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

**Standards and Quality
in Education
1995/96**

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IN EDUCATION**

THE ANNUAL

REPORT OF

HER MAJESTY'S

CHIEF INSPECTOR

OF SCHOOLS

Standards and

Quality in Education

1995/96

LONDON: The Stationery Office

**OFFICE FOR STANDARDS
IN EDUCATION**

The Rt Hon Gillian Shephard MP
Secretary of State
Department for Education and Employment
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3BT

February 1997

Dear Secretary of State,

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 in education.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Woodhead

CHRIS WOODHEAD

Contents

Preface: This Report draws on three sources of evidence:

■ Section 10[1] inspections carried out by registered inspectors;

■ inspections carried out by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools (HMI);

■ research reviews commissioned by OFSTED.

Chris Woodhead
Her Majesty's Chief
Inspector of Schools

The 1995/96 Section 10 inspections provide evidence on the standards, quality and efficiency of about 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 careers education and guidance, adult education and youth work, teacher education and training and the work of local education authorities (LEAs).

The Report also takes into account commissioned reviews of educational research on, for example, the achievement of ethnic minority pupils. In our report on the teaching of reading in three LEAs we combined inspection findings with the results of reading tests administered by the National Foundation for Educational Research. OFSTED's priorities, particularly Section 10 inspections, have limited the resources available for inspection of independent schools. HMI inspection of these schools this year has focused almost exclusively on registration visits. We, therefore, do not have a representative evidence base on independent schools and will not be reporting on them in this year's Report.

Full details of the evidence base are given in Annex 4.

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 63 secondary schools listed have received outstanding inspection reports. In addition, some have excellent General Certificate in 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. (The LEA, where different to the name of the town, is given in brackets).

Audenshaw High School MANCHESTER (TAMESIDE)
Bishop Challoner Secondary School BASINGSTOKE (HAMPSHIRE)
Brentwood County High School BRENTWOOD (ESSEX)
Caistor Grammar School CAISTOR (LINCOLNSHIRE)
Cardinal Langley RC High School ROCHDALE
Cardinal Newman RC School and Community College COVENTRY
Carleton High School PONTEFRACT (WAKEFIELD)
Dene Magna Community School DENE MAGNA (GLOUCESTERSHIRE)
Diss County High School DISS (NORFOLK)
Dr Challoner's High School AMERSHAM (BUCKINGHAMSHIRE)
Egglescliffe School STOCKTON-ON-TEES
Finchley RC High School BARNET
Frogmore Community School CAMBERLEY (HAMPSHIRE)
Habergham High School BURNLEY (LANCASHIRE)
Harrow Way Community School ANDOVER (HAMPSHIRE)
Hawkley Hall High School WIGAN
Helenswood School ST LEONARD'S (EAST SUSSEX)
Hethersett County High School NORWICH (NORFOLK)

1   Section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996 (previously Section 9 of the Education [Schools] Act 1992).

Highworth Grammar School for Girls ASHFORD (KENT)

Huish Episcopi School LANGPORT (SOMERSET)

Humberston Comprehensive School GRIMSBY (NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE)

Huntington School YORK

Ivybridge Community College IVYBRIDGE (DEVON)

Kennet School NEWBURY (BERKSHIRE)

Langley Park School for Girls BROMLEY

Leasowes High School and Community College DUDLEY

Meadowhead School SHEFFIELD

Newstead Wood School for Girls (GM) ORPINGTON (BROMLEY)

Ninestiles School BIRMINGHAM

Oxted County School OXTED (SURREY)

Our Lady and St John (Aided) School BLACKBURN (LANCASHIRE)

Ponteland County High School NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE (NORTHUMBERLAND)

Preston Community School YEOVIL (SOMERSET)

Queens' School WATFORD (HERTFORDSHIRE)

Rainham School for Girls GILLINGHAM (KENT)

Range High School SEFTON

Richard Hale School HERTFORD (HERTFORDSHIRE)

Robert May's School HOOK (HAMPSHIRE)

Simon Balle School HERTFORD (HERTFORDSHIRE)

Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys CANTERBURY (KENT)

Sir John Leman High School BECCLES (SUFFOLK)

St Augustine RC (GM) Comprehensive School TROWBRIDGE (WILTSHIRE)

St Bede's RC High School BLACKBURN (LANCASHIRE)

St Edmund Arrowsmith RC High School WIGAN

St John's School MARLBOROUGH (WILTSHIRE)

St Mary's RC High School WIGAN

Stratford-upon-Avon Grammar School for Girls STRATFORD-UPON-AVON (WARWICKSHIRE)

The Bishop Milner RC School DUDLEY

The Chase High School MALVERN (HEREFORD AND WORCESTER)

The Cornwallis School MAIDSTONE (KENT)

The Hayfield School DONCASTER

The Hertfordshire and Essex High School BISHOP'S STORTFORD (HERTFORDSHIRE)

The Kings of Wessex Community School CHEDDAR (SOMERSET)

The London Oratory School HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

The Norton Knatchbull School ASHFORD (KENT)

The Philip Morant School COLCHESTER (ESSEX)

Tonbridge Grammar School for Girls TONBRIDGE (KENT)

Trinity Catholic High School WOODFORD (REDBRIDGE)

Tudor Grange School SOLIHULL

Tuxford Comprehensive School NEWARK (NOTTINGHAMSHIRE)

Twynham School CHRISTCHURCH (DORSET)

Tytherington County High School MACCLESFIELD (CHESHIRE)

Wolverhampton Girls' High School WOLVERHAMPTON

Primary

I am pleased to be able to name 82 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.

Askwith County Primary School OTLEY (NORTH YORKSHIRE)

Banks Lane Junior School STOCKPORT

Barnby Dun Primary School DONCASTER

Barton Infant and Nursery School and Speech Unit TORQUAY (DEVON)

Billingshurst Infant School BILLINGSHURST (WEST SUSSEX)

Brewster Avenue Infant School PETERBOROUGH (CAMBRIDGESHIRE)

Broadway East First School NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE

Byley County Primary School MIDDLEWICH (CHESHIRE)

Christchurch Infants' School ILFORD (REDBRIDGE)

Church End Lower School BEDFORD (BEDFORDSHIRE)

Chuter Ede Primary School NEWARK (NOTTINGHAMSHIRE)

Clifton Infant School WAKEFIELD

Combe CofE Primary School WITNEY (OXFORDSHIRE)

Crawley Ridge County Junior School CAMBERLEY (SURREY)

Deer Park Primary School CHESTERFIELD (DERBYSHIRE)

Delamere CofE Primary School TARPORLEY (CHESHIRE)

Edenham CofE Primary School BOURNE (LINCOLNSHIRE)

Engayne Junior School UPMINSTER (HAVERING)

Evelyn Primary School PRESCOT (KNOWSLEY)

Flintham Primary School NEWARK (NOTTINGHAMSHIRE)

Florence Melly Infant School LIVERPOOL

Frogmore Junior School CAMBERLEY (HAMPSHIRE)

Galley Hill Primary School GUISBOROUGH (REDCAR AND CLEVELAND)

Gotherington County Primary School CHELTENHAM (GLOUCESTERSHIRE)

Great Crosby RC Primary School LIVERPOOL (SEFTON)

Hornton County Primary School BANBURY (OXFORDSHIRE)

Hose CofE Primary School MELTON MOWBRAY (LEICESTERSHIRE)

Ingleton CofE Primary School DARLINGTON (DURHAM)

Keston Infant School COULSDON (CROYDON)

Kingmoor Junior School CARLISLE (CUMBRIA)

Kings Heath Junior School BIRMINGHAM

Leighterton Primary School TETBURY (GLOUCESTERSHIRE)

Long Bennington CofE Primary School NEWARK (LINCOLNSHIRE)

Lower Heath CofE Primary School WHITCHURCH (SHROPSHIRE)

Lydgate Junior School SHEFFIELD

Lympne CofE Primary School HYTHE (KENT)

Marine Park First School WHITLEY BAY (NORTH TYNESIDE)

Mickleover Primary School DERBY (DERBYSHIRE)

Montpelier Junior School PLYMOUTH (DEVON)

Muskham Primary School NEWARK (NOTTINGHAMSHIRE)

New Hartley First School WHITLEY BAY (NORTHUMBERLAND)

North Reddish Infant School STOCKPORT

Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School WANSTEAD (REDBRIDGE)

Our Lady of Walsingham Infant School BOOTLE (SEFTON)

Overchurch Junior School WIRRAL

Peak Forest CofE Primary School BUXTON (DERBYSHIRE)

Pensby Infant School WIRRAL

Pinewood Infants' School FARNBOROUGH (HAMPSHIRE)

Poulton Lancelyn Primary School WIRRAL

Reigate Infant School DERBY (DERBYSHIRE)

Riddings Junior School ALFRETON (DERBYSHIRE)

Seaton Delaval First School WHITLEY BAY (NORTHUMBERLAND)

Silsoe VC Lower School BEDFORD (BEDFORDSHIRE)

South Ossett Infant School OSSETT (WAKEFIELD)

Southam St James CofE(VA) Primary School LEAMINGTON SPA (WARWICKSHIRE)

St Bede's RC Primary School REDCAR (REDCAR AND CLEVELAND)

St Christopher Primary School COVENTRY

St Ives County First School RINGWOOD (DORSET)

St John Vianney RC Primary School COVENTRY

St Joseph's RC Primary School BILLINGHAM (STOCKTON-ON-TEES)

St Joseph's RC Primary School WESTMINSTER

St Mary's RC Primary School NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME (STAFFORDSHIRE)
St Rumon's CofE Infants' School TAVISTOCK (DEVON)
St Saviour's CofE Junior School WESTGATE-ON-SEA (KENT)
Temple Sowerby CofE Primary School PENRITH (CUMBRIA)
Thorndown County Infant School HUNTINGDON (CAMBRIDGESHIRE)
Thornton-in-Craven Primary School SKIPTON (NORTH YORKSHIRE)
Torpoint Infants School TORPOINT (CORNWALL)
Turnfurlong County First School AYLESBURY (BUCKINGHAMSHIRE)
Valley End CofE Infant School WOKING (SURREY)
West Bridgford Junior School NOTTINGHAM (NOTTINGHAMSHIRE)
West Down Primary School ILFRACOMBE (DEVON)
Whinfield County Infant School DARLINGTON (DURHAM)
Winklebury Infant School BASINGSTOKE (HAMPSHIRE)

Middle
Exeter Central CofE Middle School EXETER (DEVON)
Farnham Common Middle School SLOUGH (BUCKINGHAMSHIRE)

Nursery
Bognor Regis Nursery School BOGNOR REGIS (WEST SUSSEX)
Clervaux Nursery School JARROW (SOUTH TYNESIDE)
Elston Hall Nursery School WOLVERHAMPTON
Marsh Hill Nursery School BIRMINGHAM
North Islington Nursery School ISLINGTON
Strong Close Nursery School KEIGHLEY (BRADFORD)

I am also pleased to name 14 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.

Abbey School ROTHERHAM
Dawn House Special School MANSFIELD (NOTTINGHAMSHIRE)
Heathfield MLD Special School HEATHFIELD (HAMPSHIRE)
Kilton Thorpe School CLEVELAND (REDCAR AND CLEVELAND)
Lister Lane Special School BRADFORD
Longspee School POOLE (DORSET)
Marshfields School PETERBOROUGH (CAMBRIDGESHIRE)
Meadowgate School LEWISHAM
Orrets Meadow School WIRRAL
Pinderfields Hospital School WAKEFIELD
St Anthony's School MARGATE (KENT)
The Parks Nursery School OAKHAM (LEICESTERSHIRE)
Wendover House School WENDOVER (BUCKINGHAMSHIRE)
Woodlands Special School BLACKPOOL (LANCASHIRE)

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.

Erpingham VC Primary School NORWICH (NORFOLK)
Francis Askew Primary School HULL
The Northicote School WOLVERHAMPTON
Roundthorn Junior, Infant and Nursery School OLDHAM
St John the Divine Primary School LAMBETH
South Park Infant School LEYTONSTONE (REDBRIDGE)
Stratford (GM) School STRATFORD (NEWHAM)
The Drive County Primary School GATESHEAD

I am confident that these schools will continue to build on this improvement.

Commentary and Proposals for Action by OFSTED

Commentary

This, my third Annual Report, will be published in the run up to the General Election. It is likely, therefore, to attract a good deal of interest. There is a danger that what is a complex story will be simplified in order to confirm comfortable preconceptions. We have many highly effective schools and outstanding, committed teachers, some of whom work in the most difficult and depressing of circumstances. There is much, on the evidence summarised in this Report, to praise. There are also problems and weaknesses. Standards in schools will rise when solutions to these problems are found. They must be taken seriously. Initial publicity may well concentrate on the negative but that should not lead anyone to reject the Report as yet another attack on the teaching profession. Those who are tempted to question our evidence base, to allege statistical sleight of hand, or to argue that it is unfair to blame teachers when problems stem from under-resourcing, low morale and lack of parental support, should think again. Such reactions do not take us very far. The story *is* complex. There *are* strengths and weaknesses. The one obvious truth is that we must build upon the former and eradicate the latter. To do this we need as much information as possible about what is actually happening in our schools. This Report aims, in a frank but constructive way, to add to our understanding of what is happening so as to help teachers, parents and policymakers play their part in raising educational standards.

To begin with an unequivocally positive statement: the quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in the majority of lessons. It is only in a small proportion of schools where standards of pupil achievement are poor. As primary school teachers have become more familiar with the demands of the National Curriculum, the quality of teaching, particularly in Years 5 and 6, has improved. There are signs of an improvement in standards in secondary schools that is reflected in public examination results. Pupils are for the most part well behaved. Despite the intensity of the national debate about the need to re-discover moral truths, most teachers do an excellent job in contributing to their pupils' social and moral development. Our schools are generally well led and well organised. They provide safe and orderly communities in which to educate young people.

This is not to pretend that all is well in all schools. Overall standards are similar to last year. That is to say, standards are good in about half of primary and three-fifths of secondary schools. In the rest they need to be improved. Substantial improvement is needed in about one in 12 primary schools in Key Stage 1 and one in six in Key Stage 2, and in about one in 10 secondary schools. The dip in pupil performance at Key Stage 2, especially in Years 3 and 4, is a particular weakness which calls for attention in many schools.

The quality of teaching is quite clearly the key to high standards in schools. There are encouraging signs in two areas which are crucial to improving the quality of teaching.

The first is that more is being done to tackle the problem of the small, but significant, number of incompetent teachers who have a major impact on standards, particularly in small primary schools. But, while there are signs of more action being taken to support, and, if necessary, dismiss such teachers, too many children continue to mark time in too many schools because their teacher is not up to the job.

The second is that the culture in many schools is more questioning than it once was. Schools are beginning to look hard at the teaching methods and grouping arrangements

they use. The percentage of lessons judged to be unsatisfactory or poor (about 16 per cent) is an improvement on last year's figures (18 per cent). The fact, however, that this figure remains as high as it does, shows that the old orthodoxies continue to exert their influence in too many classrooms.

