing skills are not as good as they should be, and weaker pupils in particular have difficulty applying them in new and different situations. One in six schools fails to comply with statutory requirements in Key Stage 4. In one-quarter of schools poor levels of resources severely constrain the range and quality of pupils' work.

90. Achievement in **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES** in both Key Stages 3 and 4 compares unfavourably with other subjects. Most pupils are well motivated by starting a new subject in Year 7 and make good progress, particularly in the first half of that year. The momentum slows in Years 8 and 9. The main weakness is that the use of the target language by most pupils does not develop sufficiently in important

aspects of the Programme of Study Part I, for example in initiating and developing conversations and in varying language to suit context, audience and purpose. These weaknesses are partly due to the limited range of opportunities in Key Stage 4 and partly to insufficiently thorough coverage of the ground in Key Stage 3.

91. The progress made in **GEOGRAPHY** is significantly better in Key Stage 4 than in Key Stage 3. At both key stages most pupils have a sound understanding of geographical processes and there are examples of good investigation work and some outstanding individual studies. The disappointing proportion of good work in Key Stage 3 in relation to other subjects is often due to a lack of specialist teaching and a lack of clear objectives in lesson plans. The underachievement of some pupils is attributable to the low level of work set - colouring, copying, filling in words and using narrowly focused worksheets.

92. In history, better use is now being made by teachers of the National Curriculum programmes of study to support rather than over-prescribe their work. The trends towards an increased emphasis on extended writing and the development of historical enquiry continue. Generally, pupils' application of knowledge is sound, although often connections between present and past work are not made to reinforce pupils' enduring knowledge base and develop their broader understanding. Pupils' understanding of interpretations of history is a relative weakness, reflecting the conceptual difficulty of this Key Element. In those schools where pupils' progress is slow it is mainly because of either low-level tasks or limited resources. Progress in Key Stage 4 is more rapid than in Key Stage 3, and compares favourably with most other subjects.

93. In **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**, the best achievement is in games. In gymnastics, girls achieve better than boys, but few pupils reach a high level of attainment. GCSE courses have a positive effect on levels of attainment at Key Stage 4 and more schools are now offering these. The teaching on these courses is generally good; pupils respond with enthusiasm and achieve well.

94. In two in five schools, pupils make good progress in **ART** in Key Stage 3. In these schools, pupils master techniques and processes, and good drawing skills enable them to evolve compositions and designs in painting, printmaking, collage, textiles and sculpture. In the one in seven schools where pupils underachieve in art, the work is undemanding and the pace is slow. This often leads to disaffection among the pupils in Year 9. In Key Stage 4 progress is mostly good. Individuality is expressed through the accomplished handling of imagery, which often shows originality as well as reflecting the styles and genres of other art works. Pupils increasingly use technical terms, discuss the work of artists and speculate about its meaning. Where progress is poor, pupils have little scope for personal involvement in their work and rely too heavily on second-hand imagery copied from photographs, illustrations and comics.

95. In **MUSIC**, pupils' achievements in Key Stage 3 continue to compare poorly with other subjects. However, there are many schools where attainment in composing, singing, playing instruments, listening and appraising is improving, and few where it is worsening. There is undue variation in pupils' achievements in different schools, even when schools make similar amounts of time available for the subject, and have resources and accommodation of similar quality. In Year 9, underachievement in many schools is often linked with insufficient attention to skills that pupils need if they are to express themselves musically, insufficient practical work, or unchallenging

tasks. The achievements of the small number of pupils who continue music in Key Stage 4 compare well with other subjects.

96. In Key Stages 3 and 4, **DANCE** becomes an option within the physical education National Curriculum. In the minority of schools, where it is chosen mainly as an activity for girls, progress is often more rapid than in other aspects of the work in physical education. **DRAMA** is sometimes taught as part of English, and sometimes as a discrete subject leading to GCSE. It is also taught as part of performing arts courses, as well as being important as an extra-curricular activity. At best, pupils acquire a wide range of skills in Key Stage 3, using them effectively to bring a text to life, create characters, explore a theme or develop skills in the National Curriculum Order for English. In the GCSE pupils build and sustain roles well, introduce and resolve conflict and adapt language to meet a range of needs. They explore sensitive issues and take on responsibility for structuring and presenting their work. Pupils appreciate good drama performed by others. However, progress in drama is unsatisfactory in one school in six, and is very variable even within schools, often reflecting its status and the relatively high number of non-specialist teachers.

97. In most schools, pupils' progress in **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION** is at least satisfactory, but it is less often good than in other subjects, particularly in Key Stage 4. Where progress is good, pupils are familiar with people, practices and events in Christianity and can make connections and contrasts with other religions. At best, pupils can discuss, contextualise and interpret complex material and ideas. However, progress is restricted in some schools by an emphasis on factual knowledge at the expense of skills and understanding. In Key Stage 4 in particular, progress in many schools is limited by the lack of time available for the subject and the lack of expertise of many non-specialist teachers.

### **The Part One GNVQ**

98. Evidence from the Part One GNVQ pilot indicates that the course is sufficiently challenging to be introduced nationally. Students sustain a high level of commitment and are strongly motivated by the opportunities to work independently and to develop contacts with adults working in vocational areas. Employers are generally impressed by the standards achieved. Pupils' achievement on Intermediate courses is mostly satisfactory and more able pupils often achieve well.

At Foundation level, achievement on the business and health and social care courses is satisfactory, but there is significant underachievement on half of the manufacturing courses. Lower achieving pupils are often seriously hindered by poor basic literacy and numeracy skills.

### **Achievement in different types of school**

99. Inspection shows that the progress made by pupils and the quality of teaching are similar in grant maintained (GM) and LEA maintained comprehensive schools. In GM comprehensive schools the average GCSE points score per pupil in 1997 was 38.9 compared with 35.9 in LEA maintained comprehensives. However, GM comprehensive schools are on the whole more advantaged, and when schools with similar intakes are compared the difference reduces substantially.

## Achievement in schools serving disadvantaged areas

100. There is a strong and persistent link between low standards and **SOCIO-ECONOMIC DISADVANTAGE**. In schools where over 40 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals an average of 20 per cent of pupils gain five GCSEs at grade C or above, as against the national average of 43 per cent. These schools serve disadvantaged communities in inner city areas, on some outlying estates, and in parts of some smaller towns where there has been marked industrial decline. In several respects these schools are working against the odds. Many pupils enter secondary schools with poor basic skills. A significant number have special educational needs. Additionally, many of these schools are undersubscribed and often receive a steady flow of new arrivals, some of whom may be new to English (and in some cases new to schooling) while others are pupils excluded from elsewhere. Despite these difficult circumstances, some schools make considerable progress in raising attainment in the GCSE. For example, a school in inner London with over three-quarters of pupils eligible for free school meals improved the percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A\* to C grades from 11 per cent in 1994 to 40 per cent in 1997. During this period the average points score per pupil increased from 17.5 to 32.4. However, schools often find it difficult to sustain improvement, and experience a switchback of rises and falls in attainment against national measures.

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<sup>14</sup>Third International Mathematics and Science Study, 1997

### The achievement of different groups of pupils

101. The difference in the performance of boys and girls continues to be a very significant issue. At GCSE the average points score for girls is 39.2 compared with 34.7 for boys. Boys' relatively poor performance is often linked to weakness in their basic skills and failings in their commitment to school. However, schools are getting better at monitoring the progress of pupils, particularly in Key Stage 4, and some schools are giving increased tutorial support to boys who are identified as underachieving. Additionally, some schools are attempting to combat an anti-achievement culture, through emphasising success and reward and establishing closer links with parents. In many cases, however, schools do not take remedial action until the GCSE examinations approach (which is too late). Some are now beginning to confront the problem in Key Stage 3.

102. The pattern of achievement of pupils from ethnic minority groups remains very complex. Identification of trends is hindered by the lack of detailed and accurate data produced for, or by, schools and LEAs. In general, pupils of African Caribbean heritage, and particularly boys, continue to underachieve. Some schools, however, have successfully tackled the underachievement of specific ethnic minority groups by well-targeted initiatives. These include additional tutorial time for monitoring pupils' academic progress, setting specific targets for pupils, and homework clubs at lunchtime and after school, sometimes with Section 11 teachers as the driving force. These initiatives have improved attendance and behaviour and increased parental involvement, and in a small number of cases the pupils' examination results have improved. Pupils for whom **ENGLISH IS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE** often make good progress, especially where they receive continued support to refine their knowledge and use of language as they become more competent. Traveller children



generally underachieve. Despite successful initiatives by individual schools and Traveller Education Services, their progress is limited by poor attendance and a disproportionately high rate of exclusion.

**103. VERY ABLE PUPILS** achieve less well than expected in about three in ten schools. In only one school in ten is their progress particularly good. Here, extension work is well planned and pupils are given good opportunities to develop higher-order learning skills. These schools often make good use of outside agencies to support the curriculum, and they monitor carefully the progress and development of their able pupils and the appropriateness of the teaching to meet their needs.

**104.** In the majority of schools, pupils with **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS** make good progress in basic skills. In particular their reading age increases steadily, their spelling improves and they advance in their numerical skills. Pupils usually make sound gains in understanding where there is in-class support, with teachers encouraging them to identify and remedy misunderstandings and ensuring they stay on task. Progress across the curriculum is slower where individual education plans are not well used, where progress is not monitored, and where specific learning difficulties are not supported.

### **Attitudes and behaviour**

**105.** Pupils' **ATTITUDES** towards their work are good in eight in ten schools and are satisfactory in all but a small minority. Pupils respond well in six in ten lessons in Key Stages 3 and 4, although there is a significant decline in quality of response from Year 7 to Year 9, where it is unsatisfactory in over one lesson in ten. In general, pupils work well independently and in collaboration with other pupils.

**106.** The overwhelming majority of schools are well-ordered institutions. In three-quarters of schools **BEHAVIOUR** is generally good. Pupils are self-disciplined, courteous and considerate. They respond well to systems of rewards and sanctions. When they are given the opportunity to do so, pupils display initiative and a sense of responsibility. Schools which promote good behaviour have an effective code of conduct. They have well organised and effective teaching, and staff are consistent in their approaches to managing pupils. Behaviour is unsatisfactory in only one school in twenty. There is, however, a higher proportion of schools where the overall picture is good, but with occasional incidents of poor behaviour in lessons and around and outside the school. A small minority of pupils do not comply with school codes. Some become involved in bullying and racial and sexual harassment. Most schools are vigilant about such issues but a few are less willing to accept that bullying, harassment and intimidation take place, and lack effective strategies for dealing with them.

**107.** There has been a small rise in the number of **FIXED-TERM AND PERMANENT EXCLUSIONS**. Exclusion is the last resort for schools to deal with a very small minority of pupils who display attitudes or behaviour which are unacceptable. The majority of exclusions are for a fixed term and are used as punishment for persistent poor behaviour. Schools with very similar intakes vary considerably in their rates of exclusion. Schools which are successful in managing behaviour also carefully monitor exclusions to identify patterns. They carefully monitor and guide pupils' academic and social progress and adopt strategies for defusing disagreement and conflict.

Where such practice is consistent, exclusions are falling. When schools lack a behaviour code which includes gradually increasing sanctions, the significance of exclusion is devalued and often too many pupils are excluded.

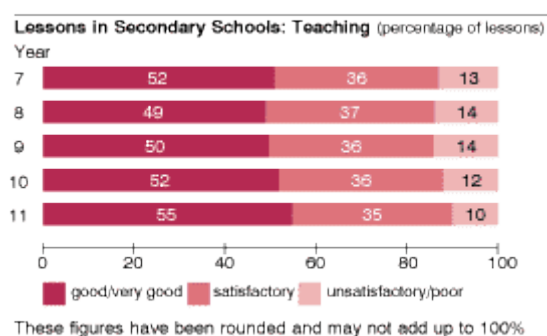
108. Permanent exclusion continues to be used sparingly by the majority of schools. In the last year for which statistics are available, permanent exclusions increased to 10,300 from 9,200 in the previous year. This represents 0.34 per cent of secondary school pupils<sup>15</sup>. Boys are four times more likely to be excluded than girls. About three-quarters of those excluded are lower attaining pupils. A disproportionately high proportion of pupils in the care of the local authority, and pupils who are of minority ethnic heritage, especially African Caribbean boys and Traveller children, are permanently excluded. Pupils with emotional and behavioural problems are also more likely to be permanently excluded. More effective inter-agency working is needed to ensure suitable provision for these children. Even so, there are no easy answers to the problems that lead to the exclusion of disturbed and disruptive pupils. This important issue must continue to command serious attention.

109. ATTENDANCE is 90 per cent or over in more than two-thirds of schools<sup>16</sup>, but there has been another small increase in the number of schools where it has fallen below this figure. The considerable efforts of some schools and Education Welfare Services to ensure good attendance are undermined by parents who condone their children's absence or withdraw pupils during term time for family holidays. This can be particularly damaging for pupils whose learning requires carefully planned steps and constant reinforcement.

## Quality of education

### Teaching

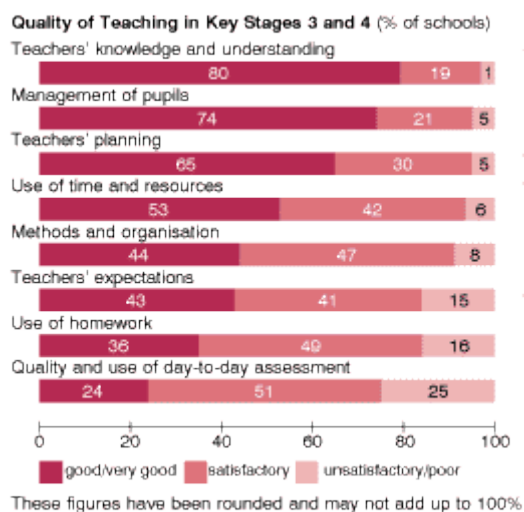
110. Teaching is better in Key Stage 4 than in Key Stage 3. One in seven lessons is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 3 but only one in nine in Key Stage 4. The chart below shows that the weakest teaching is in Years 8 and 9 and the best is in Year 11.



111. Inspectors evaluate a number of aspects of teaching which are shown on the chart on page 38. Overall, in three-quarters of departments teachers show good **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING** of their subjects. The impact of teachers' lack of specialist knowledge is particularly strong in certain subjects. The relatively low incidence of good progress made by pupils in geography in Key Stage 3 is linked to the combination of a relatively high proportion of non-specialists and teachers with other responsibilities and schemes of work which are insufficiently sharply focused to provide them with the necessary support. In modern foreign languages problems arise



where non-specialists or specialists teaching their second or third foreign language have insecure command of the target language. In such cases pupils can acquire defects in accuracy and pronunciation which are difficult to eradicate later on.



112. Teachers generally manage pupils well and maintain good discipline, sometimes in difficult circumstances. Most teachers also plan lessons effectively and use time and resources efficiently. The well planned lessons have clear objectives with realistic strategies for achieving them. Inspectors judge **TEACHING METHODS** to be good in just under half of schools but unsatisfactory in about one in ten. The good teaching makes use of a carefully selected range of methods to extend or deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding, and develop their skills. This requires that teachers have realistic but sufficiently high **EXPECTATIONS** of their pupils and pitch their exposition at the right level, formulate questions which encourage pupils to think more deeply, and set tasks which are well matched to the ability levels of the pupils. Teachers' expectations are good in over four in ten schools, but too low in one in six in Key Stage 3 and one in eight in Key Stage 4. These low expectations generally lead to narrow undemanding tasks that limit opportunities for pupils to think critically and to take responsibility for organising and extending their work.

113. Many schools have difficulty in providing appropriately for the full **RANGE OF ATTAINMENT** amongst their pupils. Last year's annual report commented on the relative benefits of grouping by ability in some subjects, particularly for higher and lowest attaining pupils. Limiting the range of pupil ability in the group, generally makes it easier for the teacher to pitch the demand at the right level. The picture, however, remains complex and benefits vary considerably across subjects and year groups. In mathematics the rapid progress made by pupils in upper sets is in part offset by the lack of progress made by pupils in lower sets. Particular difficulties arise in English in teaching low ability groups partly because the preponderance of boys in these groups reinforces negative stereotypes on the part of both pupil and teacher. These patterns reaffirm that grouping alone is not the solution to providing effectively for pupils at different levels of attainment.

114. **MARKING** of pupils' work is satisfactory or better in the majority of schools but good in no more than one-third. Marking is regularly and conscientiously undertaken, particularly in Key Stage 4 as the GCSE approaches, but it is not always to optimum effect. The good marking demonstrates to pupils the teachers' expectations, rewards what they have done well, and shows how work can be further improved.

**115.** In general, day-to-day **ASSESSMENT** continues to be the weakest aspect of teaching. The quality and use of assessment by teachers is good in only one-quarter of schools, and is weak in a further one-quarter. It is rather better in Key Stage 4 than in Key Stage 3. In part this is because GCSE provides clearer objectives and assessment criteria than do the programmes of study in Key Stage 3. In the core subjects the best assessment is in English, where teachers draw on a wider range of methods, make assessment criteria clear and relate them effectively to level descriptions. Assessment in mathematics and science continues to depend heavily on short, end-of-unit written tests and with too little attention paid to the development and assessment of Attainment Target 1, at least until well into Year 9.

**116.** The teaching of pupils with **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS** is often good, particularly where support and class teachers liaise successfully to combine work in withdrawal groups, in-class support and individual work. Effective support teachers tailor work to meet individual needs and help pupils with particular difficulties to organise their work and to sustain their concentration.