There is, for example, too little direct teaching in many primary schools. Teachers by and large succeed in providing interesting activities. Too much teaching time, however, continues to be wasted on unduly complex organisational arrangements. The classrooms where children make most progress are those where teachers have high expectations of *all* pupils and where the bulk of the lesson is taken up by the teacher explaining, questioning, pushing back the frontiers of the children's knowledge: in short, by teaching.

The teaching may be to the whole class or to groups. Either way, an interesting and positive development is the move to organise pupils according to their ability. Increasingly, primary schools are grouping their older pupils in ability sets for some teaching. Many are making more use of ability grouping within the class. In secondary schools setting by ability, particularly in Years 8 and 9, is leading to more effective teaching and therefore to higher standards.

In last year's Report I emphasised the need to improve standards in literacy and numeracy. The same point needs to be made once again this year. It is still the case that pupils in too many primary schools are not making the progress they must if they are to succeed in their education and adult life. Standards in literacy will rise when more schools improve the teaching of phonic work within a systematic programme for teaching reading. In the teaching of number too much time is still spent on repetitious written exercises. The individualised nature of such work means that pupils do not receive enough direct teaching. Mental arithmetic, which is particularly successful in short bursts, is being given greater emphasis and there are signs that more and better use is being made of direct whole-class teaching. Such teaching allows the teacher to explain and demonstrate a new idea, to question pupils to see if they have understood it, and to provide time for the class to practise and consolidate their understanding. The questioning by the teacher and the work done by the pupils can be geared to different levels, but the underlying intention in successful lessons is that all pupils reach an acceptable standard. These teaching methods are already raising standards in the schools that have adopted them. They need to become more widespread if they are to have a real impact on the national picture.

There is a particular problem with information technology. Despite a massive investment in equipment, standards are poor in about one-third of both primary and secondary schools. There are some indications of improvement in primary schools, but in secondary schools there has been a substantial decline. These generalisations hide, of course, wide differences between schools in both resources and quality of teaching. It is clear, however, that the main stumbling block is the confidence and competence of teachers. In part, this is because the subject is comparatively new. Five years ago HMI reported that science, which was then a relatively new subject in primary schools, was less than satisfactory in 45 per cent of lessons at Key Stage 2. There has been a substantial improvement since then as teachers' confidence has increased. If information technology is to improve to the same extent, we need to give particular attention to the use made of resources for information technology and, what is more important still, to the expertise of teachers and the methods they employ.

Vocational courses, pre- and post-16, are succeeding in some respects but not in others. The good news is that many of these courses are motivating groups of pupils from a wide range of ability, some of whom were faring badly in the past. There are encouraging signs that standards of pupils' achievement in GNVQ courses are improving, but their achievements in the key skills of communication, information technology and the application of number are generally not as good as their achievements in vocational knowledge and skills. The assessment and verification of GNVQs, moreover, continue to raise concerns which those responsible for the courses are now tackling vigorously.

Looking to the future, the contribution which initial teacher training (ITT) makes to the dissemination of more effective teaching methods is obviously crucial. OFSTED's initial survey of how students are being trained to teach primary-aged children English and mathematics revealed much satisfactory and good practice. No aspect of a student's training, however, is more important. Given the fact that serious concerns continue to be expressed about standards of literacy and numeracy, and, indeed, about how well students are trained, we intend over the next two years to look in greater depth at the training which students receive in these key skills.

As stated above, pupils' behaviour and attitudes are generally good in both primary and secondary schools. The great majority of our schools are orderly communities and relationships between teachers and pupils are for the most part positive. The example set by their teachers, school codes of conduct and the impact of assemblies mean that pupils in school generally have a clear understanding of right and wrong behaviour. Many secondary schools have to work hard to maintain a moral code against pressures from outside the school; but this makes it all the more important to emphasise that most of them do a very good job. Nevertheless, there are unacceptable instances of bullying and racial harassment. Most schools have sensible policies for dealing with such behaviour; those that do not must set such policies in place and all schools must be vigilant in order to deal decisively with this kind of behaviour.

Only a tiny percentage of children is permanently excluded from school. There is no truth to allegations that the rate of permanent exclusion has risen dramatically over the last year. It is clear, however, that some schools are very much better than others at preventing the escalation of poor behaviour to the point where a pupil has to be excluded. Some schools have to deal with some very difficult children, but there are clear links between the quality of teaching and the expectations made of pupils and the quality of the pupils' behaviour. Dull, undemanding work leads to disaffection and contributes to poor behaviour. Schools where teaching is good and where a clear behaviour policy is implemented consistently by all staff do not, as a rule, have to exclude many pupils. The quality of provision for pupils who have been excluded remains a serious cause for concern.

It is worrying that a higher proportion of special schools has serious weaknesses, or is subject to special measures than other schools. There are particular weaknesses in schools which cater for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. While it is true that such pupils clearly present severe problems and challenges for their teachers, excellent practice has been identified in some schools and OFSTED intends to look at the key features which underpin this success.

Issues of school management have been thrown into sharp relief by this year's inspection findings. Most schools are well led, but leadership is poor in one in seven primary and one in 10 secondary schools. The weakest schools are invariably the victims of poor management and weak leadership; the converse is true in successful schools. There are signs that headteachers and governing bodies are focusing more on standards, but in many primary and secondary schools headteachers and senior management need to invest more time in monitoring the quality of teaching. Too often unacceptable variations in the quality of teaching lead to variations in standards of pupil achievement from class to class in the same school. The OFSTED/DfEE report on target setting (*Setting Targets to Raise Standards: a survey of good practice 1996*) has identified some outstanding examples of schools improving their teaching and raising standards of pupil achievement by carefully evaluating teaching performance and setting targets for improvement.

There has been little change in the level of resources from last year. One in four secondary and one in eight primary schools have shortages of books which adversely affect teaching and make the setting of homework difficult. It is clear that some schools make much better use of their funding than others. There are, nevertheless, considerable variations in the funding that schools receive, the amount they are able, or decide, to spend on learning resources and the budget surpluses they hold. OFSTED is currently investigating how far differences in funding can be justified in terms of the different requirements of schools.

In the large majority of schools inspected, appraisal arrangements for teachers and headteachers have very little impact on improving the quality of teaching and standards of pupil achievement. Similarly, the impact of much in-service education and training (INSET) is weak in this respect. Taken together, appraisal which rigorously identifies strengths and weaknesses in teaching expertise and INSET which is carefully designed to tackle weaknesses ought to be powerful levers for improving standards. Much more needs to be done within schools to make appraisal and INSET work effectively, in particular, to deal with persistent weaknesses in subject knowledge and pedagogy and to provide value for money.

Last but not least, the debate continues over how LEAs can best support schools in raising standards. It is the responsibility of the school to act upon inspection findings using expertise that it may decide to purchase from the LEA or other agencies. The leadership and driving force for improvement must come from within the school. Those LEAs which continue to carry out 'pre-OFSTED' inspections on all schools need to consider whether such activity is not a waste of scarce time and resources. The most effective LEAs make use of inspection findings and analyse indicators such as examination data in order to provide services that schools need and target resources at those schools which are in difficulty. In coming months OFSTED will, as a priority, inspect the quality of the support which LEAs offer schools in their efforts to improve standards.

Proposals for Action by OFSTED

In last year's Report I proposed that OFSTED should undertake a number of initiatives concerning the quality of teaching in schools and educational standards. We have already published a number of reports such as *Subjects and Standards: Issues for school development arising from inspection findings for 1994-95, The Teaching of Reading in 45 Inner London Primary Schools* and *The Appraisal of Teachers*. A full list of OFSTED 1995/96 publications is given at Annex 6.

Continuation of existing work

Our *Corporate Plan* for 1996 outlines work in progress. This will lead to reports on key aspects of the education system directly related to the issues raised in this Annual Report, and including:

- primary teacher training;
- patterns of financing schools and the efficiency of expenditure;
- inner-city schools which are improving;
- the quality of provision in phase 1 nursery voucher settings;
- the management of subjects in secondary schools;
- spiritual, moral, cultural and social education;
- the effective use of subject specialist knowledge at Key Stage 2.

OFSTED is addressing a number of other issues raised in this Report. We are continuing with our commitment to raise standards in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy by monitoring the newly established **literacy and numeracy centres**. We will shortly be reporting on the **teaching of number in primary schools** in three local education authorities. Videos exemplifying the effective teaching of literacy and numeracy will be completed early in the summer term. The inspection of the **support offered to schools by LEAs** has begun with inspections of Staffordshire, Barking & Dagenham, Cornwall and Calderdale. **Schools in special measures and schools with serious weaknesses** continue to form a substantial part of HMI inspection. Following the **Dearing Review** of post-16 education, we will inspect **modular General Certificate of Education (GCE) Advanced level** examinations and the continued development of **GNVQs**. We will also continue to inspect the **Part One GNVQ pilot** and **careers education and guidance**. Our inspection of the implementation of the Code of Practice for pupils with **special educational needs** will focus upon the impact of the Code on the quality of teaching and the standards achieved by those pupils.

New proposals

Subject to the availability of resources, I am also proposing a number of new initiatives.

- In 1997 we will have completed the four year cycle of inspections of all maintained secondary schools in England. I am therefore proposing to draw these findings together in a **review of secondary education**.
- My Annual Report this year has raised concerns about **special schools for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties**. I wish to identify key features of successful practice in this difficult and demanding area.
- This year's Report has raised questions about the effectiveness of **in-service education and training (INSET)**. I will look at the arrangements for, and the cost effectiveness of INSET.
- I also propose to look at what should be done with the small proportion of **pupils who are excluded from schools**.

Primary schools

Educational standards achieved

1. There has been little change in the pattern of pupils' overall achievement in primary schools from last year. Pupils in general make a good start to their primary education. The weakest achievement occurs in Years 3 and 4 of Key Stage 2.

2. The chart below shows inspectors' judgements of overall standards in primary schools compared to last year.[2] Standards are judged to be good in about half of the primary schools inspected. About two-fifths of the schools have some strengths, but they also have weaknesses that hamper the achievement of higher standards. Standards in these schools often vary markedly within and between subjects, and improvements are needed if pupils are to make consistent progress across the curriculum. Overall standards are judged to be poor in about one in 12 schools in Key Stage 1 and one in six in Key Stage 2. Standards in these schools need to be substantially improved.

Standards in National Curriculum subjects and religious education

3. Annex 1 shows inspectors' judgements of standards of achievement in Key Stages 1 and 2 for the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education for the last two academic years. A number of key points stand out.

■ Standards in English at Key Stage 2 are good in half of schools, but continue to be poor in a worrying proportion of about one in seven schools. In mathematics the finding that one in six schools has poor standards at Key Stage 2 is a cause for concern.
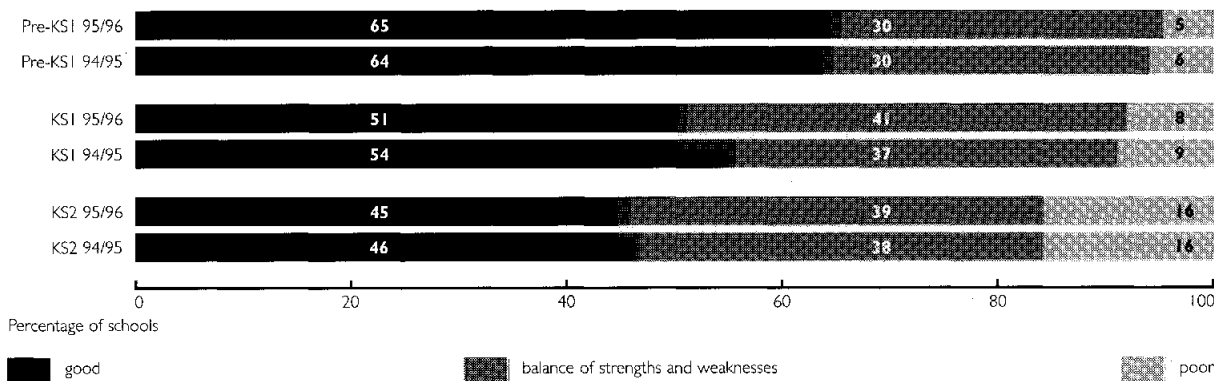
There is, however, an indication of some improvement in science.

■ In general, standards are better in Key Stage 1 than Key Stage 2. The dip in Key Stage 2 identified in last year's Annual Report persists. Achievement is weakest in Years 3 and 4. There is some pick-up in Years 5 and 6.

■ There are significant variations between subjects. For example, there are more schools with good standards in English, music and physical education than in other subjects. Standards are frequently low in information technology and design and technology.

4. In English, standards are very similar to last year. The chart overleaf shows inspectors' judgements of pupils' competence in the three attainment targets of the subject. Pupils' skills in speaking and listening are generally good. Pupils listen attentively, talk confidently about their work and express their ideas clearly. In over half of schools, pupils' reading skills are good in both key stages, but in just under one in 10 in Key Stage 1 and one in eight in Key Stage 2 they are poor. Many pupils are not able to read accurately. Phonic work in particular still needs to be strengthened in many schools. Writing skills remain weaker than those in speaking and reading, and are poor in Key Stage 2 in one-fifth of schools: weak spelling and sentence construction, limited vocabulary and lack of attention to improving work by redrafting are the main problems. Too many children continue to leave their primary schools poorly equipped with the essential skills of reading and writing.

5. In mathematics, standards in number are good in about half of primary schools, but are poor in one in seven in Key Stage 2. Standards in shape and space and data handling are generally higher than those in number. In Key Stage 2, pupils spend too much time unproductively repeating work that they have already

Standards of achievement in primary schools 1994/95 and 1995/96

	good	balance of strengths and weaknesses	poor
Pre-KS1 95/96	65	30	5
Pre-KS1 94/95	64	30	6
KS1 95/96	51	41	8
KS1 94/95	54	37	9
KS2 95/96	45	39	16
KS2 94/95	46	38	16

Percentage of schools: 0 20 40 60 80 100

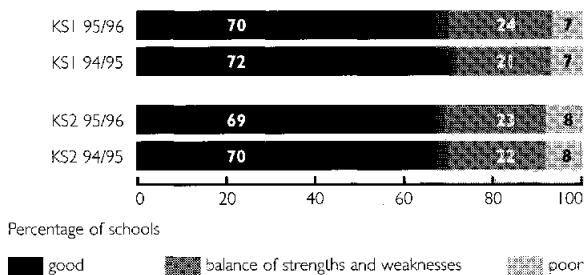■ good   ▨ balance of strengths and weaknesses   ▨ poor

These figures have been rounded and may not add up to 100 per cent.
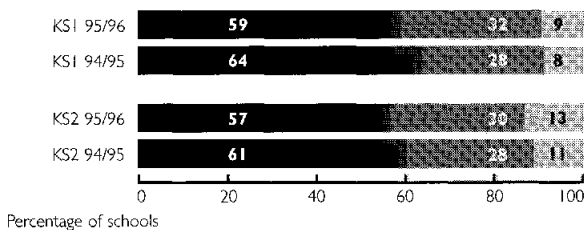
2 The standards referred to in the Report are in relation to pupils' capabilities (see Annex 5).