**117.** The quality of support for pupils who need to learn **ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EAL)** is satisfactory or better in four in five lessons, and at best has been a positive influence in enriching language activities across subjects for all pupils. Particular strengths of this teaching are in the support of early stage language learners, in the improvement of home-school contact, and in the advice given on the identification of EAL pupils with special educational needs. Despite examples of good collaborative working with Section 11 staff, the majority of mainstream staff continue to require help in planning suitable tasks and using teaching styles which are appropriate for EAL learners.

**118.** **HOMEWORK** is used well in only one-third of schools in Key Stage 3, and is ineffective in one-fifth. It is slightly better in Key Stage 4. Many schools have a policy which sets out the school's expectations for homework, but few fully meet their intentions. In particular, much of the homework set is mundane or consists of finishing off the lesson's work, and fails to stimulate or provide appropriate challenge. It is also irregularly and inconsistently set. In some schools teachers have difficulty in setting homework because of a lack of appropriate resources, in particular insufficient textbooks for pupils to take home.

In summary, the gradual improvement in the quality of teaching has continued and most lessons in secondary schools are well taught. Nevertheless, the quality of teaching in one in eight lessons is unsatisfactory. To improve the quality of teaching the following issues need to be addressed:

- the dip in quality of teaching in Years 8 and 9;
- the expectations that teachers have of pupils;
- the quality of homework and the consistency with which it is set and done;

- the quality and use of day-to-day assessment.

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<sup>15</sup>DfEE data for 1995/96

<sup>16</sup>DfEE data for 1995/96

### **The curriculum and assessment**

**119.** The **BREADTH, BALANCE AND RELEVANCE** of the curriculum are at least satisfactory in the majority of schools. In general, schools have welcomed the flexibility in Key Stage 4 introduced by the 1995 revisions to the National Curriculum. However, many have been cautious in making immediate changes to their own curriculum, and have deferred decisions on matters such as adopting short course GCSEs and whether to plan for introduction of Part One GNVQ until the picture becomes clearer. The provision for lower attaining pupils and for reluctant learners is a matter of concern for many schools. Some schools have adopted, or are seeking to develop, sub-GCSE courses in Key Stage 4 and are reviewing the numbers of courses which it is appropriate for these pupils to take.

**120.** The majority of schools comply with **STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS** for the National Curriculum for both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. Four in ten schools in Key Stage 3 and half of schools in Key Stage 4 fail to comply with information technology requirements. Some of these schools have insufficient equipment to meet requirements. Others attempt a cross-curricular approach to teaching information technology but are unable to meet the demands on planning and expertise. One in six schools fails to comply with statutory requirements in design and technology in Key Stage 4. Provision of religious education is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 3 where it is incorporated within other courses such as humanities or personal and social education, or given too little time. It is unsatisfactory in over one-third of schools in Key Stage 4, in some of which it entirely disappears. However, the GCSE short course in religious education has proved popular and has improved provision in a substantial number of schools.

**121.** In nearly one in six of schools in Key Stage 3 and one in eight in Key Stage 4 the curriculum planning is inadequate to ensure that pupils build on previous experience and encounter increasingly demanding work as they move up through the school. The weakest subjects in this respect are information technology, music and also design and technology in Key Stage 3 where the modular nature of many courses requires detailed planning and use of assessment information if pupils are not simply to repeat the generic designing and making skills.

**122.** Curriculum planning for the **PART ONE GNVQ** pilot is at least satisfactory in about three-quarters of schools. Where it is weak, teachers have rarely drawn up schemes of work covering the two years of the course, and planning for the teaching and assessment of key skills lacks sufficient detail. Four out of five schools allocate the courses the recommended 20 per cent of curriculum time. Where less time than this is made available, teachers find it difficult to plan for the effective teaching of key skills and to exploit sufficiently the vocational dimensions of the subjects.

**123.** Curricular provision for **PUPILS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS** in ordinary schools is generally sound, partly as a result of the careful identification of individual needs. It is

unsatisfactory in only one school in eight. Key features of the Code of Practice for special needs are in place in schools, but this work has proved very onerous for the special needs co-ordinators. The effectiveness of subject departments in responding to individual education plans varies even within the same school. This depends on the extent to which teachers understand the implications of the plans and adopt teaching styles which enable pupils with special needs to participate fully in lessons.

**124. CAREERS EDUCATION AND GUIDANCE** are good in over two-thirds of schools and satisfactory in a further one-quarter. In a minority of schools, teachers are poorly equipped to offer advice or to help pupils to take greater responsibility for their career choices. At its best, careers guidance makes effective use of the Careers Service, makes good use of work experience and is enriched by speakers, visits, conventions and industry days. These elements also make an important contribution to pupils' economic and industrial understanding. However, this and environmental education and citizenship are rarely the subject of a planned and sequential programme.

**125.** Over four in five schools plan well for pupils' **HEALTH EDUCATION**. Sex education is good in six in ten schools and adequate in a further one-third. Most schools have recently revised their sex education policies. A minority of schools provide insufficiently clear information on parents' rights to withdraw their children from these classes. Drug education is also predominantly good, broadening and deepening pupils' knowledge of the effects and dangers of drug taking and teaching them the skills needed to resist when they are offered drugs. A significant number of schools, however, lack adequate policies for dealing with drug-related incidents, and consequently are in a poor position to respond appropriately to any incidents which may arise.

**126.** Careers education and guidance, sex education and health and drug education are usually part of a programme of **PERSONAL AND SOCIAL EDUCATION**. Such programmes are well planned in one-quarter of schools, and are adequate in a further half of schools. There are a number of common concerns: an unclear relationship between personal and social education and the tutor period and, correspondingly, insufficiently defined roles for the specialist teacher and tutor; the status of the personal and social education course among pupils; and the monitoring of quality, which is inadequate in seven in ten schools.

**127.** Provision for **EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES** is good in three-quarters of schools, with a wide range of good-quality activities provided by committed teachers. However, such opportunities for enrichment and the development of skills are often taken up by the same minority of pupils. In increasing numbers of schools extra-curricular provision is being broadened to include extension studies for particular groups of pupils and homework clubs. A large majority of schools offer a wide range of extra-curricular sporting activities. Competitive team games dominate. Soccer, cricket, rugby, netball and hockey are the most popular and standards are generally good and at times very good. The proportion of pupils participating varies, from about one-fifth to half of pupils. Participation is generally higher in Years 7 to 9.

**128.** Many schools have yet to adjust **ASSESSMENT** arrangements to take account of revisions of the National Curriculum. Recording procedures, the use of level descriptions or end-of-key stage statutory teacher assessment and internal moderation need to be given further attention. In the first year of statutory teacher assessment in non-core subjects of the National Curriculum, many departments have worked in

isolation to devise effective strategies; and many core and non-core subject departments have made little use of SCAA exemplification materials to ensure consistency and accuracy of teacher assessments.

**129.** The majority of schools keep at least adequate **RECORDS** of pupils' attainment, but in a significant minority records are ineffective. Many schools are still exploring the best way to record attainment and progress after the National Curriculum revisions, and a few continue to adhere to over-complex records of National Curriculum attainment associated with the original National Curriculum structure.

**130.** Better use is made of assessment for setting pupils and reporting to parents than to determine pupils' individual needs or to adjust teaching programmes. Almost all schools make some use of assessment data to evaluate department and school performance, although in many schools the full potential of the data has not been realised. For example, some schools hold data on the performance of different ethnic or gender groups, of individual classes, and of subject departments, but have not acted upon it to set new school or departmental targets, or to adopt strategies for improvement.

**131.** The transfer and use of curriculum and assessment information from primary to secondary school remain areas of weakness. Procedures for the induction of pupils are usually well developed. Rarely is there a policy to guide the work of teachers in providing progression in the level of demand for all pupils. There are logistical difficulties in places where admissions arrangements are particularly complex. Additionally, Year 6 teachers find it difficult to liaise with secondary colleagues in a number of specific subject areas. Secondary school teachers are sometimes critical of the quality, diversity and timing of information received. However, even in schools which receive good-quality information on time, it is too often viewed negatively, or ignored on the grounds that schools prefer to give their new pupils "a fresh start". Many schools prefer to use standardised test results rather than National Curriculum test results as a basis for diagnostic and value-added analysis.

### **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

**132.** Schools provide very well for pupils' moral and social development and rather less well for their cultural development; but in nearly half of schools provision for **SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT** is unsatisfactory. Much of the responsibility for spiritual development rests with the teaching of religious education and upon the collective act of worship. In other subjects, such as English, history and art, the teaching makes useful but erratic contributions to spiritual development.

**133.** Seven in ten schools fail to comply with requirements for **COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**. Many schools provide valuable assemblies, but with a focus on moral and social issues rather than spirituality. Some schools have established procedures such as 'thought for the day' as a substitute for assemblies, but the quality of these varies with the commitment of the tutor, and generally they provide a poor spiritual experience. More fundamentally, while some headteachers support the present requirements and implement them effectively, many headteachers and individual teachers question the desirability of a daily act of worship; some are uneasy over the assumption of any single religious tradition, while others deny the value of introducing traditions other than their own. Some are philosophically at odds with the

notion that worship wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character should be required by law.

**134.** Pupils' **MORAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT** are generally successfully promoted by the school ethos, aims and curriculum. Parents, pupils, staff and governors have a high level of awareness of the values which the schools promote. There are clear expectations regarding behaviour and pupils can generally distinguish right from wrong. Moral issues form a significant part of personal and social education programmes. Opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills, such as co-operative working, through the curriculum are good. Pupils are generally encouraged to participate as members of a community with rights and responsibilities. In some schools, however, opportunities for responsibility are made available to only a relatively small number of pupils.

**135.** Provision for pupils' **CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT** is often piecemeal. Extra-curricular activities, including, for example, dance, in both the artistic and folk dance forms, make a valuable contribution to the development of cultural awareness and understanding in pupils. In general, there is a lack of clarity as to what is meant by cultural development. Schools and individual departments, such as English, geography, history and art need to be more explicit in identifying their contributions in this area. Some schools do not strike a balance between the pupils' own and other cultures, and some schools do little in policy or practice to address cultural diversity.

### **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

**136.** The majority of schools provide guidance for pupils through the **TUTORIAL SYSTEM** and the programme of personal and social education. School tutors vary greatly in effectiveness. Often the role is ill-defined, and the quality of the guidance offered usually varies, often widely. In almost half of schools, links between the pastoral and academic roles of the tutor are unsatisfactory.

**137.** Two-thirds of schools make a good contribution to the personal development of their pupils. This is an area of weakness in only one school in twenty. At best, the provision of a well-structured and relevant personal and social education programme, individual tutorial support, and a range of curricular and extra-curricular activities enhance pupils' own self-awareness and sense of worth and foster a greater sense of responsibility and community.

**138.** The overwhelming majority of schools have appropriate health and safety policies in place. Despite this, a high proportion of inspection reports raise health and safety issues, most of which are of a minor nature. However, a minority involve significant defects in specialist accommodation, general building deficiencies, road safety on the school site and concerns over security. Child protection measures are generally sound. There are effective, established procedures within most schools for dealing with incidents and for contacting the relevant outside agencies.

**139.** The majority of schools have comprehensive and effective induction programmes for the new pupil intake. In Key Stage 4, where appropriate, there are well-established liaison arrangements which help pupils to meet with staff from the local sixth-form and further education colleges and to follow up their interests if required. Some schools have developed effective links with the further education sector, for example, with pupils attending vocational courses at the college during



Key Stage 4 as a foundation and qualification for entry to the college's GNVQ and GCSE courses.

### **Partnership with parents and the community**

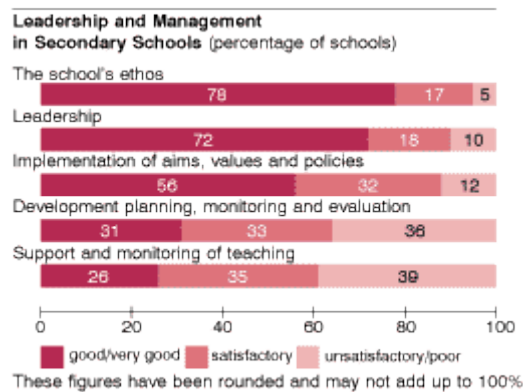
**140.** Partnership with parents and the community is satisfactory or better in the great majority of schools and only one in fourteen schools fails to provide satisfactory quality information to parents. Teachers spend considerable amounts of time writing reports to parents, but their quality remains inconsistent. In particular, parents receive mixed messages. Oral reports tend to be more hard-hitting than written reports, which sometimes use coded language. There is often a mismatch between pupils' perceptions of their attainment and progress and those of their teachers. Subject reports are often too general, with insufficient attention given to weaknesses as well as strengths in pupils' attainment and progress.

**141. PARENTS** are insufficiently involved in children's learning in nearly one in five schools. Parents' responses to OFSTED questionnaires indicate that they feel that they receive insufficient information about the areas of curriculum covered by their children, homework policies and details of the homework set, and specific matters such as coursework assignments. Good-quality information encourages parents to play an active role in promoting high standards. In most schools, pupils use a homework diary to record homework, and this provides an important link between parents and schools. However, the effectiveness with which the diaries are used varies greatly from school to school.

**142. LINKS WITH COMMUNITIES AND WITH BUSINESS** and industry continue to improve and are good in two-thirds of schools although few are systematic in developing pupils' economic and industrial awareness. Fruitful partnerships produce tangible educational and material gains, including links with local business partnerships or local engineers, and contributions by employers to industry days and sponsorships, and they help to raise the self-esteem and aspirations of young people.

### **Leadership and management**

**143.** Almost three-quarters of schools have headteachers and governors who provide clear educational direction and generate a sense of purpose. They ensure that aims, values and policies are agreed and explicit in the life of the school and give particular emphasis to seeking the highest academic achievement for all pupils. Schools with these characteristics tend to be improving. In the one in ten schools where leadership is weak, a lack of vision and ineffective policy implementation are associated with low standards of work and behaviour and with inadequate progress by pupils.



144. Monitoring standards and evaluating the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of the school continue to be the weakest aspects of management but there are indications of improvement. More schools have established effective systems for monitoring their performance using quantitative indicators. In contrast with primary schools, many secondary schools make effective use of quantitative performance indicators such as examination results to pinpoint strengths and weaknesses within the school. Increasingly, schools use this data to focus their evaluation strategies and to set appropriate targets for improvement. The best examples of school self-evaluation involve careful monitoring of standards using key indicators:

- course completion rates, punctuality and attendance;
- value added analysis of test and examination results by gender and ethnicity;

followed by evaluation strategies, including:

- classroom observation of teaching;
- sampling of pupils' work;
- tracking individual pupils;
- pupil interviews and surveys.

145. There are some particularly effective examples of schools working with LEA advisers in using the criteria in the OFSTED Inspection Framework to evaluate various aspects of performance. A number of LEAs also provide useful statistics and good advice on monitoring pupils' standards of achievement, using local and national comparative data.

146. **DEVELOPMENT PLANNING** is good or very good in only three schools in ten, and is unsatisfactory or poor in over a third. The development plan has a key role in the translation of aims and values into practice and gives the school a clear direction and sense of purpose. High-quality school development plans involve wide consultation with staff and governors, carefully chosen and prioritised objectives, a realistic number of achievable targets, and a mechanism that enables progress in meeting the targets to be monitored. Effective development planning has been a significant factor in taking some schools out of special measures. Where development planning is weak it is often over-ambitious, unprioritised and poorly co-ordinated, and implementation is inevitably sporadic. More commonly, there are weaknesses in the



extent to which plans build upon thorough evaluation and provide for monitoring of their effectiveness.

147. In most schools the day-to-day administration and communication are good. In well-managed schools the **GOVERNORS** provide consistent support for the work of the headteacher, keeping the school's work under constant review, sometimes linking with subject departments and making planned visits. At best, governing bodies are involved through their committee structure in all aspects of the strategic planning and individual governors often offer useful support based on their own professional expertise. In general, governing bodies fulfil their statutory duties, but are sometimes ill-informed about the provision of religious education and of collective worship, and also about curricular detail, for example sex education or information technology. Few governing bodies establish and use rigorous, clear and relevant indicators to help them make justifiable decisions about the salary of the headteacher.

148. **MIDDLE MANAGERS** (i.e. teachers carrying responsibility for the work of other staff) have a key role in raising standards but this is not fully developed in many schools. In particular, too many heads of department take the narrow view that their responsibility is for managing resources rather than people. Where middle managers are most effective there are good links with senior management, departmental or pastoral plans are well co-ordinated and middle managers are accountable for their implementation. Where links are unclear, departments set vague or unrealistic targets, and progress towards raising achievement is patchy and uncoordinated. The role of middle managers in monitoring the quality of teaching is often ill-defined.

### **Efficiency of the school**

149. The efficiency of financial control and school administration is generally sound and often good. At best, roles are clearly defined, and budgets are well managed and monitored, with monthly out-turn statements to enable departments to check their own spending. Recommendations made by auditors are taken seriously. **FINANCIAL PLANNING** is improving, but is weak in about one school in six. Some schools continue to have difficulty in costing their planned developments, including resource provision and provision of in-service training. Nine in ten schools make efficient use of staffing, accommodation and learning resources.