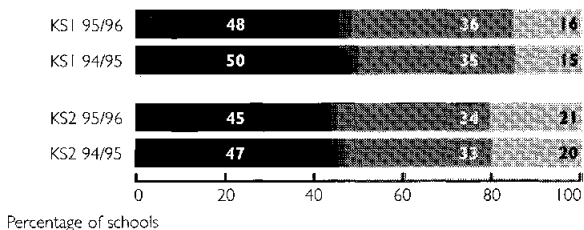## Literacy and numeracy skills in primary schools 1994/95 and 1995/96
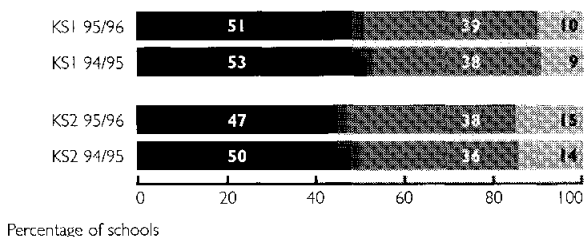
Speaking and Listening

KS1 95/96	70	24	7
KS1 94/95	72	21	7
KS2 95/96	69	23	8
KS2 94/95	70	22	8

```
0    20    40    60    80    100
```
Percentage of schools

■ good   ▨ balance of strengths and weaknesses   ▦ poor

Reading

KS1 95/96	59	32	9
KS1 94/95	64	28	8
KS2 95/96	57	30	13
KS2 94/95	61	28	11

```
0    20    40    60    80    100
```
Percentage of schools

Writing

KS1 95/96	48	36	16
KS1 94/95	50	35	15
KS2 95/96	45	34	21
KS2 94/95	47	33	20

```
0    20    40    60    80    100
```
Percentage of schools

Numeracy

KS1 95/96	51	39	10
KS1 94/95	53	38	9
KS2 95/96	47	38	15
KS2 94/95	50	36	14

```
0    20    40    60    80    100
```
Percentage of schools

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

mastered. This slows progress in Years 3 and 4, but there is an improvement in Year 6. In schools where a substantial amount of mathematics is taught directly to the whole teaching group or class, and pupils regularly undertake oral and mental work, standards are generally higher than where the approach is overwhelmingly that of individual work.

6. In **science**, standards have improved slightly since last year. There are continued weaknesses in Years 3 and 4, however, where new work is often taught superficially. Progress is more rapid in Years 5 and 6. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of **science** has improved by the end of the key stage and is good in half of schools. Standards in the skills of science such as planning investigations are lower than for the other aspects of the subject, but they are nevertheless better than last year.

7. The **1996 National Curriculum assessment results**[2] showed that in each of the English, mathematics and science tests, just over three-quarters of 7-year-olds reached or exceeded Level 2, but only about half of all 11-year-olds reached or exceeded Level 4. The results for 7-year-olds were similar to 1995. It is too early in the development of the tests for 11-year-olds to draw definitive conclusions about year-on-year comparisons of standards. A striking feature of these assessment results, however, is the extent to which schools drawing pupils from similar backgrounds achieve widely varying results, particularly in mathematics. Some of the schools which have been inspected serve areas with high levels of disadvantage but achieve results well above the national average. In one school, for example, with three-quarters of pupils on free school meals, 73 per cent of pupils achieved Level 4 in mathematics in 1996.

8. Despite some improvement this year, standards in **information technology** are weaker than in all other subjects, particularly in Key Stage 2 where they are poor in one-third of schools. Pupils' attainment depends on the level of challenge they have in class and is undoubtedly helped by access to information technology at home. There is evidence of a widening gap in capability between pupils in primary schools that have successfully embraced information technology and pupils in other schools where information technology is less well resourced and taught with little enthusiasm or commitment. Pupils in these latter schools leave Key Stage 2 with a poor understanding of data handling and are weak in using information technology as a means of communication. As a consequence, they are unlikely to make the progress of which they are capable in Key Stage 3.

9. In the majority of other subjects, pupils make a good start in Key Stage 1, but their progress slows in Key Stage 2. In **design and technology**, standards in Key Stage 2 have improved on last year from a low baseline but remain significantly weaker than in other subjects, with the exception of information technology. Pupils are using a wider range of materials, but their designing

2   DfEE November 1996.

skills are not as good as their making skills. Their knowledge and understanding within design and technology needs to be more secure. In **art**, pupils often make good early progress in Key Stage 1 in a range of skills such as observational drawing, but in a significant minority of schools this progress is not sustained in Key Stage 2. In **geography**, pupils' brisk early progress also slows down in Key Stage 2 where many do not apply what they have learnt to new and more demanding tasks. For example, pupils do not use their understanding of human and physical geography to identify differences between contrasting localities. In **religious education**, there have been improvements, but the pupils' progress is often slower than in other subjects. Pupils generally gain a sound knowledge of Christianity. In the better schools, in Key Stage 2, pupils also gain a good grasp of other religions; however, this is under developed in the poorer schools, as is the pupils' ability to consider or raise questions of their own about aspects of religious education.

10. The dip in pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 does not occur in all subjects. In **history**, for example, the improvements identified last year have continued and attainment is good in a high proportion of schools. However, as pupils move through the key stages they make slower progress in skills such as selecting key features from historical evidence than in knowledge and understanding. In **physical education**, pupils build effectively on their work in Key Stage 1. By the end of Key Stage 2, most are able to swim and many have the skills that allow them to perform successfully in dance, gymnastics and games. They are also able to plan and evaluate, at a simple level, their own work and that of others. In **music**, standards in Key Stage 1 are very high in some schools, but a significant proportion of schools do not build sufficiently on pupils' creativity and imagination. In Key Stage 2, some schools secure high standards in all aspects of music, although standards of singing are often low during hymn practice and assemblies, or where classes are combined.

11. Inspection indicates that pupils' standards of achievement and the quality of teaching in **grant maintained** (GM) schools are similar to those in LEA primary schools.

12. The standards achieved by **different groups of pupils** have been the focus of inspection and research activity in the past year. An OFSTED report on the teaching of reading in 45 inner London primary schools[3] showed that Bangladeshi pupils attained lower overall

standards in Year 2 than other minority ethnic groups. These Bangladeshi pupils did, however, make good progress and by the end of Key Stage 2 their performance was very similar to other groups. White pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds performed less well than any other group and the achievement of boys was, on the whole, lower than that of girls.

Behaviour and attendance

13. Pupils have positive attitudes to work in the overwhelming majority of primary schools. Behaviour is good in nine in ten schools and poor in less than one in thirty. Relationships are generally good, including those between pupils of different ethnic, social and cultural backgrounds. There is much public concern about bullying. Most schools, however, are responsive to these concerns and have clear policies and procedures so that any incidents of bullying are treated seriously and dealt with promptly and effectively.

14. The number of primary children permanently excluded remains very small – only 0.03 per cent of the school population. Most of the pupils excluded are boys. A small number of schools serving disadvantaged areas account for a disproportionate number of exclusions. The vast majority of primary schools are able to deal with behavioural problems without excluding pupils.

15. Attendance is 94 per cent or more in just under two-thirds of primary schools.[4] This is slightly lower than last year and explained by a rise in the number of authorised absences. Attendance in five per cent of schools is below 90 per cent, often as a result of parents condoning absenteeism. Schools meet the legal requirements for registration and the majority promote good attendance through a variety of incentives, such as awarding certificates for regular attendance. They also have systematic procedures to follow up and investigate absence.

16. In about one school in 12, punctuality is so poor that as much as half an hour a day of teaching is lost.

Quality of education

Teaching

17. Teachers have become more skilled and confident in teaching the content of the National Curriculum. This is reflected in the **quality of teaching**, which is a little

3   *Reading Standards in 45 Inner London Primary Schools,*
     OFSTED, 1996.
4   OFSTED analysis of DfEE data 1996.

higher this year than last. The chart below shows the degree of variation in the quality of teaching across year groups. It dips in Years 3 and 4, but rises again in Years 5 and 6, where it is better than last year. This overall picture masks, of course, variations within individual schools. The extent to which good teaching in one class contrasts sharply with poor teaching in another is a striking feature in some schools.

18. Most teachers **plan** thoroughly and generally have clear objectives for lessons. There are sure signs of an increase in direct teaching, in which, for example, the whole class is involved in clear explanations, focused questions and instruction. Schools are moving away from complex arrangements in which groups of pupils work on different subjects in the same classroom, but there are still too many schools where teachers are preoccupied with managing groups of pupils rather

than teaching them. There is scope for more direct teaching of knowledge and skills and across a wider range of subjects than is yet the case in many schools.
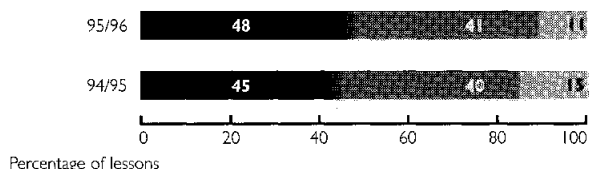
19. Pupils' performance in English and other subjects inevitably suffers in those schools where there is no systematic programme for the **teaching of reading**. This is certainly the case in Key Stage 1 when phonic work is not taught in a planned, structured way and in Key Stage 2 when pupils are not taught the more advanced reading skills. They need these skills if they are to make effective use of reference books and extend their reading of both fiction and non-fiction material. The claim made by many primary schools that they take a "mixed approach" to reading often overlooks considerable weaknesses in the links between the elements of the "mixed approach". There is an obvious but important difference between an uncoordinated mix of methods

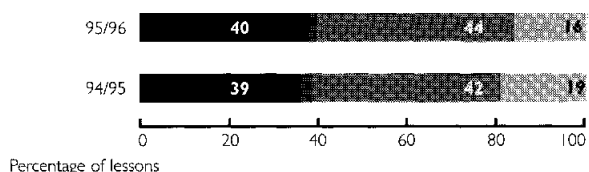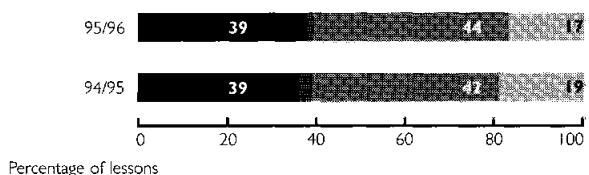## Quality of teaching in primary schools 1994/95 and 1995/96
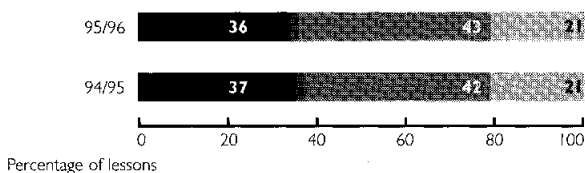
Year N (Nursery)

| 95/96 | 55 | 35 | 10 |
| 94/95 | 53 | 37 | 10 |

0 20 40 60 80 100
Percentage of lessons

■ good or very good   ▨ satisfactory   ▒ unsatisfactory or poor

Year R (Reception)

| 95/96 | 48 | 41 | 11 |
| 94/95 | 45 | 40 | 15 |

0 20 40 60 80 100
Percentage of lessons

Year 1

| 95/96 | 40 | 44 | 16 |
| 94/95 | 39 | 42 | 19 |

0 20 40 60 80 100
Percentage of lessons

Year 2

| 95/96 | 39 | 44 | 17 |
| 94/95 | 39 | 42 | 19 |

0 20 40 60 80 100
Percentage of lessons

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

Year 3

| 95/96 | 36 | 43 | 21 |
| 94/95 | 37 | 42 | 21 |

0 20 40 60 80 100
Percentage of lessons

Year 4

| 95/96 | 38 | 42 | 20 |
| 94/95 | 38 | 41 | 21 |

0 20 40 60 80 100
Percentage of lessons

Year 5

| 95/96 | 43 | 40 | 17 |
| 94/95 | 41 | 40 | 19 |

0 20 40 60 80 100
Percentage of lessons

Year 6

| 95/96 | 47 | 39 | 14 |
| 94/95 | 44 | 39 | 17 |

0 20 40 60 80 100
Percentage of lessons

and a coherent reading programme. In **mathematics,** published schemes are sometimes used successfully to provide progression. Too many teachers, however, rely uncritically on these schemes and other published materials to provide excessive amounts of individual work and give too little attention to teaching the whole class or groups of pupils.

20. In over half of the schools, the teachers have a good **command of the subjects** they teach. The demands of subject knowledge do, however, become greater as pupils get older, and by Key Stage 2 teachers in one in eight schools have insufficient subject expertise, particularly in information technology, design and technology, mathematics, science and religious education. This prevents them from teaching key aspects of the subjects in sufficient depth. In information technology a lack of subject knowledge contributes significantly to low standards, and in design and technology it leads teachers to make tasks either too open-ended or over-prescriptive. There are some indications of improvement, for example in science, where teachers in Years 5 and 6 now have a better command of the subject and are clearer about lesson objectives.

21. The **National Curriculum tests** in the core subjects for 11-year-olds are having a beneficial influence on teaching. There is a clearer focus on what is to be taught and more precise targeting of groups of pupils, sometimes through teaching ability-related groups. In the teaching of mathematics, for example, there is a sharper focus on mental calculation and strategies for solving number problems.

22. Inspection continues to show that high expectations on the part of the teacher are closely related to high attainment by the pupils. Despite most teachers working hard to provide interesting and relevant tasks, the **challenge** and **pace** of lessons in Key Stage 2 are poor in over one-fifth of primary schools and **expectations** need to be higher in half of the schools.

Assessment

23. Primary schools in general cope well with the statutory requirements for assessment. Almost half of schools, however, do not make sufficient use of assessment data to plan programmes of work and set challenging targets. The joint report by OFSTED and the DfEE on setting targets[5] provides examples of how some schools are making progress by assessing pupils

systematically to identify under achievement and then acting purposefully to counter it. Seven in ten schools have good quality assessment arrangements for under fives. Most of these arrangements were developed before the 'desirable outcomes for learning'[6] were published by the Schools Curriculum and Assessment Authority (SCAA) and may need to be revised accordingly. Many schools now make use of some form of baseline assessment scheme. In Key Stage 1, assessment is good in about half the schools; a proportion that declines to just under four in ten schools at Key Stage 2. Where assessment is effective, schools approach it systematically and use a range of techniques. For example: compiling portfolios of pupils' work in order to assist teachers' monitoring of progress; constructing a single portfolio of work exemplifying the requirements for the different National Curriculum levels; using an analysis of National Curriculum assessment results to adjust teaching programmes. Assessment is best in those schools where the responsibility for coordinating it is clearly assigned to a particular teacher.

24. Virtually all schools comply with the statutory requirement to make annual reports to parents on pupils' progress and achievements, but the quality of these reports varies. The problem is that schools do not always provide parents with adequate curricular information about their children's strengths and weaknesses in each subject.

25. With guidance from LEAs and special needs coordinators, most teachers have established effective procedures for identifying pupils requiring low-level and short-term support in line with the **Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs.** As a result, pupils' needs are identified more clearly and parents are better informed. There are, however, sharp variations in the criteria used for identifying pupils and the number of pupils identified by different schools therefore varies widely. LEAs also use widely differing criteria for identifying pupils with special needs and the proportion of pupils carrying a statement consequently varies enormously across LEAs. The requirements of the Code with respect to pupils with greater need have resulted in better focused internal and external support, but many schools need to do more to monitor pupils' progress. These pupils are often supported in class by a special support assistant (SSA). The quality of this support is closely dependent on the skill with which the class teacher deploys the assistant. The best practice involves the SSA from the outset in lesson planning and preparation.