150. Many schools have found difficulties with long-term **STRATEGIC PLANNING**, and in particular managing budget reduction with the minimum impact on pupils and the curriculum. Where financial planning is weak, responses to a change of circumstance, such as falling rolls and subsequent cuts in budget, are necessarily *ad hoc* and can lead to imbalances in spending, for example high staffing costs at the expense of resources. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

151. Schools are generally well **STAFFED**, and teachers are effectively deployed in the great majority of them. However, one school in twenty experiences some difficulties in matching the subject taught to the initial qualification of the teachers and this has an adverse effect upon standards achieved in one or more subjects. HMI carried out a survey of staffing in a sample of schools and reported increased difficulties in recruitment in physics, chemistry, design and technology, English, in new vocational courses and at middle and senior management levels. There are particular difficulties for schools recruiting in the inner London area, resulting in a

very large number of temporary appointments. Recruitment problems are also increasing in other LEA areas.

**152.** Only a small number of schools suffer from high staff turnover. In nearly one in ten schools, however, the stability of staffing has resulted in high staffing costs, so creating difficulties in meeting other resource demands. A small number of schools have been forced by budget pressures to increase both contact time and class size. In such cases the lack of time for necessary curriculum development, monitoring of teaching and planning is beginning to have an adverse affect upon the quality of education provided.

**153.** The quality of support by **CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS** and non-teaching staff is generally good, with a beneficial effect upon the quality of teaching and learning. However, there are shortages of classroom assistants in one or more practical areas in one in ten schools, including in design and technology, food technology, art and science.

**154.** Most secondary schools have effective **INDUCTION** programmes for new teachers and newly qualified teachers. However, the same rigour does not extend to **INSET**, which is unsatisfactory in one-quarter of schools. Dissemination and evaluation of the impact of **INSET** tend to be informal and unsystematic. A particular issue in half of all schools is the need to improve the level of information technology skills of teachers, particularly design and technology teachers. Other priorities are management training for those with departmental responsibility and training for subject teachers timetabled to provide in-class support for pupils on the special educational needs register.

**155.** Only about one-quarter of secondary schools have a well-established **APPRAISAL** system which meets statutory requirements. About half of schools have a system operating in an unsatisfactory way; in the remaining one-quarter the system is not operational. **156.** The **ACCOMMODATION** IS good in just over one-third of schools. However, in nearly one-quarter of schools, the accommodation is inadequate to meet the demands of the National Curriculum despite the efforts made in the great majority of schools to optimise the spaces available and maintain them well. Increasing numbers on roll in some schools have led to significantly higher occupancy rates of rooms which are frequently inadequate in size: this has also increased the pressure for maintenance.

**157.** **LEARNING RESOURCES** are adequate in three-quarters of schools despite shortages of suitable **TEXTBOOKS** in some subjects. English is well resourced in most schools, but about one in three music and design and technology departments, one in four modern foreign language departments, and one in five history, geography, science and mathematics departments have insufficient textbooks to provide effective support for teaching the National Curriculum. In some schools, shortages of books lead to the extensive use of worksheets, some of which are of poor quality. It also makes it more difficult for teachers to set appropriate homework. There are poor levels of support materials for pupils on the special educational needs register in one in eight schools. This adversely affects the progress of some pupils with learning difficulties. As well as shortages of textbooks, there are shortages of **EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS** in design and technology, art and music in nearly one in four schools. Access to **COMPUTERS** sufficient in number and quality to promote the use of information technology across the curriculum remains a problem. HMI visited a

sample of schools where resources were judged to be inadequate. In about half of these schools the money was not well spent; underfunding was a major reason for the shortage in other cases. Schools are increasingly developing library provision to include a wider variety of learning resources such as multimedia systems and access to the internet but these resources are yet to be used effectively by all schools to support teaching and learning. Only six in ten school libraries are adequately resourced, and in the remainder there are shortcomings in the numbers and range of books available. In one-quarter of schools the overall level of learning resources is unsatisfactory. In this respect there is little improvement upon previous years.

In summary, most secondary schools provide a broad and balanced curriculum. The large majority of schools establish a good ethos. Most are well led, but leadership is weak in one school in ten. In order to further improve the quality of education, the following issues need to be addressed:

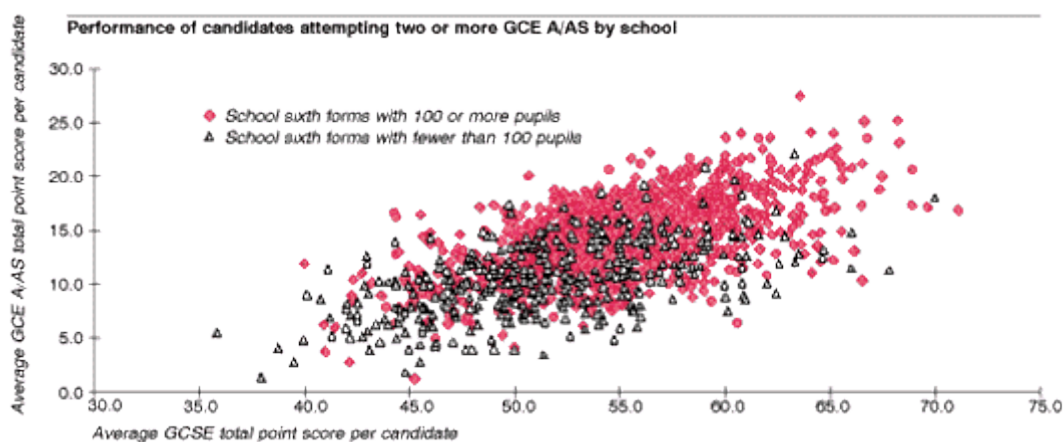
- the non-compliance with National Curriculum requirements - particularly in information technology and design and technology;
- non-compliance with collective worship;
- the quality of leadership in the one in ten schools where it is unsatisfactory;
- monitoring standards and evaluating the teaching within schools;
- the range of responsibilities carried by middle managers;
- the effectiveness of INSET and teacher appraisal;
- the adequacy of learning resources, particularly textbooks, in schools and the degree to which schools spend their money well.

## Sixth forms in schools

### Educational standards achieved

158. One thousand eight hundred and twenty seven schools have sixth forms. Of these, 110 have fewer than 50 students and 514 over 200. They provide for about 30 per cent of the 16-19 cohort. As last year, standards in the sixth form have continued to rise, both in the quality of students' work and in their overall performance in examinations. Standards vary across subjects. They are lowest in information technology and highest in art.

159. In 1997 the average points score per candidate for students entered for two or more GCE A levels was 17.0 compared with 16.8 in 1996<sup>17</sup>. Although the number of A grades awarded for particular subjects has either remained steady or declined slightly, there have been more entries overall than in 1996, more successful candidates and, after years of decline, an increased number of entrants in sciences and in computing. The chart below shows the wide variation in GCE AS/A-level points score in sixth forms. The average points score per candidate for each school in 1996 has been plotted against the average GCSE score for the same candidates two years earlier. Not surprisingly, schools where students have high prior attainment tend to score better at GCE A level. However, for schools with students of similar prior attainment, GCE A-level points scores vary widely. Schools with large sixth forms tend to recruit students with higher levels of prior attainment and tend to achieve higher GCE A-level scores than schools with small sixth forms.



160. The number of students following modular GCE A/AS-level syllabuses has increased significantly and in 1997 they formed 30 per cent of examination entries. Half of the candidates in science subjects in 1997 took modular examinations. The standards of the work of students following modular syllabuses are comparable with those working for linear syllabuses. OFSTED is currently inspecting the procedures for modular examinations and will report in the autumn of 1998 on the standards of both the 1997 and 1998 awards.

161. GNVQ results for 1997 show an increase of over 10 percentage points in the numbers gaining a full award compared with last year. At Advanced level, almost 50 per cent of students in schools and colleges achieved the full award and a further 20 per cent achieved at least six accredited units. HMI inspection evidence suggests that approximately 60 per cent of students following Advanced GNVQ courses in school

sixth forms achieve a full award.

**162.** Inspectors judge that overall progress made by students is good or very good in about two-thirds of sixth forms. It is particularly significant that, in schools with average or sometimes below-average GCSE results in Year 11, sixth-form students can make substantially better progress than they did in Key Stage 4. This is attributable to a range of factors: the particular ethos of the sixth form and the high expectations placed on students; opportunities for new types of learning such as GNVQ; good initial advice about course choice accompanied by effective tutorial support; and rigorous monitoring of academic performance from the beginning of Year 12.

**163.** Successful **GCE A-LEVEL** students demonstrate well-developed analytical and research skills, the ability to clarify, challenge and reshape ideas, sophistication in discussion and debate, and a good grasp of the requisite subject knowledge. Many write well, completing their assignments with thoroughness and assurance and often making good use of information technology. Particularly high standards are reached in sixth forms where students have the capacity for effective independent study. Where standards are never more than satisfactory, students do not write with ease or at sufficient length, lack confidence in discussion and data handling, and are over-dependent on the teacher. They are unable to work on their own and they make limited use of information technology.

**164.** Some students find the staged assessment of modular A-level syllabuses motivating and, as a result, are working more consistently from the beginning of their course. Progress is therefore usually good. In particular, the progress and commitment of less able candidates have been considerably enhanced by the adoption of modular syllabuses.

**165.** Work in the best **ADVANCED GNVQ** portfolios matches the quality of GCE A-level Grade A students. Such portfolios contain high-quality, mature work of impressive range and depth. Students demonstrate a high level of research, practical and technical skills; they can organise and synthesise a variety of materials and analyse complex ideas. The worst of those portfolios awarded a pass are, however, very poor and fall well short of the standard required for GCE A-level Grade E. There are also greater variations in the quality of work within the vocational areas than in previous years.

**166.** GNVQ students are for the most part well-motivated. In schools with small sixth forms containing students from a wide ability range, GNVQ students often make good progress. This is particularly true in Advanced GNVQ science, where many students who just achieve a grade C in science subjects at GCSE make good progress to meet the demanding requirements of the award. Slow progress is, however, made in Advanced GNVQ by some weaker candidates, who are often unaware of the need to keep portfolios up to date and to maintain quality and quantity of output.

**167.** Similar variations in standards across vocational areas occur in **INTERMEDIATE GNVQ**. The good work is distinguished by sound planning and organisation, effective research, and a developing understanding of the nature and function of the vocational area being studied. Here, however, as in **FOUNDATION LEVEL**, there is some poor work. In such cases assignments lack depth, students fail to explain or analyse their work sufficiently, and they place too much reliance on secondary source material

which is superficially synthesised.

168. Inadequate numeracy and literacy skills are, in some instances, impeding students' progress. Students' **KEY SKILLS**<sup>18</sup> in GNVQ, particularly at Intermediate and Foundation levels, are not as good as they should be and rarely build effectively on their prior attainment. There is particular variability in the standards achieved in information technology and the application of number. Students' oral communication skills are usually good; frequent opportunities to develop presentational and speaking skills are integral to well-planned GNVQ programmes and have a positive impact on students' performance. Writing skills, particularly those of spelling, punctuation and sentence construction, remain a matter of concern.

169. Sixth-form students generally display extremely positive attitudes to their work and role within the school. They respond well to the increased opportunities to develop their skills as independent learners and to exercise greater personal responsibility, both for their own development and for more general aspects of school life. Sixth formers work willingly and with pride across the school, making a valuable contribution to its smooth running and to supporting younger pupils. Students whose prior attainment has been low often welcome the chance to make a fresh start.

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<sup>17</sup>DfEE data 1997. The points score per pupil is calculated by allocating 2 points for an E, 4 for a D etc, up to 10 for an A, for each subject taken, and half the number of points for an AS subject.

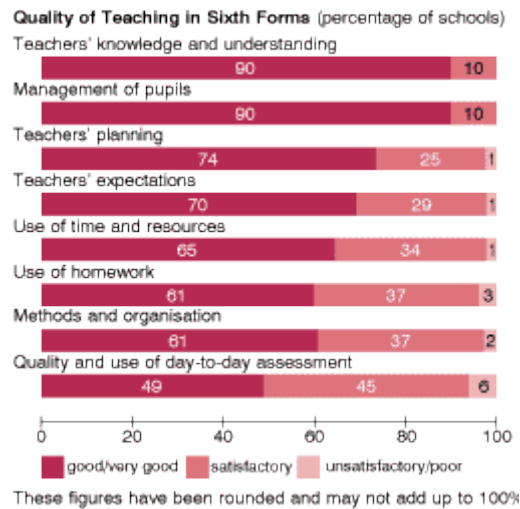
<sup>18</sup>The three mandatory key skills are communication, the application of number and information technology.

## **Quality of education**

### **Teaching**

170. The quality of teaching is good or very good in about two thirds of sixth-form lessons and unsatisfactory in about one in twenty. The chart opposite shows inspectors' judgements of different aspects of teaching. Expert teaching is a feature of most school sixth forms. GCE A-level teachers' knowledge and understanding of their subject are almost always good or very good. Their skills of explanation and questioning are a particular strength. They have high expectations of their students and provide them with thorough and constructive feedback about their work. The best vocational teachers are specialists who have taken recent opportunities to update their knowledge and direct experience of the vocational area concerned. They use this expertise in good quality direct teaching and in preparing challenging assignments.





171. Lessons are generally well planned and teachers make good use of resources, but in one-third of sixth forms teaching methods and classroom organisation are somewhat limited in range. In such cases, there is lack of attention to the differing abilities of the group, with good students insufficiently challenged and weaker students struggling to maintain the pace set. In cases where vocational teaching is poor, teachers generally have inadequate experience or recent knowledge of the vocational area and set assignments which limit rather than extend students' performance. The day-to-day use of assessment is good in about half of sixth forms. Work is regularly set and marked and most pupils receive helpful feedback. Nevertheless, the use of assessment is the weakest aspect of sixth-form teaching.

### Curriculum and assessment

172. The **BREADTH AND RELEVANCE** of the sixth-form curriculum are good in well over half the schools and inadequate in fewer than one in ten. Some small sixth forms, however, are unable to offer an adequate range of courses to meet their students' needs and capabilities. Some overstretch themselves. One sixth form of fewer than 100 students, for example, offered more than 20 A-level subjects, with resulting small class sizes and high costs. In some areas, collaborative work with other schools or colleges can alleviate such pressures.

173. An increasing number of schools offer a good mixture of academic and vocational courses at a variety of levels. More students than previously are choosing to take one GCE A-level subject alongside an Advanced GNVQ. Other than for English and mathematics, GCSE re-takes are now comparatively rare in the sixth form and most students choose an Intermediate GNVQ course instead. There are, however, still opportunities to follow new GCSE courses in subjects other than those of the National Curriculum.

174. The **ADDITIONAL STUDIES PROGRAMME** offered by the vast majority of schools includes personal and social education, sometimes sport and physical education, community work or work experience and GCE A-level general studies. At their best, these programmes are rich and diverse, offering options such as money management, computer competence and awareness of the legal system. There are opportunities for working for a number of awards - such as the Duke of Edinburgh's, Young Engineers and Young Enterprise - and for becoming involved in performing



arts activities and charity work. These opportunities, along with the range of responsibilities which sixth-form students assume in relation to younger pupils and to the general running of the school, make an important contribution to students' personal and social development, as well as to their academic progress. Again it is in small sixth forms that this breadth of extension studies is difficult to sustain.

**175.** ASSESSMENT procedures are good in almost two-thirds of sixth forms. GCE A-level students are generally regularly informed about their attainment, often in relation to GCE A-level grades, and can set realistic targets for improvement. They are clear about the criteria for success in their programmes of study. In one in seven sixth forms, however, insufficient use is made of assessment in planning future work.

**176.** In the majority of GNVQ portfolios, vocational work is conscientiously assessed. Occasionally teachers' comments are excessively congratulatory and, in a few cases, insufficient marking has taken place. However, the GNVQ assessment requirements remain too burdensome for teachers. The over-emphasis on assessed work leaves insufficient time for students' necessary learning and consolidation, and for informal feedback by teachers.

**177.** The most significant problem in GNVQ assessment, however, and the one most urgently needing attention, remains the lack of appropriate, clearly defined and widely understood standards by which to judge whether work has achieved a pass and, further, if it should be graded at merit or distinction levels. The most capable and experienced teachers have continued to use their knowledge of expected standards in corresponding GCE A-level or GCSE courses to make well-judged assessments, but other teachers are very unclear about judging standards and some have too often been lenient in their assessments. Inspection by HMI reveals that there are serious inconsistencies in the grading of some GNVQ Advanced portfolios and in a number of cases work that had been too generously graded had been verified by the vocational awarding body.

### **Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

**178.** The positive ethos of most school sixth forms enables students to develop greater maturity, independence and autonomy, both as learners and as committed members of the school and the wider community. They assume a range of responsibilities, and have opportunities within the curriculum to discuss a variety of moral and social issues and to enhance their cultural awareness through their main programmes of study or within the enrichment programme.

**179.** There has been little discernible improvement since last year in the provision of religious education in the sixth form. The requirement for a daily act of worship is often not met. Other than in denominational schools and for those students who follow the subject at GCE A level, religious education is usually only offered as part of a wider personal and social education programme, if at all.

### **Students' support and guidance**

**180.** In general, students receive appropriate advice before entering the sixth form. In a small number of cases, however, they are recruited onto GCE A-level courses with too low a level of prior attainment and have great difficulty in coping. This occurs

more often when the curriculum on offer is narrow and schools are anxious to recruit onto whatever courses they are able to provide. This does not serve the needs of the students concerned. A number of schools now appropriately insist on minimum specified GCSE grades in English and mathematics for entry onto the Intermediate and Advanced GNVQ programmes.