5   *Setting Targets to Raise Standards: A survey of Good Practice,* OFSTED and DfEE, 1996.
6   *Nursery Education: Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning on Entering Compulsory Education,* SCAA, 1996.

26. The extra help for teaching pupils English as an additional language (funded under Section 11 of the Local Government Act 1966 or under the Single Regeneration Budget) is effective in most of the schools where it is provided, but the existence of several ad hoc scales for assessing pupils' stages of competence in English calls for a review to ensure that procedures are compatible with the National Curriculum.

Curriculum

27. Most schools provide a broad and balanced curriculum which meets the statutory requirements for the National Curriculum. However, in information technology, design and technology, and music, schools frequently have difficulty in fully meeting the requirements. In religious education, one school in seven falls far short of meeting statutory requirements.

28. Many schools have invested a considerable amount of time and energy in **curriculum planning and organisation** in recent years. Curriculum planning is most effective where the class teachers collaborate effectively under the strong leadership of a headteacher and receive clear guidance from subject coordinators. In Pre-Key Stage 1, the curriculum is generally more fitted to the needs of four-year-olds where they are in nursery schools or classes than in reception or mixed age classes. There are weaknesses in curriculum planning and organisation in almost one-quarter of schools in Key Stage 1 and three in 10 in Key Stage 2. The main weaknesses are: the failure of planning to set out a clear progression so that pupils receive increasingly demanding teaching, and a lack of balance between subjects, with design and technology, information technology, geography and RE being under-emphasised.

29. In most Key Stage 1 classes, a substantial amount of the curriculum is still organised into topics, but in the main these now have a distinctive subject focus. Single subject teaching is almost universal in English, mathematics, music and physical education. In Key Stage 2, a large majority of schools now uses either single subject teaching or a combination of subject focused topics with single subject work in English, mathematics, physical education, music and religious education. In the most successful schools, the work is clearly focused on separate subjects. More schools are setting pupils by ability in Years 5 and 6 for mathematics and to a lesser extent for English. This can help to reduce the wide range of attainment in classes and help teachers to achieve a better match between the tasks and pupils' abilities.

30. The time freed by the review of the National Curriculum is frequently used to give greater attention to the teaching of literacy. This is particularly appropriate where pupils begin school with a low baseline of achievement. The extra time needs, however, to be used well. Many children who, for example, are not yet able to read competently do not benefit from more time given to whole-class silent reading when what they really need is more direct teaching of reading.

31. The provision of **extra-curricular activities** is improving. In the best schools these activities are making a substantial contribution to the standards attained by pupils. In Key Stage 2, almost all schools now provide extra-curricular sport and about a third do so at weekends. In some schools, parents make an important contribution. In others, good use is made of coaching from professional organisations. Traditional team games dominate the programme and are played in mini-versions with a good emphasis on the development of skills. Almost all schools with Year 6 pupils arrange inter-school games. The proportion of pupils taking part is high and good standards are often achieved.

32. Curricular provision for pupils with **special educational needs** is good in seven in 10 schools. Almost all schools are giving attention to implementing the Code of Practice. Individual educational plans for pupils with special needs are beginning to help teachers to improve the match of tasks to children's learning requirements. Almost all schools now have a sound policy for pupils with special needs and all but a very small number of pupils with exceptional disabilities have full access to the National Curriculum.

33. Most schools place a strong emphasis on the welfare of pupils. Most teachers know their pupils well and there are good procedures for meeting their **personal, health and safety needs** in nearly nine in 10 schools. An increasing number of schools are taking steps to increase their security by controlling access for visitors and the general public.

34. In nine in 10 schools **parents** provide strong support and often make a substantial contribution to the life of schools, not only through fund-raising activities, but also by helping in the classroom and on educational visits. Some schools are trying to involve parents more in the education of their children, for example by listening to them read and helping them with mental arithmetic. In those schools which are beginning to set targets for their pupils, the process works best where parents are closely involved, particularly if pupils have special educational needs.
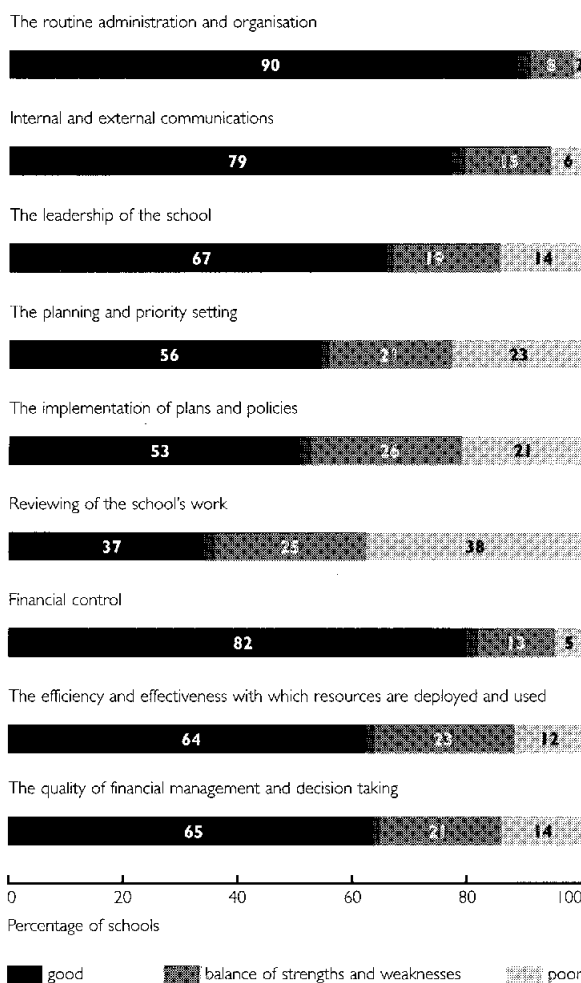
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

35. Provision for pupils' **spiritual development** is good in about two-thirds of schools, but it is poor in one school in seven. Most of the provision is through collective worship in assemblies or in religious education. Nine in ten schools comply with the legal requirements for "acts of worship". Some schools make a strong contribution to spiritual development in arts and humanities subjects, but they often fail to exploit the potential of other subjects. Provision for **moral development** is good in nearly nine in 10 schools, where pupils are given a clear understanding of right and wrong behaviour. Schools are succeeding here because the moral values which feature clearly in their aims and codes of conduct are communicated to the pupils through the example set by the teachers, as well as through the principles taught in assemblies and in day-to-day lessons. In religious education, pupils learn about the moral teachings of Christianity and the other principal world religions.

36. Provision for **social development** is as good as that for **moral development** and particularly strong when opportunities are given to pupils to exercise responsibility in classroom work and the wider life of the school. Provision for **cultural development** is weaker than that for spiritual, social or moral development. Where schools are strong in this aspect of their work, they tackle cultural issues in most subjects of the curriculum and extend that experience through extra-curricular activities. Such thorough programmes are uncommon. The most frequent weakness is that too little is done, outside of religious education and assembly, to prepare pupils for life in a multicultural society.

Management and efficiency

37. The chart opposite shows inspectors' judgements of the different aspects of school management. The day-to-day administration and organisation of schools is good in a large majority of schools. This contributes to the good behaviour of pupils and a calm working atmosphere. Schools are less successful, however, at strategic planning and setting priorities. Most **schools are led well** but in about one in seven the leadership is weak and fails to give a clear educational direction. Schools which are otherwise led well often do not evaluate their own performance with any rigour. Too few headteachers monitor and influence classroom teaching. OFSTED's report on standards of reading in three inner London boroughs, for example, showed that

Management of primary schools 1995/96

The routine administration and organisation

90	8 2

Internal and external communications

79	15 6

The leadership of the school

67	19 14

The planning and priority setting

56	21 23

The implementation of plans and policies

53	26 21

Reviewing of the school's work

37	25 38

Financial control

82	13 5

The efficiency and effectiveness with which resources are deployed and used

64	23 12

The quality of financial management and decision taking

65	21 14

```
0        20        40        60        80       100
```
Percentage of schools

■ good   ▨ balance of strengths and weaknesses   ▤ poor

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

in one school in three the headteacher's leadership was not effective in these respects. Headteachers usually analyse the information provided by National Curriculum assessment in their schools, but use of this analysis to pinpoint strengths and weaknesses and set priorities for improving pupil performance varies widely from school to school.

38. Just over half of primary schools provide good **value for money**; one in 10 provides poor value. Financial control is generally good but financial management is weakened in nearly half of schools by a failure to evaluate whether they have spent the money well. Budget surpluses continue to vary considerably from school to school – typically from two to eight per cent of total income. The larger surpluses are generally accumulated to fund specific accommodation or resource projects. Surpluses have reduced since last year; nevertheless at the end of the 1995/96 financial year, half of primary schools carried forward £15,000 or more.

39. Governing bodies are for the most part playing an increasingly active role in the work of primary schools. For example, most now have committee structures which make effective use of governors' expertise and interests. Most offer a good level of support to headteachers and staff and are increasingly involved in decision taking. Too few are clear, however, about how to monitor standards or the quality of the curriculum. Legal responsibilities are usually fulfilled, with some technical exceptions generally related to a lack of policies for areas such as equal opportunities. Overall, however, the quality and capability of governing bodies varies considerably and many governors remain uneasy about the breadth of responsibilities they carry, particularly in financial areas. Many governing bodies are a long way from setting the clear and relevant performance indicators for headteachers which are needed if reliable judgements are to be made about the salary of the headteacher. Governors generally need to be better prepared for this task.

40. Subject coordinators are effective in about half of schools. They have the most positive impact where they are able to evaluate and feed back advice on the teaching of the subject by looking at pupils' work, visiting colleagues' classes and helping with their planning. The long-standing problem of non-contact time for coordinators, including **special educational needs coordinators**, continues to limit their effectiveness.

41. A large majority of schools has enough **suitably qualified teachers and non-teaching staff** and they deploy them well. Classroom assistants continue to make strong contributions to work in the classroom. Specialist Teacher Assistants[7] are beginning to make valuable contributions to teaching the basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Most schools also have the required arrangements for staff appraisal, but these have yet to make a positive impact on teaching and learning.[8] Staff development is effective in about half of schools, but it is weak in nearly one in five because of a failure to relate the training provided to the school's planned developments or to specific teaching and assessment requirements.[9]

42. There are signs of an improvement in the quality of **learning resources** as schools give increasing attention to achieving value for money, but the overall quality of **books, equipment and materials** remains poor in one school in 10. There has been no change from last year in the proportion of schools where lack of learning resources affects the quality of teaching: one in eight

7   See paragraphs 190–194 for more detailed discussion.
8   See paragraphs 195–198 for more detailed discussion.
9   See paragraphs 182–187 for more detailed discussion.

schools is short of **books**; one in 10 is short of **equipment**; one in 14 is short of **materials** such as consumables for practical subjects. These inadequacies prevent schools from fully meeting the requirements of the National Curriculum in some subjects. One school in six, for example, has an insufficient range of books, particularly for extending pupils' reading in Key Stage 2, and in geography about one-quarter of schools lacks the necessary reference books, Ordnance Survey maps and atlases. There is a computer in most classrooms, but many are old and unreliable and have an insufficient range of applications for pupils to develop fully their capability in information technology. In religious education, one-third of schools has insufficient books and other resources to meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Many schools have difficulty in keeping equipment up to date, for example replacing old books, computers and information technology software. There are indications that schools are trying to improve their **libraries**, and that book stocks have improved. Schools realise the importance of the library in teaching advanced reading skills, but stocks of reference books need to be increased and better used. Where the LEA maintains a school library service, it generally provides good support for schools.

43. The present OFSTED inspection exercise on resources is intended to illuminate what is a very complex situation. It is clear that the amount of money which schools receive varies very significantly across LEAs. Some of these variations can be justified in terms of the different needs of pupils in different schools. There is then the question of how much money the school is able to spend on resources. In a sample of schools visited, this varied from between two to nine per cent of the total expenditure and was dependent to a large extent on the school's staffing profile. It was also influenced by management decisions about priorities and the school's ability to achieve value for money. And, finally, the actual expenditure on resources may or may not constitute value for money. It is already obvious that schools which spend similar amounts of money on the education of their pupils have very considerable differences in the quality of their learning resources.

44. The majority of primary schools have enough **accommodation** and most schools manage the use of their accommodation well, on occasions with ingenuity. However, in one in seven schools difficulties with accommodation have a detrimental effect on teaching and learning. Shortage of space is a feature of almost one in three schools. Physical education is the subject which suffers most from a lack of specialist accommodation.

Secondary schools

Educational standards achieved

45. There are indications that standards of achievement in secondary schools have gradually improved over the three years of the inspection cycle. The chart below shows an aggregation of inspectors' judgements for all subjects across all the schools in each year. The proportion of subjects judged to be good has increased steadily, particularly in Key Stage 4, while the proportion of subjects judged to be poor has fallen.

46. This year, as in previous years, there are significant variations within and between subjects in the same school. At both Key Stages 3 and 4, just over one-third of schools has no subjects where standards are poor, just under one-third has one poor subject, and the remaining third of schools has two or more poor subjects.

47. Overall standards are judged by inspectors to be good in about three-fifths of secondary schools. About one-third of schools has some strengths but also weaknesses. Standards in these schools need to be improved so that pupils make consistent progress across the curriculum. Overall standards need to be substantially improved in the one in 10 schools where they are judged to be poor in one or other of the key stages.

Standards in National Curriculum subjects and religious education

48. A number of key points stand out from the summary of standards in National Curriculum subjects in Annex 2.

- Overall standards in English are good in most schools, although weaknesses across the curriculum in pupils'
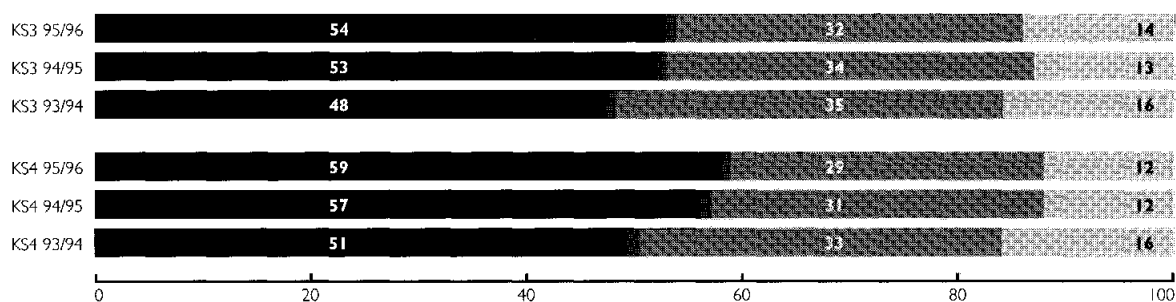
ability to write accurately are a cause for concern. There are indications of improvements in science, but the proportion of schools with poor standards in mathematics in Key Stage 3 has increased.

- There are substantial variations across subjects; standards in physical education and history are comparatively good, but standards are frequently poor in information technology.