**181.** The majority of sixth forms have comprehensive and effective programmes for advising students about higher education choices and have established excellent links with HE institutions. The growth of vocational courses and the work experience contained within them have enabled wider links to be made with local employers, who may be able to offer employment or traineeships to 18 year olds. Although these are valued by students, they are putting a considerable strain on the good placements available in some localities. Advice about employment or other training opportunities is, however, generally less good than on progression to HE and, in some cases, is totally overlooked. In the majority of schools there is no timetabled programme for **CAREERS EDUCATION AND GUIDANCE**, and provision usually comprises a range of *ad hoc* activities.

**182.** Most schools give good pastoral and academic support to their sixth-form students. This generally takes the form of useful induction courses and personal tutor and mentoring systems. In the best examples, there is careful monitoring of the work of individual students, throughout their sixth-form career, in relation to their prior attainment and predicted performance, and effective structures exist for advice and counselling on personal matters.

### **Management and efficiency of the sixth form**

**183.** The large majority of sixth forms are well managed. The wide-scale adoption of modular syllabuses and of GNVQs has increased considerably the administrative and organisational burden on examinations officers. School managers and governors are becoming more aware than previously of the need for the sixth form to pay its way, but some small sixth forms continue to be uneconomic and are subsidised by the rest of the school budget.

In summary, the achievements of pupils and the quality of education in sixth forms are at least satisfactory and often good. Attention needs to be given to the following issues:

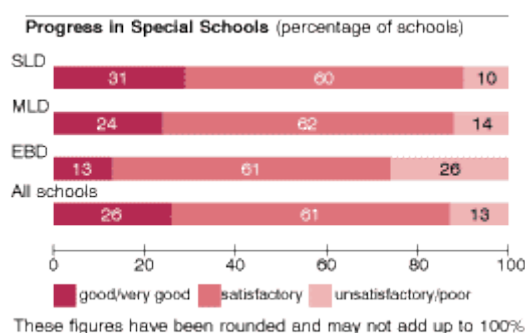
- ensuring that there are clearly defined and widely understood standards by which to judge pupils' work in GNVQ courses;
- the quality of careers guidance for sixth form pupils;
- the cost and effectiveness of small sixth forms.

## Special schools

184. For this overview of standards in special schools, information is drawn from inspection reports and from visits by HMI to maintained, non-maintained and independent special schools for pupils with a wide range of disabilities. Most of the evidence comes from the inspection of schools for pupils with moderate or severe learning difficulties and for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Detail is also included from inspection of schools for pupils with visual and hearing impairment, physical disabilities and language disorders, or less common disorders such as autism, as well as schools designated for a variety of disabilities.

### Educational standards achieved

185. The chart below shows inspectors' judgements of pupils' overall progress in special schools. Pupils make good progress in about one-quarter of special schools, but there is substantial underachievement in one in six. Progress is best in schools for pupils with sensory impairment or physical disability. Pupils in three-quarters of schools designated for emotional and behavioural difficulties make adequate or good progress, but there is substantial underachievement in one-quarter of these schools.



186. Pupils' progress in **ENGLISH** is good in one-third of special schools. **SPEAKING AND LISTENING** continue to be strengths in most schools. Pupils generally make good progress in schools for pupils with physical disability. However, good progress is only made in one-quarter of schools for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties as fewer opportunities are provided for practice. In schools using signing systems, where pupils have no spoken language, the consistent use of signs by all the adults in school contributes significantly to good achievement. Although electronic communication aids are increasingly available, only a few of those pupils who could benefit actually have effective access to them. Many schools still lack sufficient support from speech therapists which some pupils depend on.

187. Pupils make good progress in **READING** in less than one-fifth of special schools and underachieve in one-quarter. In schools for pupils with moderate learning difficulties, pupils' success is linked particularly closely to the structure and consistency of the school's reading programme. In schools for pupils with severe learning difficulties, reading is receiving more attention than in previous years, but is still underdeveloped. The school library is often inadequately resourced and there is not enough variety of age-appropriate books.

188. Pupils underachieve in **WRITING** in more than one-third of special schools and

in more than half of schools for pupils with severe learning difficulties, although increased attention to writing for pupils for whom it is appropriate has raised standards in these schools. In many special schools, worksheets continue to dominate the opportunities provided for writing to an excessive degree. When pupils are given access to a word processor, they are too often merely copy-typing material already laboriously handwritten, rather than editing and correcting their work.

**189.** Pupils' progress in **MATHEMATICS** is good in more than one-quarter of schools, and unsatisfactory in one in five. Standards of mathematics in schools for pupils with moderate and with severe learning difficulties have improved. In many schools, especially those for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties, pupils' success in mathematics is too narrowly focused on numeracy. Pupils in a small but growing number of schools are working towards nationally recognised accreditation in mathematics. Without exception, this is raising standards.

**190.** Pupils make good progress in **SCIENCE** in one-third of schools but underachieve in one in five. Science appears as a strong subject in a higher proportion of schools than in previous years. Good progress is often restricted to a limited range of experiences as only half of special schools adequately cover the National Curriculum programme of study. Schemes of work providing detailed and practical guidance across the age range have proved crucial in raising achievement.

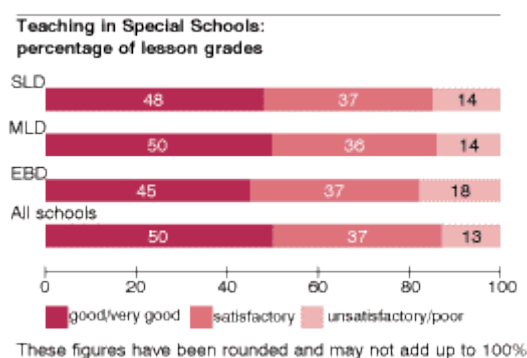
**191.** Pupils' achievement in **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY** is restricted in most schools, and it is amongst the weakest subjects in all but schools for pupils with physical disabilities. Only one-third of schools offer a full range of activities, and most underuse the resources they have. Progress in **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY** is good in more than one-third of schools; success relates largely to 'making', but schools are becoming more skilled in ensuring that the designing process is meaningful for pupils with special needs.

**192.** Amongst the foundation subjects of the National Curriculum, pupils' progress in **ART** and **PHYSICAL EDUCATION** is often good, although the majority of schools offer a limited selection of experiences from the national programmes of study for art. In physical education, most schools provide good curriculum coverage. However, in many schools for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties, poor facilities restrict the range of activities. Outdoor pursuits, sailing, aerobics and soft play environments extend the curriculum and enrich social and cultural experiences for many pupils. In **GEOGRAPHY** and **HISTORY**

**193.** Pupils' progress in **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES** continues to improve as schools grow in confidence, but many are unable to offer continuous teaching of the subject throughout Key Stages 3 and 4. There are examples of schools with outstandingly good achievement, including schools for pupils with severe learning difficulties. Experience is usually limited to speaking and listening, with little reading or writing. In **MUSIC/RELIGIOUS EDUCATION** is good in one-third of schools but unsatisfactory in a further third, reflecting lack of subject knowledge on the part of teachers, weak planning, and, in most of these schools, limited resourcing. Pupils make best progress when there is a detailed scheme of work, in line with the local Agreed Syllabus, to support less confident teachers.

### **Quality of teaching**

194. There are indications that the quality of teaching has improved. It is now good in a half of lessons. It is best in schools for pupils with sensory impairment and physical disabilities. In one in eight lessons, the quality of teaching is less than satisfactory. This includes a high proportion (about one in five) of lessons for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The quality of teaching has, nevertheless, improved in these schools and is most effective where teachers have a good grasp of the content they are teaching and can focus their attention on teaching methods that produce maximum interest and combat distraction. The unsatisfactory teaching is generally associated with poor control of difficult behaviour. In other types of school, behaviour is usually managed well, so that potentially disruptive pupils have a minimal effect on the progress of others.



195. The quality of teaching could be improved if more schools made better use of information about pupils' strengths and weaknesses in planning lessons. Teachers devote a great deal of time to gathering and recording information, but find difficulty in using it to ensure a close match between the content of lessons and pupils' individual (and often widely differing) needs.

196. In more than one-third of special schools, teachers lack sufficient knowledge of National Curriculum subjects. Schools continue to have difficulty recruiting subject specialists, particularly for Key Stage 3 and above. Specialist teaching poses a particular problem for small schools where the pool of subject expertise is limited.

197. In the great majority of schools, learning support assistants (LSAs) make a valuable contribution in all subjects by supporting individual pupils and by working with groups. They are successful when they are involved in planning pupils' work, and the most successful LSAs also contribute to assessment and recording. The deployment of LSAs in schools for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties in particular has improved from a previously poor level, and is particularly effective in almost one-fifth of such schools.

## Curriculum and assessment

198. Most schools are strongly committed to providing a full and balanced curriculum, including the National Curriculum for all their pupils; very few pupils are disapplied from any subjects of the National Curriculum. Success in providing this breadth varies greatly between types of school. Schools for pupils with moderate learning difficulties are generally the most successful, with eight out of ten such schools providing the full range of subjects. Less than half of schools for pupils with severe learning difficulties provide all subjects for all eligible pupils, the most

frequent omissions being a modern foreign language and religious education. Many of these schools face the challenge of planning for all four key stages plus pre-school and post-16 pupils.

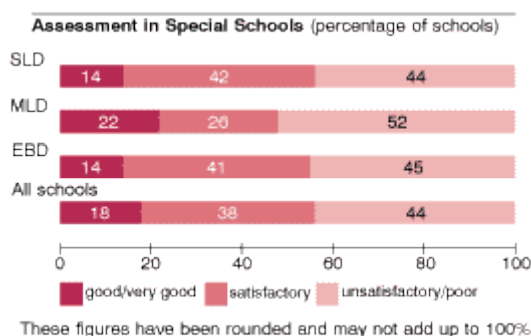
199. More than two-thirds of schools need to review the balance of time devoted to each subject and to institute more effective monitoring so that the balance of the timetable is not left to individual teachers to decide. Overlong lesson periods reduce timetable flexibility and also tax pupils' powers of concentration. About one-third of schools teach significantly less than the recommended number of hours each week. Science, geography and history most frequently have limited taught time, with considerable amounts of time spent on English.

200. Teachers of pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties are not clear about how appropriate the full breadth of the National Curriculum is for these pupils. They are unsure in particular about the attention that should be given to foundation subjects such as history and modern foreign languages. Consultations with schools on these matters are taking place at a national level.

201. Most special schools still lack balanced coverage of programmes of study within subjects. This is a matter which needs to be addressed through the development of the role of the subject co-ordinator (including provision of time to fulfil the role) and through clear and informative schemes of work for each Key Stage. Schools are not always clear about the best approaches to drafting such schemes to reduce repetitive and time-consuming writing within medium-term planning and at the same time ensure progression within and across key stages.

202. One-quarter of schools for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties have weaknesses in providing for pupils' moral and social needs, although overall in special schools this is a strength. Most special schools meet these needs well. About one-third of all schools provide insufficient support for pupils' spiritual and cultural development, but all types of school are becoming more successful in making explicit provision of this kind and in identifying potential contributions from other subjects. Within otherwise good cultural education programmes which may include, for example, visits to theatres and galleries, the study of other cultures is often neglected.

203. Only half of special schools have satisfactory systems for assessment, recording and reporting. The majority of schools are experiencing difficulty in striking a balance between brevity and detail in pupils' individual education plans. Most schools continue to struggle to establish a cycle of target setting and review in order to make these plans fully effective.



204. The access of pupils with similar degrees of disability to external accreditation



at Key Stage 4 remains variable. For example, only half of schools for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties provide GCSE courses; schools for pupils with moderate learning difficulties may offer a wide range of accreditation or may offer none at all; only one-third of schools for pupils with severe learning difficulties offer more than the school's own Record of Achievement.

## Residential schools

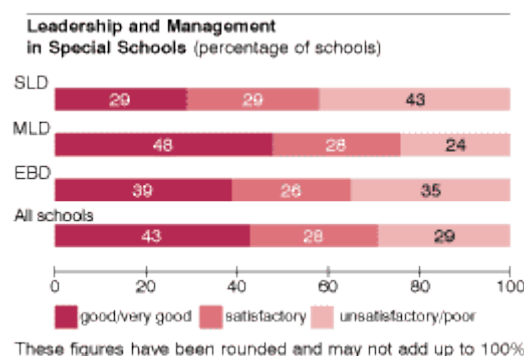
205. Provision is good in half of schools with residential facilities. It is unsatisfactory in less than one in ten. Standards are improving as schools make use of guidance arising from such sources as the Children Act and from inspection. The best practice is characterised by three factors:

- effective planning in the school, reflected in individual education plans with clear targets including behaviour and social development;
- effective planning in the residential setting, with appropriate care plans for individual pupils;
- good communication between school and residential teams.

206. Residential accommodation is good in half of schools, with attractive sleeping and daytime facilities. It is unsatisfactory in one-quarter of schools, where, for example, bathing facilities offer insufficient privacy or where the standard of decoration and furnishing is poor.

## Management and efficiency

207. Leadership and management are good in more than one-third of special schools, but weak in another third. Almost half of schools for pupils with severe learning difficulties have significant shortcomings in management. Good management practice provides strong leadership which takes account of the views of staff and parents, assigns clear roles and accountabilities to the senior management team and other postholders, and establishes systems to monitor the quality of key aspects of the school's provision.



208. Even where day-to-day leadership and management are good, weaknesses in important areas may still be evident. For example, only one in five schools has a satisfactory system for monitoring the curriculum and evaluating the quality of teaching.



209. Governing bodies in half of special schools take a full part in the management process, but are rarely involved in monitoring effectiveness. Effective governing bodies usually establish sub-committees to take a particular interest in different aspects of the school. Governing bodies in schools for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties often face problems with recruitment, which makes their successful operation problematic.

210. Expenditure per pupil continues to vary greatly between similar schools; this is due mainly to wide variation in staffing ratios. Differences between the pupil populations may account for some of the variation, but it is difficult to account for the very wide range of reported levels of funding which bear no clear relationship to the quality of provision.

211. Equipment and resources are adequate for the delivery of the curriculum in only six out of ten schools. Schools for pupils with severe learning difficulties remain the least suitably equipped, but are improving over time. Of the National Curriculum core subjects, maths and science are more likely to be under-resourced. Design and technology, history, geography and religious education are the other subjects most often short of resources.

212. Specialist accommodation for science and design and technology is inadequate in almost half of schools, and for physical education and art in one-third. Only one-third of schools have a satisfactory library. These deficiencies lower the standards which can be attained, particularly by older pupils. One-third of schools for pupils with severe learning difficulties have unsatisfactory toilet and hygiene facilities, which could create health and safety hazards for staff and pupils. Classrooms in schools for pupils with severe learning difficulties and those for pupils with physical disability are under the most pressure as specialist equipment grows in size and quantity, and information technology workstations have to be accommodated in classrooms.

### **Pupil Referral Units**

213. A small number of inspection reports are now available. They indicate that Pupil Referral Units (PRU) are successful in improving pupil attendance and stimulating positive attitudes to learning and responsible behaviour. PRUs are, however, less successful in their assessment of pupils' prior attainments and the monitoring of their academic progress. This results partly from their not having a curriculum policy, as suggested in Circular 11/94, and from weak strategic planning. The quality of teaching is variable but satisfactory in most of the PRUs inspected.

In summary, most special schools provide at least a sound education, but there are wide differences in the progress of pupils in different types of school. Attention needs to be given to the following issues:

- standards achieved by pupils and the quality of teaching and behaviour management in schools for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties;
- the quality and use of assessment and recording of

pupils' progress;

- giving more pupils in Key Stage 4 wider access to accredited courses;
- the role of the subject co-ordinator in special schools.

## *Schools requiring special measures and schools with serious weaknesses*

**214.** Since 1993 a total of 427 schools have been made **SUBJECT TO SPECIAL MEASURES**. This represents about 2 per cent of the primary and secondary schools inspected and 7 per cent of special schools, proportions that have remained generally constant in each inspection year. However, there was a small but significant rise in the number of primary and secondary schools put into special measures during 1996/97. Of the 427 schools, 23 have subsequently closed and 40 have been removed from special measures, 33 in the last year.

**215.** Primary schools subject to special measures vary considerably in size, type and socio-economic circumstances: they include nursery schools, small rural schools and large inner-city schools. Secondary schools subject to special measures are predominantly, but not always, in areas of urban disadvantage. About half of the special schools are for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. What most of these schools share are high proportions of unsatisfactory teaching, pupils who make insufficient progress, and standards that are too low, especially in literacy and numeracy. These factors are usually reflected in poor examination and national test results. The leadership and management of these schools are commonly weak, with strategic planning that fails to take the schools forward and an overall performance that fails to provide value for money. Often there are poor relationships between some sections of the school community, disquiet among parents and a high staff turnover. Poor behaviour and low levels of attendance are common features of the secondary and special schools, though less so in primary schools. Most of the primary and special schools are failing to implement some aspects of the National Curriculum. In some of the special schools there are additional concerns over health and safety, and pupils' welfare.

**216.** The schools subject to special measures have undertaken a programme for improvement, based on very detailed action plans that identify targets to be achieved over a set timescale. Most LEAs have provided the support they promised to their schools, a critical factor at the outset of the process when morale may be low. Schools have then received regular inspections from HMI to monitor progress, helping them to pinpoint where further work is needed and where there has been success.

**217.** The majority of schools have made satisfactory or good progress, but there are a small number, particularly of secondary schools, where improvement has been too slow. Though suitable management structures and documentation have often been established, standards and the quality of teaching remain too low. Factors that have hindered schools' progress are commonly:

- ineffective leadership;
- poor relationships and a continual turnover of staff;
- proposals for closure or reorganisation;
- a lack of appropriate support;

- action plans that fail to confront the fundamental issues.

218. Nonetheless, improvement for most schools has followed a pattern of: strengthening of leadership and management; the development of planning, policies and procedures; monitoring and evaluation of the impact of changes; and finally, significant rises in the quality of teaching and pupils' standards of attainment.

219. Success can be rapid. Some of the 40 schools removed from special measures have taken little longer than a year before they were judged to provide an acceptable standard of education, but most have taken around two years. Changes can be dramatic, for example, in a school where the overall quality of teaching improved from unsatisfactory to good, or where the percentage of pupils reaching expected levels in national tests tripled. Strong leadership, often from a recently-appointed headteacher, is the key feature of all the schools that have made substantial improvement. Other significant factors have included: clear plans with measurable targets; governors and teachers intent on improvement; good communications with parents; an ability to tackle poor behaviour and attendance; thorough curriculum planning and guidance; and effective financial management. However, the process is not easy and requires commitment and perseverance. In all the schools that have left special measures, staff and governors have faced criticism, taken difficult decisions, worked very hard together and channelled their efforts to the areas that mattered most.

220. From January 1994, OFSTED has identified schools with **SERIOUS WEAKNESSES**, and inspected and reported on their progress in tackling the weaknesses recorded in their inspection reports. So far, just over one in ten primary schools and secondary schools and one in five special schools inspected have been identified as having serious weaknesses. Most of the schools recognised their problems and have systematically set about solving them, although there has been a common failure to gauge the impact of initiatives in classrooms. Some of the schools, however, did not realise the degree of their difficulties. Typically this has resulted in complacency among the senior managers, governors who are unaware of the school's relative performance, and an ineffective action plan. Where such responses have been combined with particularly serious problems, schools have subsequently been placed in special measures.

221. Of the primary schools identified as having serious weaknesses, about two-thirds have made satisfactory improvement. These schools have produced practical, detailed action plans with realistic timetables for addressing the issues. Improved curriculum guidance and lesson planning, together with in-service training, have raised the quality of teaching. Such developments have been particularly effective in schools associated with national or local initiatives on literacy and numeracy. The need to raise standards has led many schools to group pupils according to attainment in some lessons and to eliminate mixed-age classes where possible. There has been increased use of data, especially results from national tests, to measure improvement and set targets. Schools have recognised the need to delegate responsibilities to co-ordinators, but many have been unable to provide adequate amounts of time for the key staff who are leading developments to oversee and evaluate work across the school.

222. Two-thirds of the special schools have made satisfactory improvement. They have devised a broader and better-balanced curriculum on the basis of National

Curriculum requirements, and strategies for behaviour management have been successful. Closer attention has been paid to the national Code of Practice, especially in the use of individual educational plans with specific objectives understood by staff and pupils. The schools have written development plans that have targeted funds and guided their efforts.

**223.** The progress made by secondary schools has been slower. About half have made sufficient improvement. Schools have generally reviewed basic structures, such as timetables and lines of management, and sharpened strategic planning, but they are often beset by budgetary difficulties and changes among senior staff. There is a clear awareness of the need to raise standards, for example through targeting support towards particular pupils, usually at GCSE level. Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to work have generally been satisfactory, though attendance often remains too low. However, in too many schools underachievement persists and standards have been too slow to improve, largely through a failure to eradicate the unsatisfactory teaching that exists in about one-fifth of lessons. As a consequence, there is an unacceptable variation in pupils' attainments from subject to subject. In-service training has often focused on lesson planning instead of concentrating on basic weaknesses in teaching.

## *Youth work and adult education*

### *Youth work*

#### **Educational standards achieved**

224. The achievement of young people who participate in **LOCAL AUTHORITY YOUTH SERVICE PROVISION** was good in just over half the sessions inspected and unsatisfactory in about one in six. In the good sessions, the work had a clear educational focus and young people were offered a variety of challenging opportunities to develop their personal and social skills as well as to complement their formal education. They planned their own programmes and took part in a variety of creative, intellectual and sporting activities which fostered new skills and interests. They learned how to play an active role in their community. By contrast, the poor work lacked focus and failed to capture the imagination and interest of the young people involved, who consequently attended spasmodically, responded without enthusiasm and learned very little.

225. In the education and training programmes inspected in **YOUNG OFFENDERS' INSTITUTIONS**, achievement was generally satisfactory, despite the unsatisfactory level of provision. In a small but significant minority of cases standards were very low. It was only when sound initial assessment had resulted in appropriately planned programmes of work that standards were good, as in some basic skills provision. There were sometimes high standards in vocational training, but there were few opportunities for gaining accreditation. Work in physical education classes, both in gymnasiums and outdoors, was also generally good, but many young offenders in adult establishments had very limited access to this type of provision.

#### **Quality of education**

226. Just over half the sessions inspected in local authority youth services were well led. In these cases, youth workers planned activities carefully, had clear objectives and established excellent relationships with the young people. In the best examples of drug education, youth workers helped young people to appreciate the dangers of drug misuse, and the associated health risks. As well as providing young people with objective information about drugs, youth workers were also able to direct them to appropriate support networks. In crime diversion projects, they encouraged young people to develop a sense of their own worth by involving them in challenging and creative activities.

227. The unsatisfactory work was poorly planned, with little educational content. Such programmes lacked a clear sense of purpose, realistic targets for achievement and effective strategies for evaluating success. For quality to be sustained, relevant initial training needs to be followed up by effective supervision by line managers and by in-service training consistent with the service's overall aims.

228. Increasingly, local authority services give priority to work with particular groups of young people, usually the most economically, socially and educationally

disadvantaged. Youth workers are often effective in winning the trust and commitment of these young people. They use their professional skills to provide them with essential information and advice, to support them in their transition to adulthood and to draw them back into education and training programmes. Many of the very diverse National Voluntary Youth Organisations (NVYOs) in receipt of DfEE grant are reaching more disadvantaged young people by innovative work.

**229.** The majority of youth services have developed a broad curriculum which reflects the needs of the young people in their area. In a number of authorities there are improved strategies for assessing the specific needs of young people in order to plan relevant programmes for them. Assessment of young people's progress, however, remains a weakness. Other than in project work and in a high proportion of detached work, the evaluation of achievement, as an integral part of all youth work practice, is underdeveloped. Nevertheless, some interesting approaches are being introduced, linked to self-evaluation by young people in relation to their Record of Achievement.

**230.** Almost all services support the work of voluntary youth organisations in their area through grants or secondment of staff. The best services have also established curricular links with schools and colleges as well as with the police, the probation service, social services, housing departments and health authorities. Collaborative work underpins effective drug education and crime diversion initiatives. Many of the NVYO projects rely on successful joint working with the statutory sector or other voluntary organisations. Local authority services still need, however, to take account of these partnerships in their overall strategic planning.

**231.** Education and sometimes training in young offenders' institutions are normally contracted out to a local college or private agency, after a tendering process. Occasionally the local authority has the contract for this work. Budgetary pressures within the prison service have, however, resulted in tighter regimes of containment which are limiting the educational opportunities for young offenders, some of whom are under school leaving age. This is a matter of concern which calls for urgent attention (by the Prison Service)

### **Management and efficiency**

**232.** Most local authorities have policy statements which give an essential focus to their services and ensure that all staff are clear about service objectives. Many also ensure that the views of users are heard, by giving young people representation on key committees or in youth forums. More work, however, needs to be done on monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of policies and how well their objectives are being achieved.

**233.** Despite budgetary constraints and budget-setting procedures which rely heavily on historical precedent, many services have been able to introduce greater flexibility and equity into their allocation of resources and an increasing number are beginning to assess the cost-effectiveness of their work. The local authority proportion of the youth service budget was reduced in real terms during 1995/6 and is likely to have been further reduced in 1996/7. At a time when priority is being given to schools, the discretionary areas of local authority services are coming under increased pressure.



## *Adult education*

### **Educational standards achieved**

**234.** Within the 22 local authority services inspected as part of a survey of LEA-funded adult education, standards of achievement were good or very good in three-fifths of classes and unsatisfactory in fewer than one in sixteen. Students' motivation and enthusiasm made a significant contribution to the standards achieved in adult education classes. Students are generally committed and effective learners, who work hard and with persistence in their chosen subjects. The most consistently high standards are achieved in art, traditional crafts such as pottery, sculpture and embroidery, and in modern languages.

**235.** There is also high achievement in basic skills by students on family literacy programmes but, in contrast, much of the achievement in more general basic skills classes is no more than satisfactory. Despite apparently good systems for establishing student objectives and for support and guidance, literacy and numeracy work is often insufficiently challenging, with tutors and students alike content with mediocre progress: expectations are too low and the assignments are set mechanistically to the requirements of external accreditation rather than to the capabilities of students.

### **Quality of education**

**236.** The quality of teaching was good or very good in two-fifths of classes and unsatisfactory in one in seven. The majority of teachers are experienced and trained adult educators, who are specialists in their subject. Planning of sessions is usually sound, and is backed up by schemes of work containing, in the best examples, clear identification of what is to be learnt, and differentiating tasks according to ability. In contrast, poor teaching lacks rigour and basic planning or is over-prescriptive, with teachers lacking flexibility in their approach to course content. Poor teaching features particularly in those services where curriculum management is weak, where senior managers fail to monitor the quality of their teaching staff and where there are few opportunities for in-service training.

**237.** A majority of services still lack a consistent approach to monitoring and assessing students' achievement in individual classes, although most produce schemes of work for each course which identify the body of knowledge and specific skills forming their content. Where class assessment systems are being piloted, they are based on a clear identification of what constitutes good quality for particular subject areas, sometimes using syllabus outlines offered by local Open College Networks. They are most successful when recording is relatively simple and involves students directly, but also gives students a choice about how such assessment is carried out.

**238.** Most services offer a broad curriculum which reflects the needs of their local communities. The unhelpful funding divide between Schedule 2 and non-Schedule 2 courses, however, and most particularly the primacy given to the stable funding of the one over the other, restricts the curriculum, especially in small authorities. A clear definition of adequacy in relation to local authorities' statutory duties for this area of

provision is long overdue.

**239.** A strength of local authority services is their community base. Courses held in a familiar local venue are often an important first step for students returning to education and training or wishing to re-enter employment. Some particularly good work in this respect was observed in community-based business education centres where students could acquire information technology skills at a number of levels as well as gain access to business counselling or business start-up courses. Similarly, high-quality provision is made for parent education in several authorities, either as part of family literacy projects or in liaison with parent or early learning centres. This first-stage local provision is particularly beneficial for those groups currently under-represented in post-16 education nationally.

**240.** While some students move from this provision to qualification-bearing courses, progression routes from local authority adult education courses are many and varied. This type of provision has as important a contribution to make to the development of a learning culture at the heart of the community or the workplace as it has to opening up access to further and higher education.

### **Management and efficiency**

**241.** The majority of local authorities provide some or all of their adult education services directly and there are generally sufficient staff to plan and manage the provision. Curriculum leaders who develop and monitor specific curriculum areas and evaluate teachers' effectiveness have a positive impact on standards achieved by students. It is more difficult to ensure consistency of quality in delegated services where others assure quality on behalf of the local authority. Total reliance on the quality assurance systems of those institutions to whom the work has been contracted is rarely effective or appropriate.

**242.** Most local authorities target their expenditure and monitor their budgets carefully. They continue to work under extreme budgetary pressures. This year has seen further reductions in the proportion of local authority expenditure on adult education and an increasing reliance on external funding. In many authorities, too much staff time is devoted to seeking recurrent funding from outside sources rather than to improving the level of recruitment and the quality of provision within the authority.

## *Education in independent schools*

243. 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 484 schools. These schools represent a wide cross-section across the independent sector. A further six schools, which had been identified as causing serious concern from previous visits, received inspections leading to a published report.

### **Trends in provision**

244. The independent sector of education is far from static and retains its considerable diversity. The number of boys' schools becoming co-educational continues to grow. Boarding schools and boarding pupils continue to decline, especially in the preparatory school age range. The average age of pupils starting to board, however, fell during the year. Weekly boarding as opposed to termly boarding continues to grow in popularity. Some schools have maintained their boarding numbers by recruiting pupils from other parts of the world, especially the Far East and Central and Eastern Europe. The number of new religious schools, particularly Islamic and Evangelical Christian schools, continues to grow. A few independent schools have begun the process of opting into the voluntary and grant maintained sectors.

245. In most well-established schools, changes in age range are properly managed, and often lead to good educational provision. A few tutorial colleges and nurseries gain the advantages of school status without providing accommodation or a curriculum suited to the new intake. The increased numbers of boarders from different countries enrich many schools, and the pupils themselves are usually well supported by good pastoral care and by suitable provision of tuition in English as an additional language. Other schools, however, admit these pupils without sufficient preparation and resourcing to meet their needs.

246. Rather more than half of independent schools belong to associations which require some form of inspection as a condition of membership. Most of these schools have moved towards the National Curriculum at least in subject outline, sometimes without losing traditional subjects such as classics.

### **The quality of education**

#### **Standards**

247. Most independent schools provide at least a sound education; in a number it is good or excellent. The schools are particularly effective in inculcating into their pupils the habit of hard work. Levels of attainment are often high, reflecting the quality of teaching, high expectations from home and school, pupils' good attitudes to work and in many cases the schools' selective intake. Occasionally, however, the ablest pupils do not achieve the very high standards of which they are capable.

248. The large majority of independent schools establish secure foundations in reading and writing. Preparatory and pre-prep schools are helped in this vital task by the fact that pupils often start with good language skills acquired at home. Senior school pupils usually arrive fully able to read and write and with a good grounding in the major areas of the curriculum.

249. The major independent schools continue to achieve very high examination results. Overall, at GCE Advanced level selective independent schools score higher than maintained selective schools, but at GCSE, the maintained selective schools do better.

250. In nearly all the lessons seen, pupils' attitudes to learning were positive. They were almost always well-behaved, attentive in class and eager to co-operate and learn. The pupils in the best schools work very hard. They are keen to succeed and frequently ambitious. This makes the task of teaching relatively straightforward; indeed these positive attitudes occasionally compensate for teaching which would otherwise be ineffective.

## **Teaching**

251. In the large majority of lessons the quality of teaching is at least satisfactory and often good. In the best schools it is consistently good across a range of ages and subjects; it is scholarly and makes high demands of the pupils. Lessons are usually well planned with clear learning objectives, and the relatively small size of most classes enables the teacher to supervise the pupils' work closely. The quantity and quality of work expected from pupils in class and for homework are consistently high. This and the rigorous correction of errors contribute significantly to pupils' success.

252. Where teaching is less effective, pupils spend too much time simply following instructions or copying. In most preparatory schools there is a proper concern for and emphasis on progress in basic literacy and numeracy and these skills are generally well taught. Sometimes, however, this concern leads at too early an age to the premature and ineffective teaching of abstract concepts before pupils have been able to consolidate the necessary foundations.

253. In senior schools the predominant teaching style is exposition from the teacher followed by written or practical work. Often this exposition is well-judged and effective. Sometimes, however, it fails to engage fully pupils' interests and energies and pays insufficient attention to the full range of ability and attainment found in the class. As a result, some pupils make less progress than they should.

254. Many schools provide effective individual support for pupils with learning difficulties by withdrawing them from normal classes. Less frequently such pupils receive learning support in the subject classroom; this can be particularly helpful. In a minority of schools, however, special needs support is not sufficiently linked to the pupils' work in the rest of the curriculum.

255. The quality of teaching English as an additional language to the increasing number of pupils from overseas is uneven. Some schools provide expert and effective support; others recruit non-English speaking pupils without making appropriate provision. Many of these pupils initially lack sufficient fluency in the language for

them to make progress in a full academic curriculum which is taught through the medium of English.

256. Some specialist stage and music schools and religious schools have their distinctive curricula which raise significant questions about minimum requirements for the curriculum for all pupils. Many of the religious schools, for example, teach a curriculum which has its own validity, but which may not prepare their pupils for life and work in the wider community.

### **Boarding education**

257. Overall, about one-quarter of the boarding provision inspected was good or very good, while a further half was satisfactory. The provision was poor in around one in five schools. About one in twenty schools with boarding had serious weaknesses, relating to accommodation or pupils' welfare. While most boarding accommodation was clean, one-third of the schools had health and safety deficiencies, including lack of a health and safety policy or adequate heating, inadequately protected windows or floor coverings, or steep stairways without adequate handrails. One-fifth of the schools had overcrowded dormitories, while one in seven had insufficient showers and bathrooms, or lacked privacy.

258. Social Services Department inspectors' reports provide clear messages and recommendations about standards of pupils' welfare in boarding schools. Standards have greatly improved since the Children Act was introduced, but there remain some common areas of concern. One-third of the boarding schools inspected by Social Services Department inspectors had inadequate complaints procedures, ineffective child protection procedures and guidelines, or insufficient staff training in child care. One in ten still had no child protection policy while one-quarter made insufficient checks on staff who have regular or frequent unsupervised access to pupils. This was a particular problem with tutorial colleges which lodge school age pupils in private homes; these were often not visited by staff from the school.

259. While boarding schools which are members of associations have fewer shortcomings in welfare standards than non-members, membership of an association does not in itself guarantee quality. Major issues of concern include the clarity of the independent listeners' role, the establishment of effective complaints procedures and the need for awareness of child protection procedures among all boarding and teaching staff. This is especially important for the teacher with designated responsibility for child protection.