- Differences between the key stages are less clear cut than they are in primary schools. In the majority of subjects, pupils make better progress in Key Stage 4 than in Key Stage 3, but the reverse is true in modern foreign languages and religious education.

49. In **English**, standards are generally good in **speaking and listening**, but too many pupils find it difficult to listen with concentration. By Key Stage 4 most pupils have **read** and appreciated works from a range of genres and periods and can discuss plot, characterisation and structure, although too many pupils still read little for pleasure. The weakest aspect of English in both key stages is **writing**, and pupils' writing skills across the curriculum are poor in two in ten schools in Key Stage 3 and one in ten in Key Stage 4. Poor standards are characterised by a weak grasp of spelling and grammar, the failure to use conventions of standard English, poor drafting skills and, particularly as pupils get older, failure to produce expressive, sustained and well-structured writing.

50. In **mathematics**, standards in number are good in over half of the schools, but poor in one in five in Key Stage 3. Too many pupils do not acquire sufficient computational skills and the competence to tackle numerical problems that they have not previously practised. Pupils make better progress in Key Stage 4 than in Key Stage 3, where insufficient account is taken of their prior attainment. Weaknesses in pupils'

Standards of achievement in all subjects in secondary schools 1993/94, 1994/95 and 1995/96

	good	balance of strengths and weaknesses	poor
KS3 95/96	54	32	14
KS3 94/95	53	34	13
KS3 93/94	48	35	16
KS4 95/96	59	29	12
KS4 94/95	57	31	12
KS4 93/94	51	33	16

Percentage of judgements

■ good   ▨ balance of strengths and weaknesses   ▧ poor

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

achievement in Key Stage 3 in number and algebra are highlighted in the recently published *Third International Mathematics and Science Study* (TIMSS).[10] Standards in data handling are often good, but graphical representation and interpretative skills are weaker as pupils lack the required algebraic knowledge. Pupils benefit when, having listened carefully to the explanations by the teacher, they are challenged to explain their mathematical thinking.

51. In **science** at Key Stage 3, pupils generally make good gains in scientific knowledge but in about one-quarter of schools they spend too much time repeating content learned in primary schools. Investigational skills have improved, especially where pupils are encouraged to plan their own investigations and reflect on the outcomes, and where teachers combine this with sound direct teaching. This improving picture of science in Key Stage 3 is reflected in the findings of the TIMSS which shows that English students are significantly above the international mean in their scientific understanding. In Key Stage 4 there has also been improvement in the development of skills, including investigation. Aspects of scientific understanding are also improving, although pupils' ability to apply ideas in new situations needs to be improved.

52. Standards in **information technology** have fallen in Key Stages 3 and 4. This is associated with an increase in timetabled information technology. Part of the problem is that these lessons are often taught by non-specialist teachers who have an uncertain grasp of the subject. In many schools there is also a failure to build on the progress made in the primary years. Pupils are too often demotivated by having to practise familiar low level skills or by an absence of opportunities for applying previously acquired understanding. In Key Stage 4, fewer pupils are taking an accredited course in information technology. This also contributes to the lower standards overall.

53. There is a marked improvement in **design and technology** in both Key Stage 3, where the revised National Curriculum has had a beneficial impact, and in Key Stage 4, where teachers have become more familiar with examination syllabuses. Pupils develop a good variety of practical skills and work confidently, if not always with precision and imagination. The majority of pupils, however, need to improve their knowledge and understanding in order to use and handle materials more effectively and improve the quality of the products which they make; this is particularly the case in Key Stage 3.

10 *Third International Mathematics and Science Study*, NFER, 1996.

54. In most other subjects pupils make better progress in Key Stage 4 than in Key Stage 3. In **geography**, their knowledge, understanding and skills improve steadily and they are increasingly able to explain their understanding of geographical processes and environmental issues through sustained writing. In Key Stage 4, where they use their knowledge and skills to carry out challenging investigations, progress is often very good. Under-achievement is mainly due to insufficient challenge and low-level tasks involving, for example, copying text and diagrams. In **history**, there is a better balance than in recent years between knowledge, understanding and skills. Increasingly, pupils are able to engage in genuine historical enquiry, using their knowledge and analysis of historical sources to develop their understanding of the organising concepts of history and to answer historical questions in extended writing, particularly at Key Stage 4. In **physical education**, standards of achievement have improved significantly in both key stages, but there is little evidence of good standards in gymnastics, especially for boys. The rapid increase in the number of pupils taking GCSE physical education has had a beneficial impact on standards in Key Stage 4. In **art**, standards are good where the teaching gives pupils the opportunities to refine their skills, deepen their knowledge, innovate and learn disciplined craftsmanship. In the increased proportion of schools where standards in Key Stage 4 are poor, the work is unduly narrow, leaving practical skills under-developed. In **music**, there is an improvement in the proportion of schools where standards are good, but standards remain poor in too many schools at Key Stage 3. The standards achieved by a small but increasing number of pupils who continue with music in Key Stage 4 are generally good.

55. In **modern foreign languages**, pupils start well in Year 7, but their progress slows through Years 8 and 9. The vast majority of pupils now study a modern foreign language in Key Stage 4, but progress is slower than in Key Stage 3. The target language is not used sufficiently and pupils are not faced with tasks which make significantly greater demands on their knowledge and skills. There is often, moreover, a narrow focus on rehearsing tasks for the GCSE examination. In **religious education**, pupils' progress is also less good in Key Stage 4 than in Key Stage 3. Schools often provide insufficient time for the agreed syllabus and this limits the gains that pupils make in their knowledge and understanding of religious practices, beliefs and concepts. In those schools that prepare all pupils at Key Stage 4 for GCSE examinations or school-based certificates in religious education, standards are generally high.

56. GCSE results continue to show a gradual improvement in the performance of pupils in maintained secondary schools. In 1996, 42.6 per cent of pupils gained five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C, compared with 41.2 per cent in 1995.[11] While this figure provides a useful indicator of the proportion of pupils reaching a particular benchmark, a clearer indication of the overall performance of pupils is provided by the average GCSE points score per pupil: this has risen from 34.6 to 35.0.[12] However, this overall improvement masks large and unacceptable differences between the performance of individual schools. Figure 1 in Annex 3 shows how the average GCSE points score per pupil differs for schools with the same proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. In schools, for example, where one in five pupils is eligible for free school meals, average scores per pupil vary from about 25 points to 45 points. A further issue related to variability is the proportion of pupils who fail to gain five or more GCSEs at grades A* to G. This figure has improved only very slightly on last year. About one in eight pupils still fail to achieve this level.

Vocational Courses in Key Stage 4

57. Much of the work seen in the first year of the pilot **Part One GNVQ** courses is of a good standard, particularly when pupils are taught how to work independently, and the work is successfully related to vocational contexts. Achievement is best in business courses, where teachers are more likely to be able to draw on recent experience of the vocational area. This is less often the case in health and social care where standards vary across the units; and in manufacturing where standards, because of insufficiently challenging assignments and a lack of attention to the understanding of technical knowledge, are often weakest. Key skills in communication are often good, but achievement in information technology is frequently limited to word processing. The application of number, moreover, amounts mainly to the collation and presentation of statistical data, rather than the interpretation of it.

58. A large number of GCSEs has vocational elements. In broad-based vocational courses, such as business studies and child development, standards of achievement are slightly higher than in GCSE courses overall. In industry-specific courses, such as commerce, building construction and engineering, however,

11 DfEE data November 1996.
12 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.

standards vary widely and much work is undistinguished. Standards in the application of skills and use of terminology are usually at least sound. Standards in the application of information technology are, however, often poor.

Achievement in different types of school

59. Inspection shows that pupils' standards of achievement and the quality of teaching are similar in GM and LEA secondary schools. In GM comprehensive schools the average GCSE points score per pupil in 1996 was 37.3 compared with 33.8 in LEA comprehensive schools. When schools with comparable intakes are compared, however, this difference between the sectors is reduced. This is illustrated by Figure 3 in Annex 3.

Achievement in schools serving disadvantaged areas

60. Urban secondary schools in disadvantaged areas continue to struggle to raise standards. Improvements are fragile. In general, such schools are increasingly successful in tackling poor attitudes, bad behaviour and, to a lesser degree, poor attendance. This success has yet, however, to feed through to higher overall attainment. In the GCSE, improvement is more consistent at lower than at higher grades. There are, however, notable exceptions. For example, one large comprehensive school with 55 per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals has steadily increased the proportion of pupils gaining five GCSEs at grades A* – C from 25 per cent to 37 per cent over a three year period.

The achievement of particular groups of pupils

61. The relative under-achievement of boys, particularly of white and African Caribbean boys from disadvantaged areas, is a cause for concern in many schools. There are marked and increasing differences in the achievement of pupils of different ethnic minority groups. Traveller children continue to be amongst the lowest achievers. A small but increasing number of schools has, however, recognised the need to monitor the achievement of particular groups of pupils and target support on those at risk of under-performing.

62. Bi-lingual pupils whose English language competence is good, generally achieve well and are often among the highest attainers. The potential of pupils, however, who are less fluent in English is often not realised. Reductions in the specific grant to support pupils for whom English is an additional language have

caused schools to concentrate rightly on younger, early stage language learners. Nevertheless, schools need to be vigilant in tracking the progress of bi-lingual pupils to make sure they fulfil their potential.

63. In the majority of schools, pupils with **special educational needs** make steady progress and achieve standards commensurate with their abilities. The Code of Practice has led to sharper target setting and to teaching support which is better focused on educational progress.

Behaviour and attendance

64. Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school in over four in five schools and poor in only one in twenty. Pupils' **attitudes to learning** show a slight improvement against previous years in most subjects, and there is, unsurprisingly, a strong association between positive attitudes to learning and effective teaching. There are strong links between the behaviour of pupils and teachers' expectations and skills in classroom management. Lessons that lack a clear sense of purpose and fail to engage the interests of the pupils often result in low-level disruption which, if unchecked, leads to more serious misbehaviour. Pupils generally respond to clear systems of rewards and sanctions, especially when these are applied consistently. Inspection finds little evidence of **bullying**. Most schools have sound policies for dealing with bullying and treat incidents of bullying seriously. Overwhelmingly, relationships between pupils of different ethnic, social and cultural groups are good, with schools making great efforts to promote racial tolerance and harmony and respect for cultural diversity. Even so, an OFSTED commissioned review of research[13] suggests **racial harassment** exists in some schools and more decisive action is needed to deal with it at the earliest stage.

65. The level of permanent exclusions remains low at about 0.3 per cent of secondary age pupils. Particular groups of pupils are, however, over-represented among those excluded: boys, lower attaining pupils, pupils in the care of local authorities and pupils from certain minority groups, especially African Caribbeans. Schools in similar circumstances vary considerably in their rates of exclusion which suggests that there is much schools can do to promote better behaviour and avoid exclusion. The schools which exclude fewest pupils are

those which have an effective behaviour policy, apply suitable rewards and sanctions, monitor exclusions, provide effective pastoral support, and tailor their curriculum to meet individual needs. There is, however, a small minority of exceedingly difficult pupils with whom it is unrealistic to expect mainstream schools to cope and for whom exclusion must remain the ultimate sanction. The issue which needs to be addressed is what should be done with pupils who are excluded. As the OFSTED report on exclusions[14] shows, LEA policy in respect of exclusion is very uneven.

66. Attendance is 90 per cent or over in two-thirds of schools,[15] but there is a small increase in the number of schools where it has fallen below that figure. Poor attendance in a number of these schools is often condoned by parents. The number of schools where records of attendance fail to meet legal requirements has increased to nearly one in five. Some schools in disadvantaged areas have difficulty in maintaining attendance at 90 per cent despite concerted efforts to tackle the problem.

Quality of Education

Teaching

67. The quality of **teaching** in Key Stages 3 and 4 is predominantly satisfactory and often good, but unsatisfactory teaching remains a problem in about one in six lessons. The chart opposite shows variations in the quality of teaching across years: there is a slight decline through Key Stage 3 and it is weakest in Year 9. Most teachers are well qualified and have adequate specialist knowledge and understanding to cover the subjects they are required to teach.

68. The quality of **teachers' planning** is often high, based upon a sound understanding of National Curriculum requirements and good schemes of work which enable teachers to be clear about the aims, objectives, content and organisation of lessons. Good teachers plan and prepare for an interesting variety of work, the elements of which are carefully chosen to build upon pupils' prior attainment. Broadly, teachers make good use of the teaching time and the resources available to them. Planning is generally better in Key Stage 4 than in Key Stage 3, where lesson objectives are sometimes insufficiently matched to the National Curriculum programmes of study. In middle schools the quality of short-term planning is frequently better than that for the medium and long term, and the curriculum is less well-balanced overall than in secondary schools generally.
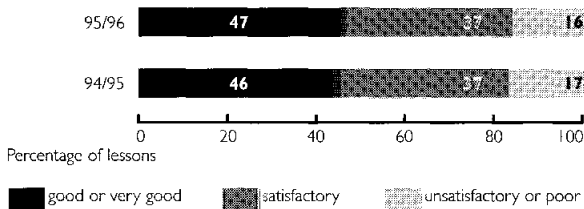
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13 *Recent Research on the Achievements of Ethnic Minority Pupils,* OFSTED, 1996.
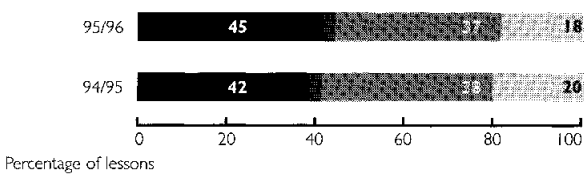14 *Exclusions from Secondary Schools 1995/6,* OFSTED, 1996.
15 OFSTED analysis of DfEE data, 1996.

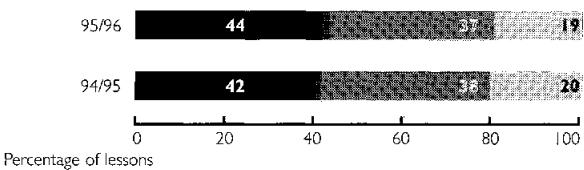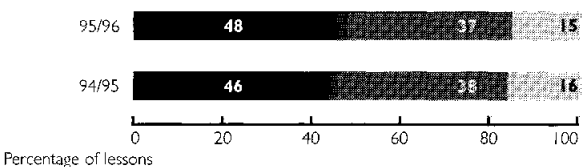# Quality of teaching in secondary schools 1994/95 and 1995/96

Year 7

	good or very good	satisfactory	unsatisfactory or poor
95/96	47	37	16
94/95	46	37	17

Percentage of lessons

■ good or very good   ▨ satisfactory   ▦ unsatisfactory or poor

Year 8

95/96	45	37	18
94/95	42	38	20

Percentage of lessons

Year 9

95/96	44	37	19
94/95	42	38	20

Percentage of lessons

Year 10

95/96	48	37	15
94/95	46	38	16

Percentage of lessons

Year 11

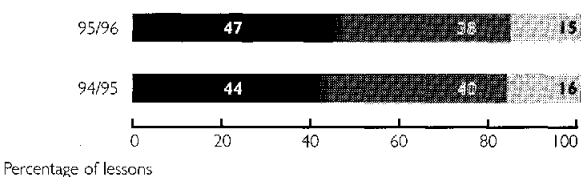|			
95/96	47	38	15
94/95	44	40	16

Percentage of lessons

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

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69. A weakness in planning continues to be in the provision for pupils of **differing levels of attainment**. In most schools ability grouping is used in some subjects and year groups. The impact of ability grouping is complex, but there are some clear patterns. In most subjects in Key Stage 3, overall standards are higher and teaching is more effective where pupils are grouped by ability than where they are taught in mixed ability classes. In general, pupils make better progress in upper and lower ability groups than in middle ability groups. Whereas mixed ability classes appear to be effective in Year 7, standards and teaching are significantly better when pupils are grouped by ability in Year 8 and Year 9. Grouping by ability, however, does not in itself guarantee a good match of work to pupils' attainment. Grouping by ability can also disadvantage bi-lingual learners whose attainment in subjects may be higher than their capability in English; their placement requires careful consideration.

70. A key issue for action mentioned in one-third of all inspection reports is the need for teachers to raise **expectations** in order to provide a greater level of **challenge**, and to match work more effectively to the developing abilities of pupils. Good teachers have high expectations of their pupils and make sure that they understand what is to be covered in each lesson. Under-expectation is a feature of unsatisfactory teaching in about one in eight schools. Other key characteristics of weak teaching are a slow or erratic pace, insufficient understanding of classroom management and how to deal with potential disruption, a limited range of teaching styles and of variety in activities, an inappropriate balance between information-giving and problem-solving, and, more rarely, imperfect understanding of the subject. A specific shortcoming is teachers' lack of expertise and confidence in making use of information technology.

71. When **homework** is of high quality and well-managed it makes a major contribution to pupils' achievement. In most schools, homework is regularly set, but the quality of tasks and the response of pupils are often unsatisfactory. At one extreme pupils are overloaded, but not necessarily with worthwhile tasks; at the other, too little homework is set. Much homework is insufficiently challenging or consists merely of "finishing off" classwork. Many schools do not manage homework well and many subject departments do not make good use of the opportunity it provides to reinforce and extend learning. Homework in some schools is restricted by shortages of books.

72. The failure to use **assessment information** to inform planning and teaching, and, in particular, to match work to pupils' attainment may also result in low expectations on the part of teachers. Despite some improvement this year, the majority of schools make too little use of assessment data. The pattern across departments is often variable. In almost all schools, pupils' work is regularly marked. **Marking** only provides helpful feedback to pupils, however, in about one-third of schools. In about one-quarter, the quality of marking is poor: commonly, for example, marks and grades are given without

comment or explanation. Even in the majority of schools which have a marking policy, there is frequently inconsistent practice within and across departments. Marking tends to improve in Key Stage 4 as public examinations approach providing pupils with better feedback on what they need to do to improve their work.

73. Section 11 funded support for bi-lingual pupils is of sound or better quality in seven in 10 schools. Good support teaching enables pupils to develop their skills in English while engaging fully with the National Curriculum. Such support is carefully matched to need; and it grows out of good liaison and planning between support and mainstream teachers often resulting in additional teaching materials. In those schools where support is poor, it is not sufficiently focused on the language needs of the pupils and is frequently given by staff with little or no specialist training.

74. In mainstream schools, the quality of teaching for pupils with **special educational needs**, in ordinary classes with support teachers and in groups withdrawn from normal lessons, is generally satisfactory. Most schools have sound procedures for operating the Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs. Many schools are becoming skilled at setting targets which coordinate the efforts of all the staff working with each pupil and at monitoring pupils' progress. Some schools need to do more to ensure that pupils with behavioural difficulties are also included on the Register of pupils with special educational needs where appropriate, so that they are provided with the additional support they need. Many schools are clarifying the responsibilities of special needs coordinators and subject teachers in order to prepare pupils' individual action plans. In schools where pupils' progress is unsatisfactory their potential is frequently underestimated. In a small minority of schools either individual education plans are not in place or planning is insufficiently focused on the pupils' needs.

Curriculum

75. The great majority of secondary schools provides a broad and balanced curriculum for pupils. In Key Stage 3, the main difficulties facing schools concern the provision of information technology, adequate provision of a second modern foreign language and non-National Curriculum subjects, including drama and classics. In Key Stage 4, schools are considering the implications of the Dearing Review and the opportunities which now exist to provide more curriculum flexibility. Many

schools are torn between the aim of providing breadth and balance and the desirability of allowing more curricular choice. Schools continue to have difficulty in making the content of GCSE syllabuses accessible to lower attaining pupils. Over half of schools fall far short of meeting the statutory requirements in religious education in Key Stage 4.

76. Part One GNVQ has given the schools in the pilot phase a strong opportunity to establish additional good quality vocational options. The first cohort of pupils contains the full ability range, but includes few pupils of very high or very low ability. Courses running at four in five of the schools involved are allocated an adequate amount of time and are appropriately timetabled.

77. Overall, there is little systematic development of pupils' economic and industrial understanding, or, more broadly, their understanding of **citizenship** and their role in a democratic society. This is also true of **environmental education**, although school and national initiatives play an important part in raising awareness of environmental issues. Pupils' understanding of the **world of work** is developed through work experience, young enterprise schemes, industry weeks and the schools' links with industry. Most schools have a strong commitment to work experience and the great majority of pupils gain useful insights into the world of work. Work experience and other work-related activities, however, need to be strongly linked to the pupils' study in school.

78. Most schools provide a good range of **extra-curricular activities**, and there has been an overall increase in both key stages. Prominent among these are sporting activities. Many schools continue to provide a very extensive range of activities before school, at lunchtimes, after school and at weekends. Overall, competitive sports dominate and standards achieved are often very high. The number of pupils participating varies between schools; on average over one-third of Year 7–9 pupils is involved and more than one-quarter of Year 10 and 11. Almost all schools arrange internal competitions in a range of sports, mainly traditional games and athletics.

Assessment

79. Nearly all schools have reviewed and revised their **assessment** policies and practices in light of the revised National Curriculum. In too many schools, however, the quality of assessment varies within and between

departments and is insufficient to identify and remedy weaknesses in pupils' achievement. There is some good practice in Key Stage 4 where schemes of work contain clear guidance on both assessment and coursework, but this is an area of weakness in Key Stage 3. With the exception of English, approaches to teacher assessment in the revised National Curriculum are narrow, with many departments failing to use a balance of assessment methods which combine the benefits of testing with other modes of assessment.

80. The **Part One GNVQ** pilot shares many of the difficulties associated with assessment in the full award. A start has been made on the external standardisation of assessment with the nationally-set, controlled assignment. Despite some teething problems, this is a welcome development and the external review of the assessment of the assignments has started to feed useful information back into schools.

81. More schools need to review their strategies to standardise the assessment of pupils' work, in order to promote consistent and accurate **teacher assessment** within the National Curriculum. The good practice of standardising GCSE coursework has often not been transferred to Key Stage 3. Some schools have successfully developed "benchmark" portfolios of pupils' work which exemplify levels of achievement. Well-developed, comprehensive portfolios, however, even in the core subjects, are not widespread. Many schools do not yet **record** pupils' progress in ways that will help them to decide on the pupils' attainment at the end of the key stage. Although parents are kept well informed of pupils' progress by the great majority of schools, around one in six fail to provide satisfactory annual **reports** on pupils for parents.

Welfare and guidance

82. Careers education and guidance are good in one-third of schools, and of satisfactory quality in a further one-third. In the remainder, the quality of provision is poor. At transitional points, pupils are generally well informed and carefully guided on subject choice and future careers. Pupils need, however, to be helped to develop a better understanding of the changing nature of the workplace and its implications for their own futures.

83. The great majority of pupils in the pilot schools received sound advice towards the end of Year 9 about the Part One GNVQ and most were able to make an informed choice. So far, relatively little has been done to explain fully to pupils the opportunities for progression beyond Part One GNVQ. School staff responsible for careers advice are not always sufficiently well informed about these new courses and the implications for students' choice.

84. The overwhelming majority of schools gives good attention to **pupils' welfare and guidance**. Schools provide a secure and caring environment to promote pupils' learning. They have appropriate and effective systems of rewards and sanctions and make use of carefully organised referral systems to identify and monitor pupils who are giving cause for concern.

85. The large majority of secondary schools has good **links** with primary schools that enable early identification and communication of health, welfare and social needs. There are often excellent programmes of induction for new intakes. Insufficient use of academic records and other curricular evidence received from feeder schools, however, is often a setback to pupils' progress because teachers tend to repeat work done in primary schools rather than build upon it. Where primary and secondary schools adopt common formats for recording information about pupils' special educational needs, this is highly effective in reducing unnecessary paperwork at the time of transfer.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

86. Most schools have clear and well established aims for pupils' **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**. Pupils' spiritual development , however, remains problematic for most schools and this is often the least satisfactory of the four areas of development. Three-quarters of schools do not meet the legal requirements for collective worship. Provision for pupils' spiritual development, including the collective act of worship, is better in middle schools than in secondary schools. Schools generally set and maintain high moral standards and ensure that pupils know the difference between right and wrong behaviour. Most schools support pupils' social development by giving them opportunities to take responsibility and exercise initiative. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory in most respects, but in many schools awareness of the contribution made by other cultures to British multicultural society is too low.

87. Health education is sound or better in the majority of schools. Some schools continue to provide incoherent programmes and there is often insufficient evaluation of whether courses have been successful. Over seven in 10 schools have recently reviewed their policy for **drug education** and in eight in 10 lessons the quality of teaching and response is sound or better. One in eight schools has, as yet, failed to comply with the statutory requirement to have a policy on **sex education**.

88. Much work in the areas of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, including health education, falls within **personal and social education** (PSE). In about four in 10 schools, PSE is well planned and taught. In one in four schools provision is poor. Weaknesses often occur when the programme is taught by form tutors, who lack sufficient knowledge and teaching skills in the more sensitive areas of sex and drug education. In addition, tutor periods are usually too short to deal with important and complex issues. In general, personal and social education is more successful when it is taught by a specialist team in timetabled time.

Management and efficiency

89. The chart opposite shows inspectors' judgements of different aspects of management. The daily **administration and organisation** of secondary schools continues to be a strength and in the vast majority of cases is good. Nine in 10 schools have clear aims and policies which are shared with staff, pupils and parents, and reflected in school development planning.

90. Leadership, in particular that of the headteacher and senior management team, is good in three-quarters of schools, but is weak or ineffectual in one in 10 schools. The leadership role of **middle managers** continues to be more variable. At best, heads of department identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching, establish INSET needs, and evaluate the extent to which pupils' achievements meet departmental targets.

91. There has been a considerable improvement in the **quality of development planning**, with the majority of schools producing good or very good plans, but as yet, these have had limited impact on the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom. Schools are now more likely to prioritise aspects for development, set improvement targets, identify milestones to be aimed for, detail the staffing and other resources necessary to achieve the targets, and indicate who is responsible for taking action. There is better consultation across the various groups within the school and much clearer links

Management of secondary schools 1995/96

The routine administration and organisation

91	

Internal and external communications

82	

The leadership of the school

77	10

The planning and priority setting

60	19

The implementation of plans and policies

51	21

Reviewing of the school's work

41	33

Financial control

92	

The efficiency and effectiveness with which resources are deployed and used

69	

The quality of financial management and decision taking

71	

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0      20      40      60      80     100
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Percentage of schools

■ good   ▨ balance of strengths and weaknesses   ▨ poor

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

to departmental and faculty plans. The fact that many schools are now giving greater attention to raising standards is in no small part influenced by OFSTED inspections and the publication of examination results.

92. Despite this generally good picture, the **monitoring and evaluation** of school policies and procedures is poor in one-third of schools, with weaknesses found at all levels of management.

93. Governing bodies generally fulfil their statutory duties, with the frequent exception of collective worship. Most governing bodies have effective committee structures with clear working practices and procedures. More governing bodies are aware of their strategic planning role. They are gaining expertise in the curriculum and how to monitor planned improvements and priorities and the pupils' standards of achievement. The points made in paragraph 39 about the variability of

governing bodies, the unease of governors about the breadth of responsibilities, and their ability to have clear performance indicators for setting headteachers' pay, also apply to secondary school governors

94. The role of the **special educational needs coordinator** is central to the monitoring of the progress of pupils with special needs and to the provision of support appropriate to their needs. There is effective practice, for example, when the special educational needs coordinator's role includes managing a team of link teachers from each department. In some schools coordinators have insufficient time and lack the necessary senior management support to enable them to discharge their role effectively.

95. **Financial control** is a strength and is good in the large majority of schools. **Financial management** is more variable. It is good in three-quarters of schools, where spending decisions are carefully linked to school development planning. When departments produce their own curricular development plans which are carefully linked to anticipated expenditure, this creates a system which is clear and easily monitored. In some schools, however, long-established arrangements for allocating funding to departments are inadequate and sometimes conflict with development planning. Strategic financial planning is generally weaker in middle schools than in secondary schools. In one in 10 schools, financial management is unsatisfactory and gives cause for concern. Key weaknesses include: insufficient information and criteria on which to base spending decisions and judge their cost effectiveness; slack monitoring of major investments; and financial planning which is insufficiently linked to the school development plan. Such weaknesses limit efficiency and waste resources. Budget surpluses continue to vary considerably from school to school, typically from one to five per cent of total income. The larger surpluses are generally accumulated to fund specific accommodation or resource projects. Surpluses have reduced since last year. Nevertheless, at the end of the financial year, in a sample of secondary schools, half carried forward £39,000 or more. Despite significant improvement in the last year, the evaluation of cost effectiveness remains a weakness in one-third of schools. Even so, two-thirds of schools provide good value for money; only one school in 10 is judged to provide poor value for money.

96. In most schools, the teachers are well qualified for the subjects they teach, but in nearly one in 10 the match of staff qualifications to the curriculum needs to be improved. Staff development is effective in about half of the schools. Although most schools are able to identify INSET needs, some are ineffective because arrangements for monitoring teaching are inadequate.[16] The appraisal of teachers[17] has generally had little effect on schools' INSET practices.

97. There has been little change in the quality and quantity of **learning resources**. Just under one in four schools is short of **books**, one in seven is short of **equipment** and one in 14 is short of **materials** such as consumables for practical subjects. These shortages adversely affect the quality of teaching. English and mathematics are generally better resourced than other subjects. One in six schools, nevertheless, has insufficient books to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. In science, in about half of schools at Key Stage 3, there are insufficient books to issue copies to pupils for homework. The quality of science equipment is good in about two-thirds of schools, but many schools find it difficult to replace or update expensive capital items.

98. In some non-core subjects, such as geography, overdependence on a single textbook sometimes narrows the range and style of teaching. Resourcing is at its worst in religious education where two-fifths of schools lack adequate books and materials. It is often the case that books are not allowed home in some subjects, with a consequent impact on the effectiveness of homework and the development of independent study skills. Too many schools remain overdependent on photocopied materials. The quality of school libraries is very variable. Many are under-resourced for the size of school. A positive development is the provision of computer facilities and CD ROM in almost all libraries. In information technology, there is an increasing polarisation of resources; more schools are reported to have excellent resources in this area than any other subject, but equally there are too many schools where information technology resources are very poor. While the majority of schools have enough computers, many are old, and there is insufficient modern equipment to support more specialised work in Key Stage 4 and sixth forms. Where Grants for Educational Support and Training (GEST) funding for information technology has been devolved to schools, in a number of cases the funding has been used unwisely, in particular failing to combine hardware and software upgrading with appropriate professional development.