260. The welfare and quality of education of the increasing numbers of boarding pupils from Asia and Central and Eastern Europe are a cause for concern. In many schools they are frequently the only boarders left at weekends and find themselves increasingly isolated.

### **Schools causing concern**

261. There remains a stubborn minority of about three per cent of schools, mostly outside the main independent school associations, which give rise to serious concerns. These schools include a significant number in which the premises are unsuitable or pose actual risks to the health or safety of the pupils. A high proportion have

weaknesses in the standards achieved by pupils. About half offer a curriculum which is so narrow as to be unsuited to the ages of the pupils. About one-third have insufficient or unsuitably qualified staff. Nearly half have inadequate resources to support the pupils' learning. About one in four of the schools with serious weaknesses have problems related to the welfare of their pupils.

### **The private inspection of independent schools**

**262.** In addition to inspection by HMI for the purpose of registration, well over half of the sector is subject to regular private inspection in connection with association membership or accreditation. The most significant private inspecting group is the Independent Schools Joint Council (ISJC) and during the past year HMI carried out a scrutiny of their inspection arrangements.

**263.** The two systems of inspection operated within ISJC differ widely in their scale, organisation, personnel and policy over the public availability of reports. Nevertheless, they have broadly similar strengths and weaknesses.

**264.** In both systems most inspections are efficiently prepared and carried out. Inspectors comply with their codes of conduct, often make penetrating observations about the schools inspected and produce readable reports. The process contributes usefully to the development and improvement of schools.

**265.** However, many of those who lead the inspections do not monitor the collection of evidence or ensure that the criteria are followed systematically. The inspections are not subject to any direct monitoring. Inspection teams do not always ensure a definite consensus on all key judgements and need to make fuller use of objective indicators to establish whether pupils' achievements match their potential.

**266.** Such weaknesses do not necessarily invalidate the reports but do raise doubts about the security of some of the judgements reached. The Associations concerned are working to co-ordinate their two systems more closely, and to address the weaknesses identified. This represents a welcome commitment to self-regulation and raising standards within the member schools of these associations.

## *Teacher education and training*

### **Primary initial teacher training**

**267.** The training of students to teach reading and number was inspected in a sample of about 25 per cent of primary providers in 1996/97. Much of provision is good or adequate, but there are some areas where the quality is clearly less than satisfactory. Assessments carried out by the partnerships, for example, are not always reliable, rigorous or even accurate. Quality assurance arrangements designed to ensure the consistent monitoring of students' progress are sometimes weak. A minority of students observed had serious weaknesses in their competence in one or other of these basic skill areas, despite the fact that these had been judged at least adequate by the providers. These weaknesses were more marked in reading than in number. Sometimes students were not sufficiently familiar with the key stage in which they were not specialising.

**268.** The inspections took place at a time when a new National Curriculum for English and mathematics for primary initial teacher training was in the course of preparation. It was clear that, while many courses were reasonably well placed to meet these new requirements, not all students were yet gaining sufficient understanding of particular aspects of training, such as the use of phonic knowledge, to plan a structured programme for teaching reading.

### **Reading**

**269.** The majority of courses inspected offered well-planned coverage of reading within the training for English, and complied with the requirements of Circular 14/93. Essential skills, such as those related to teaching phonics and grammar, are now being given a higher priority in most course programmes. Training sessions by university or college tutors are often of good and sometimes very good quality, but a minority need a sharper focus on these skills. Providers are beginning to recognise the need to audit students' own subject knowledge, so that they can identify gaps and monitor progress. This practice is still at an early stage, however, for a number of courses, and should be extended.

**270.** Training mostly provides students with some preparation in understanding progression in the National Curriculum for reading across the primary years. In a minority of courses, however, students are not given adequate opportunity to teach and assess pupils outside their specialist key stage. In general, students specialising in early years, or Key Stage 1, are better prepared to develop the more advanced reading skills, than students specialising in Key Stage 2 are to teach initial reading to pupils who have made poor progress in learning to read.

**271.** Most courses now ensure that students understand the stages of development in learning to read. Almost all students have some knowledge of phonics; for a minority this is extensive. In most cases they know about the importance of developing phonemic awareness and are acquainted with terminology associated with phonics teaching. They are less confident in using their phonic knowledge to plan a structured programme of teaching, and less certain about how to teach phonics systematically.



These weaknesses are clearly serious in that it is practical competence in the classroom that matters more than anything else.

272. The area of assessment, recording and reporting is often the least secure competence for students. Courses usually provide effective training in assessment methods, and in statutory requirements for assessment, recording and reporting. However, students are sometimes hampered by their own insecurities in subject knowledge, or by the lack of opportunity to teach reading for extended periods. In particular, some students demonstrate weaknesses over setting clear learning objectives for reading; these affect their assessment and recording of progress. Students are generally good at informal methods of assessment; for example, they make appropriate use of questioning to help pupils to improve their comprehension of a passage or decode unknown words. The requirement for students to develop competence in reporting orally, or in writing, to parents requires further thought. For example, where it proves difficult to provide real opportunities to attend parents' evenings, more could be made of simulations in which students report to class teachers, or to college tutors.

273. Students are, almost without exception, well motivated and professional in their attitudes. They mostly demonstrate competence in classroom management, and in maintaining discipline. They often make effective use of a wide and appropriate range of resources, although information technology is not sufficiently well used to support pupils' reading. Most students observed had opportunities to observe and work with experienced and successful teachers of reading, although only a minority of partnerships had procedures in place to monitor closely students' progress in teaching reading, or to offer specific training for reading in the schools. Almost half of the partnerships experienced difficulty in identifying accurately the levels of students' competence in teaching reading, and did not have reliable information on which to base their judgements. A minority failed to identify significant weaknesses in the competence for teaching reading of a small number of their students. These weaknesses, which are obviously serious, were revealed through inspection which drew on a range of evidence including classroom observations, inspection of pupils' work, interviews with the student and with other teachers, and the examination of the student's teaching file.

## Number

274. All courses seen complied with the requirements of Circular 14/93 to teach mathematics. The development of students' own subject knowledge continues to be an important issue in some courses. Providers are now auditing and remedying students' subject knowledge more systematically.

275. Courses generally ensure that students have experience in schools in both key stages but the range and extent of this experience varies considerably, particularly when students are operating outside their specialist age-phases. Most students have the opportunity to develop some sense of how pupils' learning in number should progress, by working with pupils across the full primary age range, but about one-third of the courses inspected displayed some weaknesses in the provision of such opportunities. In a significant minority of courses, students specialising in the later years are more confident and knowledgeable about developing early number concepts than early years specialists are about teaching number at the latter end of Key Stage 2.

276. Provision in preparing students to teach place value is particularly good. New initiatives in the teaching of number, including, increasingly, the National Numeracy Project, are being used to influence the way students are trained to teach number. Training in how to organise and manage the teaching of whole classes, and in using questioning skills is increasingly effective. Skills related to recognising common pupil errors and misconceptions in number and to knowing how to teach rapid mental calculation are being given a high priority in almost all courses.

277. The time and effort which have been put into establishing training partnerships are beginning to bring about a greater understanding by schools of their role in training, but much still needs to be done to ensure that all students receive specific training in school to teach number. The contribution from schools is often strengthened by tasks which students are required to carry out in schools to complement training based in a higher education institution (HEI). However, not all providers require students to carry out a written assignment in number, and some partnerships could do more to involve teachers in the monitoring and assessment of directed tasks in school. The use of mathematics co-ordinators in training is underdeveloped. Although students often receive a good introduction from HEIs in how to use information technology in teaching number, they do not always get sufficient opportunity to put their knowledge into practice in schools.

278. Although the students observed planned well for teaching in the medium and longer term, usually in consultation with their class teacher, the learning objectives in their daily planning were often not sufficiently specific to ensure effective teaching. However, students were mostly able to establish and maintain discipline successfully in their classes and to manage and organise the work of pupils in number well. They were usually developing their skill in questioning pupils, but sometimes did not have sufficient experience of teaching number to whole classes.

279. In a third of courses the assessment, recording and reporting of pupils' progress are not firmly established. There is a particular need to improve the following: setting specific learning objectives and linking their assessment to future planning; establishing manageable and informative record-keeping systems; knowledge and experience of statutory assessment requirements and national end-of-key stage standards in number; and opportunities, particularly for later years specialists, to report directly to parents.

### Secondary initial teacher training

280. OFSTED began a programme of secondary subject inspections in initial teacher training in 1996/7 using the joint OFSTED/Teacher Training Agency (TTA) Framework. The focus is the Postgraduate Certificate in Education route to Qualified Teacher Status. The inspections will continue through 1997/8 and will cover every provider. The findings and issues outlined here are preliminary.

281. The number and quality of applicants for teacher training vary markedly according to subject and to region. Generally, the quality of trainees in art, history, English and geography is higher than in the shortage subjects of mathematics, design and technology, science, modern foreign languages and religious education.

282. Trainees recruited to School-Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) schemes

are on average less well-qualified than those in traditional partnerships; SCITT schemes have in general more difficulty in meeting the recruitment targets set by the TTA, although there is variation here, as there is in partnerships based on higher education institutions.

**283.** Providers' selection and interviewing arrangements are generally efficient and effective, but on occasion are applied less rigorously for late applicants, many of whom are in shortage subjects and, at times, encounter more difficulties during their training. Where recruitment is difficult, criteria related to applicants' subject knowledge and ability for teaching are at times applied less rigorously than in those subjects where there is competition for places.

**284.** A very high proportion of those recruited to initial teacher training courses are academically well-qualified, holding good honours degrees. Trainees from minority ethnic backgrounds are poorly represented. The balance between men and women is shifting towards women in most subjects.

**285.** Schools' understanding of their training role and responsibilities in partnership varies to a quite marked extent. School-based subject mentors have become key figures in the training process. Some mentors are excellent, but the overall quality remains variable. The less effective mentors have a limited view of their training responsibilities and the training they may have received has not fitted them effectively for the major responsibilities they bear. Schools' involvement in initial teacher training places significant additional pressure on experienced school teachers. This raises questions about the preparation and support they need and receive, and about the wider responsibilities mentors have for training their colleagues, since calls on school-based trainers' time affect the support they can give trainees and colleagues.

**286.** The training provided for mentors in most subjects is often highly relevant and of good quality; however, it is frequently limited in quantity and undertaken out of school hours.

**287.** The extent to which the school-based teaching experience and training opportunities match the needs of the trainees varies within and between partnerships. Some trainees, for example, have restricted access to Year 9 classes or to examination groups in Years 10 and 11. They may also have virtually no experience of the post-16 age group. Some trainees' school-based training is largely confined to Key Stage 3. This can lead to serious shortcomings in their preparation for teaching the full 11-16 or 11-18 age-range.

**288.** In the most effective partnerships, the training provided in the HEIs is closely linked to trainees' experiences in schools. Regular contact, including meetings between the partners, is a strong feature of such training. Increasingly, trainees' written assignments are school-based and closely related to practical teaching concerns; they are often challenging, stimulating and appropriate. The criteria used for assessing them are usually published, and tutors' marking is frequently good. Mentors could be better informed about trainees' performance in the written assignments and more closely involved in their assessment.

**289.** Mentors almost invariably undertake more lesson observations than they are required or contracted to do, and provide a great deal of informal as well as formal feedback.

290. Target-setting is a common feature of training but the quality of targets set is variable - from specific, well-focused, constructive and realistic to general, unhelpful and bland.

291. Judgements about trainees' overall proficiency in achieving the required competences for QTS are mostly based on secure evidence and accurate, although there are some over-generous assessments. Decisions about strengths and weaknesses with respect to particular competences are more variable in quality. The competences provide a generally clear framework for making judgements about trainees' proficiency; many teachers, now familiar with OFSTED inspection procedures, are becoming more confident about making comments on the quality of trainees' work, and are becoming clearer about what constitutes weak teaching and an ineffective lesson.

## HEADLAMP

292. The Headteachers' Leadership and Management Programme (HEADLAMP) is a grant-supported training scheme available to headteachers appointed to their first permanent headship from April 1995. Under the scheme, headteachers identify their own training needs and construct a programme of training. For some headteachers it was beneficial to defer the start of the training process until an opportunity to come to terms with the demands of the course had been assessed. Many heads initially found the identification of needs difficult and not all took full account of the HEADLAMP document "Tasks and Abilities". Most headteachers opted for a pre-packaged course as an alternative to planning a personal development programme. Providers offered an increasing variety of approaches to needs assessment, but only approximately a half of these approaches were of good quality. This is a serious weakness and needs to be addressed urgently.

293. The training programmes offered were generally suitable for the scheme, although in some cases they were not geared specifically to HEADLAMP participants. The delivery of approximately two-thirds of the training observed was of at least good quality, and made use of a suitable range and variety of activities, well matched to the needs of the headteachers attending. Nearly half the activities used in the training were well planned and responsive to the needs of participants. There were, however, weaknesses in significant minority of sessions, including excessively theoretical or lengthy presentations.

294. The HEADLAMP programme has not been running long enough to allow its full impact to be evaluated. However, it is clear that some headteachers who took part in the programme developed new skills and gained in confidence. On the other hand, there is as yet little clear evidence that many participating headteachers have made fundamental changes to their styles of leadership and management. There are also significant weaknesses in the quality of some of the training.

## Specialist Teacher Assistant (STA) Scheme

295. The Specialist Teacher Assistant (STA) Scheme has been in operation since 1994. Its aim is to develop courses to prepare adults to support qualified teachers in teaching the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics, especially at Key Stage

1. Some 2,600 assistants were trained during the first two years of the scheme, and a further 1,000 are currently being trained during the third round. Where STAs have been trained for a year on courses that followed the DfEE guidelines they contribute significantly to raising standards in numeracy and literacy if they are suitably deployed. In such circumstances, assistants save teachers' time and enable more flexible use to be made of trained staff within the classroom.

**296.** In 1996/7 LEAs became more involved in STA training through GEST funding or through Numeracy and Literacy Centre projects. Providers and LEAs need to do more to help headteachers review the roles and training needs of classroom assistants and to recommend suitable candidates as training for STAs. Very few LEAs have set out model job descriptions for STAs or provided anything other than oral and informal guidance on their employment. Monitoring of their employment is also a weak feature.

**297.** Those LEAs designated as Literacy or Numeracy Centres which set out to train an STA for each participating school are finding that a number of schools have no classroom assistant suitable for such training. The LEAs should be encouraged to have some flexibility in their STA training programmes rather than linking each year of training tightly to successive groups of schools. Such flexibility would allow better-qualified classroom assistants to be trained, if necessary after successfully completing access courses, and to be fitted in after their school's expected year for training. Similarly, some classroom assistants from schools due to enter the programme towards the end of the five-year period might be trained earlier when there are places available.

## *Local education authority support for raising achievement*

298. OFSTED carried out five LEA inspections in 1996/7, all with authorities who agreed to participate. Each inspection evaluated the LEA's strategy and priorities for school improvement and the consistency with which that strategy was implemented. HMI assessed the impact of the LEA's strategy through a programme of school visiting. In addition HMI evaluated the use of performance data in 12 LEAs and carried out a survey analysing the quality of planning in 13 new unitary authorities.

299. Four of the five LEAs inspected had significant strengths. One was generally weak. Most of the schools visited were judged to be improving and the LEA was judged to have made some contribution to this improvement. Weaker schools often proved particularly intractable, sometimes despite sustained and expensive support from the LEAs. The schools that improved most as a result of LEA support were effective schools. They know what support they need, how to get it and how to use it. The evidence suggested that changes in senior personnel were needed for substantial improvement in a weaker school. In order to bring this about, LEAs needed the active support of governing bodies. This was not always forthcoming.

300. Although a number of impressive initiatives were in place, LEA planning for school improvement was generally weak. It did not set out general principles, specific objectives, the resources to be deployed and means of evaluating the LEA's own performance with appropriate clarity. Rhetoric about "partnership" often obscured a lack of detail about the obligations and accountability implied for both sides. Objectives were often too broad or too optimistic. The contribution of the LEA was often insufficiently co-ordinated, involving too many initiatives, frequently funded by central government. As a result, strategic focus was lost.

301. If LEAs are to fulfil the new role the Government has set out for them in the White Paper *Excellence in Schools* there will need, for some at least, to be a substantial improvement in their performance and perception of role.

## *Support for school management*

302. LEAs assist improvements in the management of schools through advice on appointments, the induction of headteachers, management courses and involvement on working groups. The CEOs' advice on headship appointments is, for the most part, taken seriously and welcomed. HEADLAMP has contributed to improvements in the induction of new headteachers.

303. Governing bodies receive adequate information and advice on particular issues, but the provision and uptake of training are low. LEA contact with governing bodies varies considerably. Some governing bodies need help to think and plan strategically, in addition to information on particular requirements and developments.

304. Most LEAs provide sound financial and personnel support to schools who value this service. Where this support is effective it ensures that what the school does is safe and legal, promotes the efficient use of resources, saves time and reduces anxiety for staff and governors.



## The use of performance data

305. All the LEAs included in the survey collated and analysed a wide range of data related to school performance. There was, however, considerable variation in the effectiveness with which this data was used. The well-focused use of clearly presented data in individual schools significantly extended their capacity for self-improvement. The analysis of the attainment of pupils in primary schools has improved. More use is being made of National Curriculum tests and teacher assessment scores and more effective use of data from standardised tests for reading and numeracy. One-quarter of the LEAs have established systems of baseline assessments for nursery and reception pupils. These normally include objective data on numeracy and literacy together with more subjective judgements by the teacher.