16 See paragraphs 182–187 for more detailed discussion.
17 See paragraphs 195–198 for more detailed discussion.

99. As stated in paragraph 43, the reasons why some schools have inadequate learning resources are complex. High teaching costs, costs of cover for absent teachers and contingencies such as those for replacing stolen or damaged equipment compete with the levels of expenditure on books and equipment.

100. Nearly one in five schools has significant weaknesses in some aspect of **accommodation**, and in one in six this has a direct impact on specialist teaching, particularly in science, design and technology, and art.

School sixth forms

Educational standards achieved

101. Standards of achievement are good in about two-fifths of GCE A-level lessons and poor in only a small number. There is little variation between subjects, but there are relatively wide variations in attainment within classes. Some aspects of performance in particular subjects, nevertheless, cause concern. For example, in mathematics students show limited ability to analyse and solve extended problems, while in modern languages grammatical accuracy is sometimes weak, particularly in Year 12.

102. In the HMI inspection of six GCE A and AS level subjects, the quality of **coursework** was generally satisfactory and often good. Some of the more able students produced impressive assignments extending their knowledge and understanding beyond the confines of the syllabus. There were examples of students making effective use of information technology, but overall its use is patchy and students' capability varies greatly from school to school. In most of the GCE A-level examination scripts inspected, the quality of students' writing was satisfactory. It was weak in only a small minority of cases, almost always those of the E grade candidates.

103. In those **modular syllabuses** inspected by HMI, demand was in line with that of equivalent linear syllabuses and the standards set at the grade boundaries were comparable. However, some students performed poorly in early modules in some English and science syllabuses, and the immediacy of end-of-module examinations sometimes had an adverse effect on the attention that students were able to give to other subjects. Motivation was high in modular courses, students were well informed about the progress they were making and were realistic about their own capabilities.

104. GCE A-level results continue to improve in maintained schools. In 1996 the average points score per candidate for pupils entered for two or more GCE A-levels was 16.8 compared with 15.9 in 1995.[18] There was no significant difference in the performance of pupils in LEA maintained comprehensives and GM comprehensives.

105. There is some evidence of overall improvement in the standards of **Advanced GNVQ** work inspected this

year. The range of attainment and quality of work varies across the vocational areas. Students' achievement is generally satisfactory and sometimes good in art and design, business, media and science. Work in manufacturing is satisfactory, but take-up has been weak. Some aspects of work in health and social care lack rigour. Some courses in leisure and tourism are satisfactory, but in too many students are achieving low standards. In a selection of completed portfolios assessed as being of at least Pass standard for Advanced GNVQ, HMI judged that 85 per cent were broadly equivalent in quality to GCE A-level grade E or above.

106. Most Advanced GNVQ students demonstrate the skills and knowledge needed for effective progression to higher education or employment, and a significant proportion of those achieving distinction or merit, whose portfolios were inspected at the end of the year, had received offers of places on degree courses.

107. There are signs of similar improvement in work at **Intermediate level GNVQ**. Variations in quality between vocational areas largely mirror those at Advanced level. Work was judged to be comparable in quality to at least GCSE grade C, and equivalent to four or five GCSE subjects, in over 90 per cent of the completed portfolios inspected.

108. In the sample of schools inspected about four-fifths of the students who started their Advanced and Intermediate course had completed them and of these about three-quarters of the Advanced level students and two-thirds of the Intermediate level students had gained the full GNVQ.

109. Achievement in **key skills** in GNVQs is generally not as good as in the vocational areas. Communication skills are generally satisfactory or better with notable exceptions, particularly at Intermediate level and in leisure and tourism, where writing skills are not as well developed as they should be. Standards in information technology are good in about half the courses and poor in about one-quarter. Where progress is poor, students use information technology infrequently and often lack specialist teaching in more advanced skills. In most schools there are wide variations in achievement in information technology across vocational areas. Achievement in the application of number is weaker than for the other two key skills. The main weaknesses are a failure to extend students' skills beyond a relatively narrow range of numerical work and a limited development of techniques in areas such as space, shape and probability.

18 DfEE data 1996. The points score per pupils is calculated by allocating 2 points for an E, 4 for a D etc, up to 10 for an A, for each subject taken.

The quality of education provided

Quality of teaching

110. The quality of teaching is good in over half the GCE A-level and GNVQ lessons, and unsatisfactory in less than one in 10. Objectives for lessons are clear, with well chosen content and good challenge and pace. Teachers generally have high expectations of students.

111. In the main, GCE A-level teaching is in the hands of experienced and well-qualified subject specialists, who have a good command of the syllabuses they are using and a clear view of the standards required. Lessons are carefully prepared and expectations are appropriate. Work is well resourced. A good range of teaching strategies is adopted in most, but not all, cases. Relationships between teachers and students are generally good.

112. In most schools, GNVQ teachers generally have a good knowledge and understanding of the course content they are required to teach. In the majority of schools offering leisure and tourism, however, this is not the case. Teachers generally work effectively together and are deployed to make the best use of their specialisms. Courses are usually planned round a set of well-chosen assignments. Where teaching is of high quality, teachers ensure that key knowledge, understanding and skills from the vocational area are systematically developed and used in these assignments. In about one in five schools, the planning and methodology are unsatisfactory, with assignments poorly designed, uninteresting and lacking in challenge. Too little attention is paid to ensuring that students have a good grasp of key knowledge and understanding.

Assessment

113. The work of GCE A-level students is marked regularly and thoroughly. In Year 12, teachers often use their own systems of assessment and gradually align these with GCE A-level mark schemes as the course proceeds. Students benefit from good feedback on their progress, especially where early assessment of coursework is used to inform them about their strengths and weaknesses. The marking of coursework by teachers is usually rigorous and in line with the board's guidelines. Students on modular courses welcome the opportunity to deal with their GCE A-level work in manageable sections and to be assessed regularly rather than at the end of the course.

114. GNVQ assignments are carefully assessed and teachers provide students with constructive feedback. However, the criteria for merit and distinction grades are insufficiently clear and the overall burden of assessment for GNVQ teachers remains too high. The assessment and verification systems of GNVQs do not as yet guarantee consistency in judging standards. The assessment of key skills is frequently unreliable. Teachers have, nevertheless, gained confidence in assessing and grading students' work, using their professional knowledge and their experience of GCSE or GCE A-level to confirm key judgements about the quality and standards required.

Curriculum

115. The **content and breadth** of sixth form provision are good in three-quarters of schools and inadequate in only one in 12. Schools with small sixth forms do, however, find it difficult to provide an adequate range of subjects economically. Most schools have reviewed their curriculum to cater for the larger numbers, different abilities and specific preferences of those choosing to enter the sixth form, and they have broadened their provision by offering Advanced and Intermediate GNVQs. About three-quarters of schools with sixth forms provide at least one GNVQ subject. The highest take-up rate is at Intermediate level and in the large majority of schools this has now replaced GCSE resits in most subjects other than mathematics and English. Relatively little Foundation level GNVQ is taught in sixth forms.

116. Students are choosing increasingly diverse combinations of GCE A-level subjects. Some Advanced GNVQ students also take one GCE A-level, but this is not the norm. The spread of GCE A-level modular courses has contributed to the growth in student numbers in mathematics and science subjects. However, the variations in procedures and timing of modular examinations across the GCE boards cause administrative difficulties for many schools. There has also been some increase in the number of students doing AS examinations, largely because of the flexibility offered by modular syllabuses which can lead to either GCE A or AS level. In order to increase the breadth of their curricular provision within existing costs, many schools have adopted a more flexible approach to time allocations and teaching arrangements for a number of subjects, particularly those which recruit small numbers of pupils.

117. Most sixth forms provide a wide range of **additional studies and activities** aimed at broadening the students' experiences and development. Few schools, however, have a clear rationale for defining the content of this provision, and time allocated and the quality of courses vary widely. Many programmes are effective in providing valuable opportunities for students to become involved with community activities and to help younger pupils in their own school.

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

118. Most schools create a positive ethos in their sixth forms. Students value the orderly, supportive community with which they have become familiar. They appreciate what they regard as a good balance between demands for work and behaviour of a high standard and opportunities for exercising independence and initiative.

119. Most schools provide an element of religious education within the sixth form extension studies. However, this is often a token offering and three-quarters of schools fall far short of the statutory requirements for religious education.

Students' support and guidance

120. Most schools with sixth forms provide comprehensive and objective advice to their Year 11 students; a minority do not. An increasing number of schools makes effective use of value-added evidence from previous years to guide students onto suitable courses in the sixth form. However, inadequate use is made of records of achievement in selecting students for sixth form courses.

121. **Careers guidance** in the sixth form is effective in preparing students for higher education, but insufficient attention is given to informing students about the full range of employment and training opportunities on offer. Links between heads of sixth forms and careers coordinators are generally poor, and need to be strengthened.

122. Most schools offering GNVQs have no formal requirements, in terms of specified GCSE grades, for entry onto Intermediate programmes. Many are, however, revising this policy in the light of growing concern about the basic numeracy and literary skills of the applicants. In contrast, most schools appropriately insist on a minimum of five GCSE grades at C (or above) for entry onto their GNVQ Advanced programmes.

Management and Efficiency

123. The large majority of school sixth forms provides effective education, but in a minority of schools the sixth form does not pay its way. This is mainly due to small average group sizes leading to high staffing costs and is more frequent with small sixth forms. OFSTED's *Effective Sixth Forms* report showed that a school needs about 80 students in the sixth form if it is to offer a basic range of 12 A-level subjects for an appropriate cost.[19] The figure rises to 100 if two GNVQs are added. At present 149 sixth forms have less than 50 students and almost 400 have less than 100. A significant proportion of these schools has a recently established sixth form. A minority of these schools offers exclusively GNVQ courses and succeed in meeting the needs of their students. Small sixth forms that offer GCE A-levels generally either provide a restricted range of subjects or subsidise their sixth form at the expense of the rest of the school.

124. Not enough schools have taken adequate steps to compare the costs of their sixth form provision with the income they receive for it. Inspectors have identified schools where the sixth form has been expensive, but the school has been unaware of the extent to which the sixth form is being subsidised by the main school.

125. A significant minority of sixth forms liaises effectively with other schools, either as part of an established consortium, or by means of informal cooperative arrangements for providing an adequate range of subjects in a locality at an appropriate cost. However, increasing competition has led to a decrease in collaboration.

126. Schools are making more use of **value-added measures** to evaluate the effectiveness of sixth form provision. Although this has generally been productive, it has not been used systematically in whole-school and departmental evaluation, nor in the provision of effective guidance for students. The recent national value-added data provided by the DfEE[20] should be useful in helping schools to compare their performance against national data.

19 See *Effective Sixth Forms*, OFSTED, 1996.
20 *GCSE to GCE A-Level – Value Added – Briefing for Schools and Colleges*, DfEE, 1995.

Special schools

127. Day and residential special schools in the maintained, non-maintained and independent sectors provide for pupils with moderate and severe learning difficulties and for those with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Special schools also provide for pupils with physical disabilities, impairment of vision and hearing and less common disabilities, such as autism. Some schools cater for a wide range of ability.

Educational standards achieved

128. Standards of achievement are good in one-third of special schools but too low in one-quarter. There are differences between types of school. Standards in most schools for pupils with sensory impairment and physical disability are good, but in almost half of schools for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties standards need to be substantially improved. These findings are similar to those of last year.

129. Standards in **speaking and listening** are good in many schools, reflecting successful planning of opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to learn and extend these skills. High achievement and good progress are represented by a wide range of individual performance in special schools; the development of a consistent, meaningful gesture or sign by one child may represent as great a success as the leadership of a discussion group by another of the same age. The activities which enhance pupils' achievements vary from highly structured sessions planned jointly by teachers and speech and language therapists in a school for pupils with language disorders to lively drama sessions and role play in a school for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. There is an increasing range of communication aids available to support pupils without speech, but the funding of these and the successful integration of their use into lessons remain problematic.

130. Standards in **reading** vary unacceptably between types of special school. They are frequently poor relative to pupils' capabilities in schools for pupils with severe learning difficulties, where the teaching of reading has not received as much attention as other aspects of the academic curriculum. Standards are also too low in schools for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties, reflecting various factors but often related to an absence of agreed approaches to the teaching of reading as well as to a limited range of resources. As in mainstream schools, high standards of

reading are strongly associated with well-structured reading programmes through which pupils are taught the skills of reading on a consistent daily basis and where their progress is carefully monitored against agreed targets. New technologies such as CD ROM have brought fresh opportunities to catch pupils' interest in reading, for example in stories with text which can be spoken word by word and with animated detail in illustrations which can be explored. Detailed planning of the teaching of reading across the age range and into Key Stage 4 (or into post-16 provision in some schools) raises standards.

131. Pupils often under-achieve in writing because many schools offer a narrow range of opportunities for the development of writing skills. While prepared worksheets may help to enhance the appearance of pupils' work and support hesitant writers, their over use across all subjects reduces the demand made of the pupils and restricts the range of their writing. In one school, pupils working as a team to produce a school newspaper were involved in the analysis and editing of each others' writing, to the benefit of their written work in other contexts.

132. Standards in **numeracy** are good in one-third of schools in relation to pupils' capabilities, but are poor in almost half of those for pupils with severe learning difficulties. In some schools, standards in numeracy are maintained at the expense of pupils' achievements in broader aspects of mathematics. Other schools provide sufficient opportunities for the practice of numeracy skills by planning for them in other subjects.

133. Pupils' achievements with **information technology** are poor in one-third of schools and good in only a very small proportion. This reflects the general under use of information technology resources and widely varying levels of staff confidence in its use within most schools. Investments in hardware are rarely matched by the purchase of suitable software, so that pupils' achievements are restricted by the availability of relevant and well matched activities.

134. Pupils reach relatively high standards in **physical education, art and aspects of design and technology** in many special schools. Pupils' experiences in design and technology are being broadened and improved in quality despite absent or poor specialist facilities in one-third of schools. Standards in **science** are rarely high; as in design and technology, specialist facilities are absent in one-third of schools. Standards in **modern foreign languages** are good in a small, but growing, number of schools.

Teaching

135. The quality of teaching is good in two-fifths of lessons, but unsatisfactory in one-fifth. The most successful teaching is often by subject specialists, where these are available. **Specialist subject teaching** poses a particular problem in the smaller special schools, where the pool of subject expertise is limited. Staff in one in five schools continue to have weaknesses in the subject knowledge needed to give pupils access to the whole National Curriculum. This, however, is a slight improvement upon the situation reported last year. The problem is persistent in schools for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties, where in almost half of schools subject expertise is lacking, particularly in relation to the teaching of Key Stage 4.