306. Most LEAs analyse attainment in the context of the intake of the school. In the main they make effective use of data on eligibility for free school meals as an indicator of disadvantage. About half the LEAs also collect data on ethnicity and English as an additional language, often in conjunction with arrangements for Section 11 funding. A significant number of LEAs make effective use of value-added analyses, particularly for secondary schools with sixth forms where well-established data is available.

307. The provision of INSET relating to the use of data is variable; sometimes it is provided only for secondary heads but more priority is now being given to primary schools. Increasingly, LEAs regard the circulation of the data as only one part of a broader thrust on monitoring and evaluation in order to encourage improvement and there are examples of LEAs beginning to work effectively with schools in using the data to establish targets for improvement. Overall, however, too little use is made of performance data. Too little expectation is placed on schools that the data they receive should be used and there is too little guidance on how it could be used profitably. More INSET is needed to develop the growing use of data as a useful evaluative tool.

308. Many LEAs analyse OFSTED inspection reports on their schools, although the analysis sometimes amounts to little more than a repetition of key issues. Increasing numbers of LEAs have continued to draw on analyses of inspection evidence provided by OFSTED to help them focus support for schools. About three-quarters of LEAs have now obtained an analysis of inspection and other performance data from OFSTED and are beginning to use it in strategic planning and decision making. The new unitary authorities have found this information particularly useful in providing a baseline of performance for their schools.

## LEAs and OFSTED inspections

309. Some LEAs continue to concentrate too much resource on pre-OFSTED inspections. Where this assists the school to use the Framework effectively to evaluate its provision and to act on outcomes, schools benefit substantially. Where it is designed primarily to assist the school to present itself favourably in the inspection, they do not.

310. Most LEAs provide support on the action plan following an OFSTED inspection, but the implementation of the action plan is rarely monitored



systematically. There are examples of good support for subject departments in secondary schools and also for headteachers on general school planning, but, overall, the picture is not favourable.

## *Inspection evidence*

### **Section 10 inspections**

The Section 10 inspections of primary, secondary and special schools were carried out by registered inspectors. There were 7,503 such inspections: 6,027 of primary or nursery schools, 955 of secondary schools, 468 of special schools and 53 of Pupil Referral Units (PRU).

### **HMI inspections**

During the year HMI made some 2,275 visits to schools. These included more than 550 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 number in primary schools, the implementation of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs, the Part One GNVQ pilot and subject management in secondary schools.

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 carried out four full inspections of LEA-provided further education services (youth work and adult education) and also inspected the youth service's contribution to drug education, grants to national voluntary youth organisations, education provision in young offenders' institutions, quality assurance in local authority adult education and youth services, and LEA-funded adult education in 22 local authorities.

In addition HMI inspected a range of initial teacher training including secondary subject training and training for teaching reading and number in primary schools. The inspection of the Specialist Teacher Assistant Scheme and the Headteacher's Leadership and Management Programme continued from the previous year.

## *Interpreting inspection evidence*

Evidence from Section 10 inspections for 1996/7 contained a number of distinct sections:

- 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 statistical summary of these grades is contained in Annex 3.

### **Standards achieved by pupils**

Inspectors made 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, but it does not tell the whole story. Able pupils who are achieving levels which are above the average could still be underachieving if their results do not reflect their capabilities.

Conversely, pupils of low ability might be doing well if they are working to full capability even though their level of achievement is below the average achievement for pupils of a similar age. In this report, quantitative judgements on the achievements of pupils are mainly based on the progress made by pupils.

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 schools 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 standards. In this report when commenting on standards in subjects and in schools it is these overall judgements that have been used in the main. 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 excellent, 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, poor or very 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, indicating 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 excellent, very good or good teaching that promotes high standards. Grade 4 is satisfactory teaching that promotes sound standards and grades 5-7 indicate unsatisfactory, poor or very poor teaching that promotes low standards. In this report lesson grades have generally been used to provide quantitative overviews of the quality of teaching.

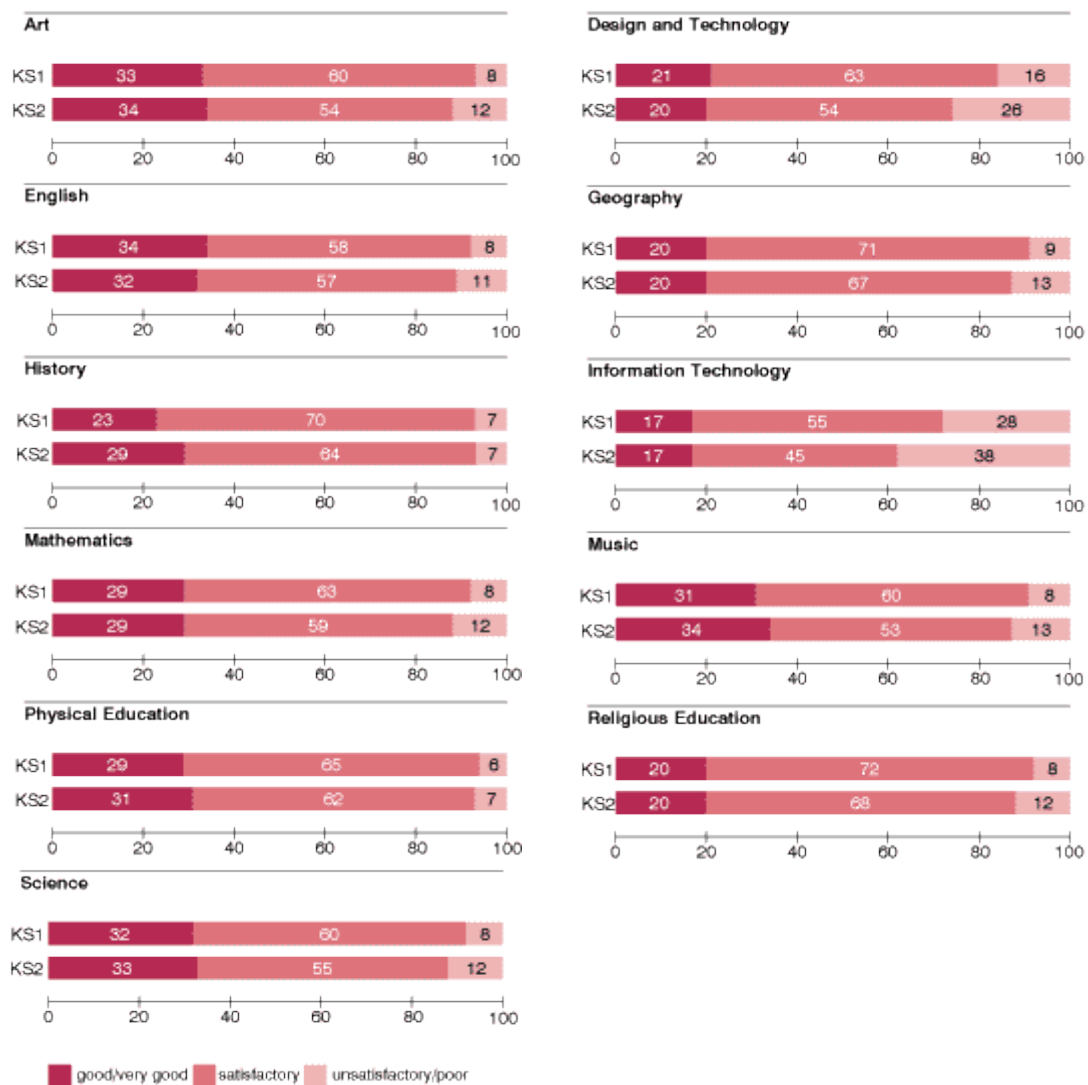
## Year on year comparisons

The revised Framework contains significant changes in the criteria used by inspectors when arriving at judgements. Lesson grades have changed from a five-point to a seven-point scale. For these reasons it is difficult to make precise comparisons between inspectors' judgements in this year's report and those in previous reports. There are few such comparisons in this year's report and they only occur where there is other clear supporting evidence.

## Statistical Summary

### Progress in Primary Schools<sup>1</sup> 1996/97

(percentage of schools)<sup>2</sup>



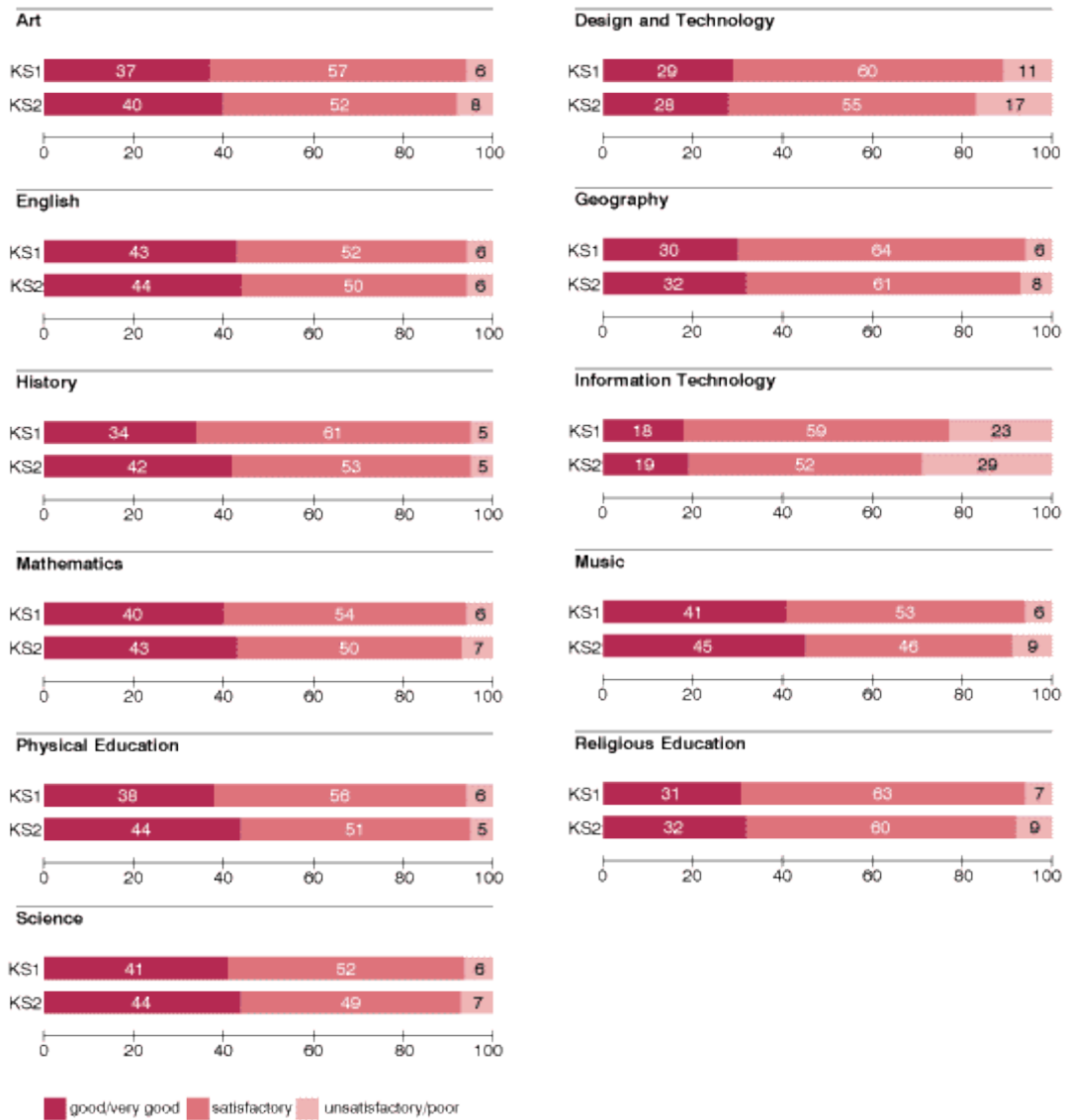
<sup>1</sup>Includes all maintained infant, junior, primary and middle-deemed primary schools

<sup>2</sup>Figures have been rounded and may not add up to 100 per cent

# Statistical Summary

## Teaching in Primary Schools<sup>1</sup> 1996/97

(percentage of schools)<sup>2</sup>



<sup>1</sup>Includes all maintained infant, junior, primary and middle-deemed primary schools

<sup>2</sup>Figures have been rounded and may not add up to 100 per cent

## Statistical Summary

### Inspection Grades for Primary Schools<sup>1</sup> 1996/97

Aspects of the School <sup>2</sup>	Percentage of Schools <sup>3</sup>			
	Inspection grade*	Good	Satis- factory	Unsatis- factory
<b>School Characteristics</b>				
3.1.1	Attainment on entry	25	43	32
3.1.2	Socio-economic circumstances	29	35	36
<b>Educational Standards Achieved</b>				
4.1.2	Progress	Under Five 53	42	5
		Key Stage 1 29	63	9
		Key Stage 2 28	60	12
		School 29	62	9
4.1.3	Progress of pupils with SEN	Under Five 51	47	2
		Key Stage 1 48	47	5
		Key Stage 2 48	46	6
		School 49	46	5
4.2.1	Attitude		84	15
4.2.2	Behaviour		79	18
4.2.3	Relationships		87	12
4.2.4	Personal development		66	30
4.3	Attendance		52	39
<b>Quality of Education</b>				
<b>Teaching</b>				
5.1	<b>Teaching</b>	<b>Under Five 63</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>7</b>
		<b>Key Stage 1 41</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>9</b>
		<b>Key Stage 2 43</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>10</b>
		<b>School 45</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>7</b>
5.1.1	Teachers' knowledge and understanding	Under Five 61	30	9
		Key Stage 1 38	55	7
		Key Stage 2 37	53	10
5.1.2	Teachers' expectations	Under Five 61	29	10
		Key Stage 36	46	18



		1 Key Stage 2	36	42	22
5.1.3	Teachers' planning	Under Five Key Stage 1	55 40	32 42	13 18
		Key Stage 2	38	42	20
5.1.4	Methods and organisation	Under Five Key Stage 1	59 41	29 47	11 13
		Key Stage 2	42	46	12
5.1.5	Management of pupils	Under Five Key Stage 1	77 64	19 30	4 6
		Key Stage 2	65	29	6
5.1.6	Use of time and resources	Under Five Key Stage 1	58 40	34 47	9 13
		Key Stage 2	41	47	12
5.1.7	Quality and use of day-to-day assessment	Under Five Key Stage 1	49 26	35 41	16 34
		Key Stage 2	23	38	40
5.1.8	Use of homework	Under Five Key Stage 1	35 24	61 68	4 9
		Key Stage 2	21	59	20
<b>Curriculum</b>					
<b>5.2</b>	<b>The Curriculum</b>	<b>Under Five</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>10</b>
		<b>Key Stage 1</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>14</b>
		<b>Key Stage 2</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>19</b>
		<b>School</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>15</b>
5.2.1	Breadth, balance, relevance of the whole curriculum	Under Five Key Stage 1	50 32	37 54	13 14
		Key Stage 2	28	53	19
5.2.2	Equality of access and opportunity	Under Five Key Stage 1	55 44	41 50	4 6
		Key Stage 2	41	49	10
5.2.3	Provision for pupils with SEN	Under Five Key Stage	62 60	35 35	3 6

		1 Key Stage 2	58	35	7
5.2.4	Planning for progression and continuity	Under Five	44	37	20
		Key Stage 1	24	37	39
		Key Stage 2	20	34	45
5.2.5	Provision for extra-curricular activities, including sport		53	35	12
5.2.6	Careers education and guidance		50	38	13
<b>Assessment</b>					
<b>5.X</b>	<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Under Five</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>18</b>
		<b>Key Stage 1</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>42</b>
		<b>Key Stage 2</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>49</b>
		<b>School</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>43</b>
5.2.7	Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment	Under Five	51	38	11
		Key Stage 1	29	43	28
		Key Stage 2	23	42	34
5.2.8	Use of assessment to inform curriculum planning	Under Five	41	36	23
		Key Stage 1	18	31	50
		Key Stage 2	15	28	57
<b>Spiritual, Moral, Social, and Cultural Development</b>					
5.3	<b>Provision for pupils' SMSC development</b>		<b>68</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>3</b>
5.3.1	Pupils' spiritual development		47	41	12
5.3.2	Pupils' moral development		82	17	1
5.3.3	Pupils' social development		80	18	2
5.3.4	Pupils' cultural development		44	44	12
<b>Support, Guidance and Pupils' Welfare</b>					
5.4	<b>Support, guidance and pupils' welfare</b>		<b>65</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>4</b>
5.4.1	Procedures for monitoring progress and personal development		41	45	14
5.4.2	Procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour		77	19	5
5.4.3	Procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance		62	29	8
5.4.4	Procedures for child protection and promoting pupils' well-being, health and safety		59	33	8
<b>Partnership with Parents and the Community</b>					
5.5	<b>Partnership with Parents and the Community</b>		<b>61</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>5</b>
5.5.1	Quality of information for parents		55	36	8

5.5.2	Parental involvement in children's learning	54	36	10
5.5.3	Enrichment through links with community	63	32	5
<b>Management and Efficiency</b>				
<b>Leadership and Management</b>				
6.1	<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>17</b>
6.1.1	Leadership: clear educational direction for the school	58	25	16
6.1.2	Support and monitoring of teaching and curriculum development	26	32	42
6.1.3	Implementation of the school's aims, values and policies	53	35	12
6.1.4	Development planning, monitoring and evaluation	32	35	33
6.1.5	The school's ethos	76	20	4
<b>Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources</b>				
6.2	<b>Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>6</b>
6.2.1	Match of number, qualification and experience of teachers to the demands of the curriculum	34	62	4
6.2.2	Match of number, qualification and experience of support staff to the demands of the curriculum	53	43	5
6.2.3	Arrangements for professional development of all staff	41	41	18
6.2.4	Adequacy of accommodation for effective delivery of the curriculum	46	42	13
6.2.5	Adequacy of resources (including books/materials/equipment) for effective delivery of the curriculum	29	60	11
<b>Efficiency of the School</b>				
6.3	<b>Efficiency</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>7</b>
6.3.1	Financial planning	50	34	16
6.3.2	Use of teaching and support staff	51	41	9
6.3.3	Use of learning resources and accommodation	51	45	5
6.3.4	Efficiency of financial control and school administration	71	25	4
6.4	<b>Value for money</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>8</b>

<sup>1</sup>Includes all maintained infant, junior, primary and middle-deemed primary schools

<sup>2</sup>Codes are consistent with the current Inspection Framework Schedule

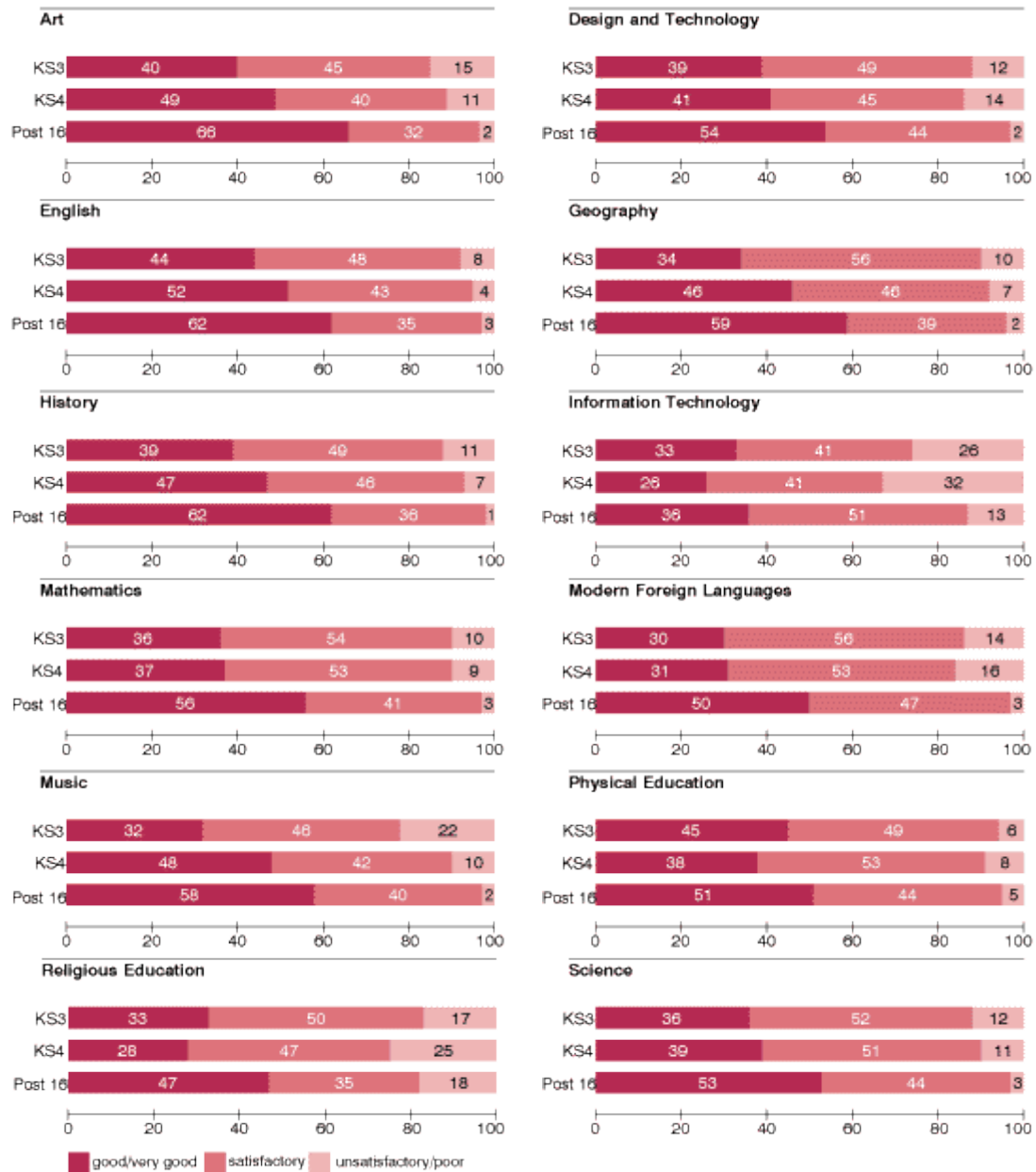
<sup>3</sup>Figures have been rounded and may not add up to 100 per cent

<sup>4</sup>For these grades, 'Good' includes grades 1-3, 'Satisfactory' is grade 4 and 'Unsatisfactory' includes grades 5-7

# Statistical Summary

## Progress in Secondary Schools<sup>1</sup> 1996/97

(percentage of schools)<sup>2</sup>



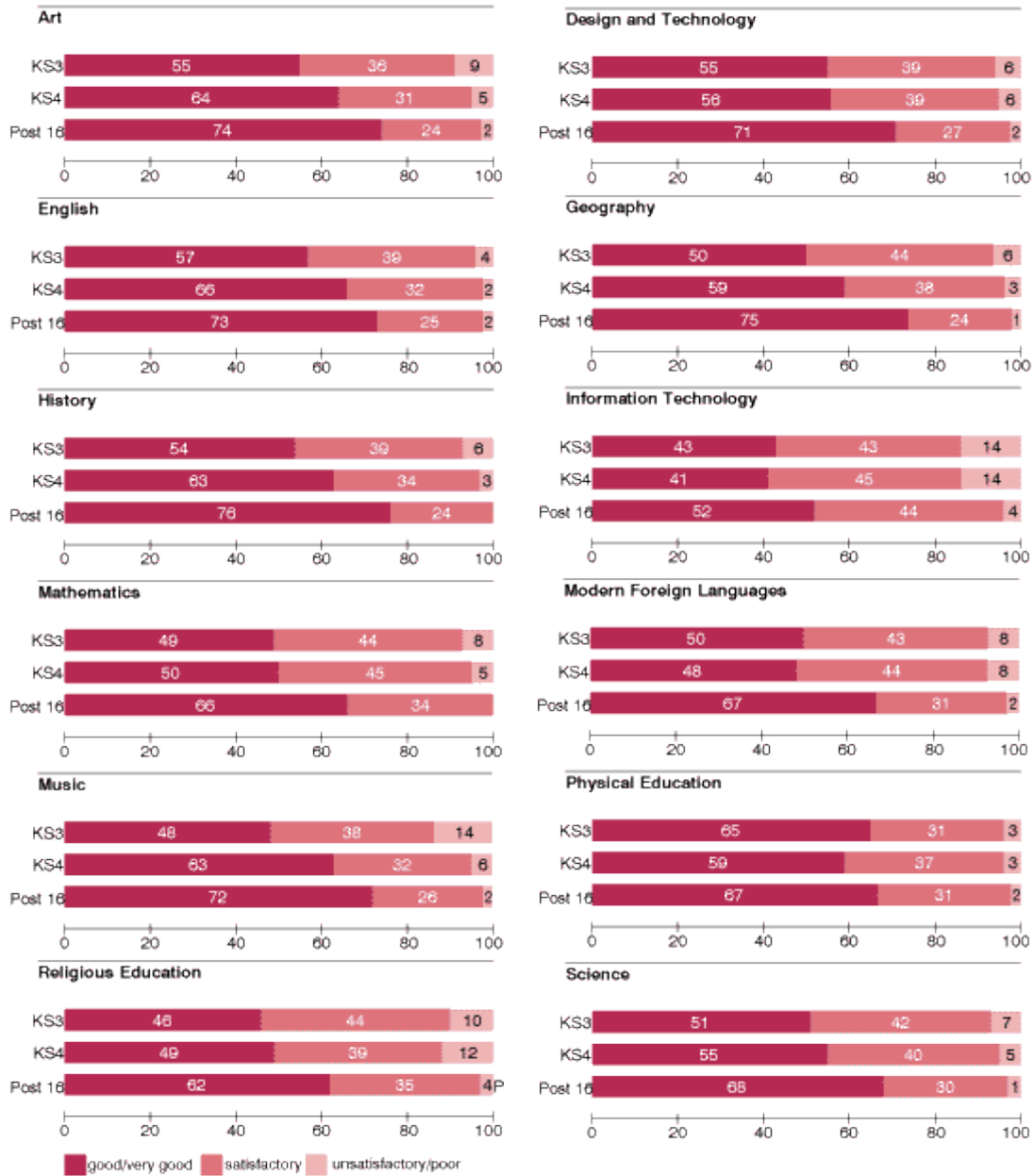
<sup>1</sup>Includes all maintained secondary and middle-deemed secondary schools

<sup>2</sup>Figures have been rounded and may not add up to 100 per cent

# Statistical Summary

## Teaching in Secondary Schools<sup>1</sup> 1996/97

(percentage of schools)<sup>2</sup>



<sup>1</sup>Includes all maintained secondary and middle-deemed secondary schools

<sup>2</sup>Figures have been rounded and may not add up to 100 per cent

## Statistical Summary

### Inspection Grades for Secondary Schools<sup>1</sup> 1996/97

Aspects of the School <sup>2</sup>		Percentage of Schools <sup>3</sup>			
		Inspection grade*	Good	Satis- factory	Unsatis- factory
<b>School Characteristics</b>					
3.1.1	Attainment on entry		21	29	50
3.1.2	Socio-economic circumstances		27	30	43
<b>Educational Standards Achieved</b>					
4.1.2	Progress	Key Stage 3	40	50	9
		Key Stage 4	46	47	7
		Post 16 School	64 43	34 50	2 7
4.1.3	Progress of pupils with SEN	Key Stage 3	48	44	8
		Key Stage 4	44	47	9
		Post 16 School	52 46	45 46	3 8
4.2.1	Attitude		78	18	3
4.2.2	Behaviour		76	18	6
4.2.3	Relationships		87	12	1
4.2.4	Personal development		64	29	7
4.3	Attendance		47	27	26
<b>Quality of Education</b>					
<b>Teaching</b>					
5.1	<b>Teaching</b>	Key Stage 3	<b>55</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>8</b>
		Key Stage 4	<b>61</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>4</b>
		Post 16 School	<b>81</b> <b>59</b>	<b>19</b> <b>35</b>	<b>1</b> <b>5</b>
5.1.1	Teachers' knowledge and understanding	Key Stage 3	77	22	1
		Key Stage 4	83	16	1
		Post 16	90	10	0
5.1.2	Teachers' expectations	Key Stage 3	39	43	18
		Key Stage 4	48	40	13

		Post 16	70	29	1
5.1.3	Teachers' planning	Key Stage 3	64	30	6
		Key Stage 4	66	29	4
		Post 16	74	25	1
5.1.4	Methods and organisation	Key Stage 3	42	49	9
		Key Stage 4	47	46	7
		Post 16	61	37	2
5.1.5	Management of pupils	Key Stage 3	74	20	6
		Key Stage 4	75	21	4
		Post 16	90	10	0
5.1.6	Use of time and resources	Key Stage 3	52	42	7
		Key Stage 4	54	41	5
		Post 16	65	34	1
5.1.7	Quality and use of day-to-day assessment	Key Stage 3	23	49	29
		Key Stage 4	26	54	20
		Post 16	49	45	6
5.1.8	Use of homework	Key Stage 3	32	49	19
		Key Stage 4	39	49	12
		Post 16	61	37	3
<b>Curriculum</b>					
5.2	<b>The Curriculum</b>	<b>Key Stage 3</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>8</b>
		<b>Key Stage 4</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>13</b>
		<b>Post 16</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>5</b>
		<b>School</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>10</b>
5.2.1	Breadth, balance, relevance of the whole curriculum	Key Stage 3	47	44	9
		Key Stage 4	36	45	19
		Post 16	56	36	8
5.2.2	Equality of access and opportunity	Key Stage 3	57	37	6
		Key Stage 4	50	38	12
		Post 16	67	30	3
5.2.3	Provision for pupils with SEN	Key Stage 3	52	35	13
		Key Stage 4	47	39	14
		Post 16	51	43	6
5.2.4	Planning for progression and	Key Stage	32	50	18



	continuity	3 Key Stage 4 Post 16	38 56	50 41	12 3
5.2.5	Provision for extra-curricular activities, including sport		74	20	6
5.2.6	Careers education and guidance		69	25	6
<b>Assessment</b>					
<b>5.X</b>	<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Key Stage 3 Key Stage 4 Post 16 School</b>	<b>22 29 43 25</b>	<b>46 50 48 49</b>	<b>32 21 9 26</b>
5.2.7	Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment	Key Stage 3 Key Stage 4 Post 16	33 45 63	45 44 31	21 11 5
5.2.8	Use of assessment to inform curriculum planning	Key Stage 3 Key Stage 4 Post 16	15 19 36	36 44 50	49 37 14
<b>Spiritual, Moral, Social, and Cultural Development</b>					
5.3	<b>Provision for pupils' SMSC development</b>		<b>58</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>8</b>
5.3.1	Pupils' spiritual development		24	31	45
5.3.2	Pupils' moral development		80	17	3
5.3.3	Pupils' social development		81	17	2
5.3.4	Pupils' cultural development		47	38	15
<b>Support, Guidance and Pupils' Welfare</b>					
5.4	<b>Support, guidance and pupils' welfare</b>		<b>74</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>3</b>
5.4.1	Procedures for monitoring progress and personal development		57	31	12
5.4.2	Procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour		79	15	6
5.4.3	Procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance		70	20	10
5.4.4	Procedures for child protection and promoting pupils' well-being, health and safety		64	28	8
<b>Partnership with Parents and the Community</b>					
5.5	<b>Partnership with Parents and the Community</b>		<b>60</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>6</b>
5.5.1	Quality of information for parents		61	32	7
5.5.2	Parental involvement in children's learning		36	46	19
5.5.3	Enrichment through links with community		68	26	6
<b>Management and Efficiency</b>					
<b>Leadership and Management</b>					
6.1	<b>Leadership and management</b>		<b>56</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>13</b>

6.1.1	Leadership: clear educational direction for the school	72	18	10
6.1.2	Support and monitoring of teaching and curriculum development	26	35	39
6.1.3	Implementation of the school's aims, values and policies	56	32	12
6.1.4	Development planning, monitoring and evaluation	31	33	36
6.1.5	The school's ethos	78	17	5
<b>Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources</b>				
6.2	<b>Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>12</b>
6.2.1	Match of number, qualification and experience of teachers to the demands of the curriculum	59	35	6
6.2.2	Match of number, qualification and experience of support staff to the demands of the curriculum	44	41	15
6.2.3	Arrangements for professional development of all staff	40	37	24
6.2.4	Adequacy of accommodation for effective delivery of the curriculum	36	42	23
6.2.5	Adequacy of resources (including books/materials/equipment) for effective delivery of the curriculum	25	48	26
<b>Efficiency of the School</b>				
6.3	<b>Efficiency</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>7</b>
6.3.1	Financial planning	59	25	16
6.3.2	Use of teaching and support staff	55	35	10
6.3.3	Use of learning resources and accommodation	58	36	6
6.3.4	Efficiency of financial control and school administration	82	15	3
6.4	<b>Value for money</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>7</b>

<sup>1</sup>Includes all maintained secondary and middle-deemed secondary schools

<sup>2</sup>Codes are consistent with the current Inspection Framework Schedule

<sup>3</sup>Figures have been rounded and may not add up to 100 per cent

\*For these grades, 'Good' includes grades 1-3, 'Satisfactory' is grade 4 and 'Unsatisfactory' includes grades 5-7

## *OFSTED Publications 1996/97*

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### PRICED PUBLICATIONS

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The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools: Standards and Quality in Education 1995/96	0 10 266997 X £8.80
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## UNPRICED PUBLICATIONS

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Arrangements for the Inspection of Schools from September 1997	<b>HMI 107</b>
Are You Ready for your Inspection? A guide for nursery education providers in the private, voluntary and independent sectors	<b>HMI 110</b>
Inspecting Independent Schools: A framework, April 1997	<b>HMI 108</b>
Inspecting Adult Education: A revised inspection schedule March 1997	<b>HMI 114</b>
Inspecting Youth Work: A revised inspection schedule March 1997	<b>HMI 113</b>
Framework for the Assessment of Quality and Standards in Initial Teacher Training 1997/98 (OFSTED/Teacher Training Agency) Available from TTA Publications	<b>Telephone: 01444 243 668</b>
LEA Support for School Improvement: A framework for the inspection of local education authorities, September 1997	<b>HMI 121</b>
Metropolitan Borough of Calderdale LEA: A review of aspects of LEA support for school improvement, January 1997	<b>HMR/33/97/DS</b>
Inspection of Hackney LEA, 1997	<b>HMR/114/97/LEA</b>
From Failure to Success: How special measures are helping schools improve	<b>HMI 109</b>
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Assessment of the Language Development of Bilingual Pupils	<b>HMR 97/97/NS</b>
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Part 1: Inspection of Independent Schools carried out by the Accreditation, Review & Consultancy Service	<b>HMR 31/97/NS</b>
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Youth Work in Wolverhampton	<b>HMR 68/97/DS</b>
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