136. In all types of school, the match of work to pupils' widely varying needs and capabilities is identified as the key factor in successful teaching, but only a small proportion of schools is making effective use of information from the **assessment** of pupils' curricular programmes to inform the planning of lessons. This is often in spite of staff devoting much time and effort to assessment and recording.

Curriculum and assessment

137. Three-quarters of special schools now teach the full National Curriculum. Difficulties remain in achieving a balance between time allocations to subjects and also between areas of study within subjects. Only one-quarter of schools provides a satisfactorily balanced curriculum. In the remaining schools, class timetables are often poorly constructed, overcomplex or not related to the National Curriculum. There is often insufficient teaching time but some lessons can be too long. Schemes of work are sometimes absent or incomplete and no attempt is made to monitor the balance of subjects taught to individual pupils.

138. The subjects most frequently neglected as a result of lack of balance in the allocation of teaching time are science and religious education. Those in which the range of pupils' studies are most likely to be narrow are religious education, music and modern foreign languages. One in four schools falls far short of meeting the statutory requirements in religious education.

139. The **assessment and recording of pupils' achievements**, and particularly the evaluation of their progress, continues to present difficulties in many schools. Although many schools have appropriate documented policies for assessment and recording, in over half the schools such policies are incomplete and monitored inadequately. One-third of schools has yet to produce satisfactory individual education plans in accordance with the general guidance in the Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs. As in mainstream schools, staff have difficulty in setting clear and individualised targets for pupils and in reviewing these consistently to provide an overview of progress.

140. The success of similar schools in providing access to **accreditation in Key Stage 4** varies widely, but those offering no accreditation are increasingly reported as actively addressing the issue. Wide variations in pupils' access to accreditation are particularly a feature of schools for pupils with moderate learning difficulties; some schools make use of a variety of routes to accreditation in order to meet the needs of a wide range of ability, while others offer no accreditation. Three-quarters of schools for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties offer at least one GCSE course, and the trend is for the number of courses and entries to increase. Suitable accreditation for the least able pupils in Key Stage 4 remains problematic in all types of special school.

141. Most schools promote pupils' **moral and social development** successfully. Clear and agreed codes of behaviour, examples set by staff, responsibilities given to pupils and educational visits outside school contribute strongly in these areas. However, almost half of schools provide insufficient support for pupils' **spiritual and cultural development**. Opportunities are missed, for example, in assemblies, where administrative matters take undue precedence over times for reflection. Two in five schools do not meet the statutory requirements for collective worship. The multicultural nature of society is generally given insufficient attention.

Management and efficiency

142. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall in three-quarters of schools, but particular aspects of management are weak in a large number of schools. In one-third of schools, insufficient central direction is given to curriculum development, while in a half, the role of subject coordinators is poorly developed. Almost all senior management teams have yet to take practical steps to monitor what is being taught and whether it is being taught effectively, although the need to do so is more widely recognised than last year.

143. The quality of **financial planning** is poor in almost three-quarters of schools. Initiatives are costed in only a minority of plans. A very small number of schools is beginning to monitor the value for money provided by the initiatives within these plans; they are able to demonstrate enhanced value from the modifications which result from their monitoring. The best development plans are practical working documents serving the governing body, the senior management team and subject coordinators. They include contributions from each coordinator and link the acquisition of new equipment and the upgrading of facilities to curriculum development. They also agree priorities within newly planned initiatives including long- as well as short- term elements.

144. The adequacy of **equipment, books and materials** varies widely between types of school. For example, three-quarters of schools for pupils with moderate learning difficulties have adequate resources to deliver the National Curriculum, but this is the case in only one-quarter of schools for pupils with severe learning difficulties. The best resourced schools are those for pupils with physical disabilities. Science, design and technology, history, geography and religious education continue to be the subjects most frequently reported as under-resourced in all types of school.

Schools subject to special measures and schools with serious weaknesses

145. A small proportion of the schools inspected since 1993 – two per cent of primary schools, two per cent of secondary schools and seven per cent of special schools, 212 schools in total – has been made subject to special measures.

146. Primary schools subject to special measures differ in size, type and socio-economic circumstances. What they have in common is that standards achieved by a majority of pupils in one or more key stages are unacceptably low. There is a high level of unsatisfactory teaching with poor subject knowledge, poor planning, and work which is ill-matched to pupils' attainment. Often the teaching does not meet National Curriculum requirements and management strategies are not in place to ensure year-to-year progression, or to recognise and remedy deficiencies in provision. In two-thirds of the primary schools strategic and financial planning is weak and many of these schools do not, as a consequence, give value for money.

147. Secondary schools subject to special measures are predominantly, but not always, in areas of urban disadvantage, and are characterised by low overall standards of achievement, poor literacy and numeracy, individual pupils' under-achievement and poor examination results. As in primary schools, the poor quality of teaching is a key factor. In over half these schools weak teaching is compounded by the poor behaviour of a significant minority of pupils. Half of these schools fail to meet National Curriculum requirements and suffer from poor strategic planning.

148. About half of the special schools that are subject to special measures are for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. There are particular weaknesses in meeting the needs of individual pupils: poor assessment and consequent under-expectation; an inability to cope with pupils' challenging behaviour; and a poorly planned and often narrow curriculum. In over half of these schools leadership and management are weak, particularly in monitoring provision and pupil outcomes. As in primary and secondary schools, weaknesses had not been identified as a starting point towards school improvement.

149. The schools identified as being subject to special measures have undertaken a programme of improvement. In this they are advised by HMI in drafting action plans which address key issues and identify targets

with realistic costings and timescales. In addition, most LEAs provide good support and monitor progress. The Funding Agency for Schools is increasingly securing effective support for those GM schools subject to special measures. On these foundations, schools have been able to address weaknesses in three main stages:

■ attention is given to the management and leadership of the school, with restructuring where necessary;

■ schools address fundamental policies and procedures including registration, lesson planning and teaching styles, with a particular emphasis on achieving consistency in practice;

■ measures are taken to monitor progress and evaluate the impact of new procedures on standards of achievement and the quality of education. Where schools are improving, it is at this point that strengths can be identified and built upon, and remaining weaknesses identified and remedied.

150. Most schools have made progress and some have been able to demonstrate significant improvement in teaching and in pupils' attitudes, and have improved performance as measured by national tests or GCSE results. Ten such schools have now made sufficient progress to be removed from the list of schools requiring special measures. There is, however, no magic wand; where pupils' literacy skills are weak, and where some teaching remains poor, improvement depends on sustained efforts being made over a considerable period of time. In a small number of schools, standards have remained stubbornly low.

151. 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 report. So far about 15 per cent of primary schools, 10 per cent of secondary schools and 25 per cent of special schools inspected have been identified as having serious weaknesses. Over half of these primary schools has improved significantly, mainly through better curriculum planning, improved schemes of work and regular monitoring of teachers' work by senior staff. Similarly, about half of the special schools improved mainly due to better individual education plans for pupils, more skilful behaviour management by teachers and more effective use of assessment. However, the progress in secondary schools has been slower. There have been improvements in strategic planning and the management of pupils' behaviour, but in a high proportion of schools levels of attendance are too low and there is still not a system for monitoring the performance of the school.

Youth work and adult education

Educational standards achieved

152. In the majority of classes within the three local authority services inspected, adults acquired good levels of practical, physical and aesthetic skills, underpinned by sound knowledge and understanding. Standards of achievement were at least satisfactory in all but a very small number of classes and good or very good in seven in ten. There were significant gains in the essential skills of numeracy and literacy and in social and job-seeking skills for those students who needed this support, and examples of particularly effective work where adults with learning difficulties were gaining the skills needed for greater independence.

153. The standards of achievement of parents involved in the 22 family literacy projects visited, all of which were based in primary or nursery schools, were never less than satisfactory and more often good or excellent. In all instances their reading and writing improved and they were also becoming more actively involved in their children's schooling. Almost all were attaining partial or full external accreditation for their work and 80 per cent planned to continue studying. In one instance a mother who initially had literacy problems became a parent governor and worked with the headteacher in recruiting parents to work alongside their children in partnership with the school.

154. The achievements of a majority of young people involved in programmes organised by local authority youth services and the 58 national voluntary youth organisations in receipt of DfEE grants are steadily improving. The young people demonstrate greater confidence and self-esteem than last year, are more responsible and socially skilled, and are gaining in knowledge, understanding and awareness about a range of issues of immediate relevance to their lives. Special projects, however, continue to result in work of higher quality than do general activity sessions which are less sharply focused.

155. In successful drug education projects, young people demonstrated an increased awareness and understanding of the nature and dangers of drugs, although they were sometimes unable or unwilling to apply acquired knowledge to their subsequent behaviour. Some young people were, however, able to impart this information with clarity and conviction to others in well-organised peer education projects. In the unsuccessful projects, young people lacked enthusiasm

and, unsurprisingly, were unable to communicate messages which they did not understand themselves.

Quality of education

156. About 70 per cent of the teaching observed in adult education was good or very good. Only rarely was there any teaching that was less than satisfactory. Teachers are experienced and skilled. They know their subjects well and communicate effectively with their students. Sessions are well planned, organised and well supported with suitable materials. Content is well matched to students' needs, interests and abilities. There are effective procedures in place for assessing the initial attainment of students' and their progress in most courses leading to external certification. Many services now produce standard course information sheets, specifying the outcomes students can expect, in some cases breaking these down to the recording of weekly progress.

157. The quality of youth work is improving, generally as a result of more rigorous planning by youth workers, who set clearer objectives which are communicated effectively to young people. There has been a steady improvement in the recording of young people's progress. Youth services and voluntary organisations frequently reward success and effort with certificates and awards for achievement both formally, as in the Duke of Edinburgh Award and Youth Award schemes, and informally at local project level. Nevertheless, there is still an unacceptable degree of variability in the quality of youth work overall, often because of inadequate training, supervision and support for staff.

158. Local authorities have a duty, even when they do not run the service themselves, to secure adequate provision for non-vocational courses for adults in their communities. Such provision develops new skills and interests and offers opportunities for creative, cultural, physical and leisure pursuits.

159. The best local authority adult education services combine a variety of such courses with those leading to vocational certification and accreditation, for which they can acquire funding from external sources, predominantly, but not exclusively, the Further Education Funding Council. These programmes are particularly successful at attracting back into education those adults who do not normally participate and can make, therefore, a key contribution to the local community. The promotion of lifelong learning by these services is increasingly recognised. All three of the

services inspected during the current academic year were successful at providing breadth and diversity in their curriculum, one particularly so. Two out of the three were spearheading collaborative work with key agencies of education and training in their areas.

160. Nationally, however, the picture is less encouraging. Budgetary constraints in all local authorities have resulted in a gradual erosion of the core funding allocated to adult education provision. This has led to an over-reliance, in an increasing number of local authorities, on external funding, available only for vocational or accredited courses and therefore skewing what is provided. It is often older adults, and adults with learning difficulties, who are especially disadvantaged by these developments. At least two authorities are failing to provide or secure any non-vocational adult education.

161. Youth services across the country are also subject to funding pressures and general youth work often takes second place to externally funded project work focusing on crime prevention and health and drugs education. Since much of the funding is short term, it is likely that the provision will be dictated by what is fundable rather than what is appropriate in response to identified local needs. In many areas, good partnerships between local authority services and other providers and agencies, particularly the voluntary sector, are being maintained and developed. This is one way in which a more coherent service is being protected.

Management and efficiency

162. Most adult education and youth services are well managed and have satisfactory quality assurance measures in place. In just over one-quarter of authorities, the local authority is no longer the direct provider of adult education but contracts other agencies to deliver a service on its behalf. There are some effective strategies for the monitoring and evaluation of the work of these other providers, but generally it is when the provision is not directly managed that quality assurance is at its weakest. Although all but two authorities provide their own youth services, almost all give grant aid to voluntary organisations who complement the work of the maintained service. It is with this grant-aided work that the majority of services still need to develop tighter monitoring procedures, in order to ensure that what is being provided by others aligns with their own objectives and is of acceptable quality.

163. Most adult education and youth services spend carefully, and monitor and manage budgets well. Many have successfully diversified their sources of funding and have entered into productive partnerships with a range of other providers. In the best services, budgets are now delegated to cost centres. Income targets are set centrally, but a degree of financial independence is built in. There remains, however, a small number of services where this is still not the case and where monitoring of expenditure is weak. Both adult education and youth services also need to give more attention to analysing the cost effectiveness of provision in a systematic way.

Teacher education and training

Primary initial teacher training

164. Between February 1995 and July 1996, OFSTED undertook inspections of 67 providers to evaluate four key aspects of training:

- the preparation of students to teach English;
- the preparation of students to teach mathematics;
- the preparation of students to assess, record and report on pupils' attainment;
- the institutional arrangements for quality assurance.

Across the four areas, standards were on the evidence of this initial survey mostly sound or good, with some weaknesses and some work of very good quality.

165. Several issues arise from the results of the inspection of English. While much that was seen was good, and sometimes outstanding, the training overall is too variable. Many students do not themselves have sufficient knowledge of the English language to teach the language requirements of the National Curriculum.

166. Providers need to structure their courses more coherently, to ensure that students are trained across the primary age range, and that there is consistency in training and practical classroom experience. Students' subject knowledge and developing competence should be audited and carefully monitored over the period of the course.

167. Students often receive good training in using a range of strategies for teaching reading and have a good knowledge of children's literature. In a significant minority of cases, however, students' competence in the teaching of reading is insecure. They are not prepared well, for example, to teach phonic work and are uncertain of how to structure a reading programme for a class of pupils.

168. In mathematics, course content reflects the breadth of the National Curriculum. However, the time allocated to the teaching of different areas of mathematics is not matched closely enough to the relative difficulty students experience in understanding and teaching them.

169. Students' mathematical subject knowledge is generally adequate to teach the lessons they plan, but it is not monitored sufficiently rigorously in most courses. It is rare for training to recognise the different needs of students whose subject knowledge is particularly weak,

or of those students who have substantial subject expertise.

170. Methods of teaching arithmetic are introduced in the training, but students are given limited opportunities to practise their skills in this area. Mental methods of calculation are not given enough emphasis.

171. In assessment, recording and reporting, the majority of courses provide a sound introduction to the National Curriculum requirements. The best students are skilled at assessing and recording the progress of their pupils, and are often provided with clear guidance from their training institutions or schools. Assignments and school-based tasks frequently help to develop students' competence, though the benefits are restricted where assessment, recording and reporting assignments are optional. Students mark pupils' work conscientiously and many make good use of observation and questioning in assessing pupils' progress, though they are often less skilled at drawing on the National Curriculum end of key stage level descriptors.

172. Arrangements for assuring quality are generally clear, and course leaders usually present regular course reviews. The quality of these and of the associated action plans varies. The best make good use of evidence from students, tutors and teachers to assess the effectiveness of the training. Course documentation and other information given to schools are improving in quality and are helping towards greater consistency. However, school-based training is not always monitored effectively. Profiles of students' teaching competences are being developed to help to focus training on students' needs but, to be successful, these require tutors' and teachers' observations to have a more critical edge.

Secondary initial teacher training

173. The focus on primary training meant that only a limited amount of secondary phase inspection took place. On most of the new courses provided by Higher Education Institutions (HEI), the students develop sufficient knowledge of National Curriculum subjects to provide a secure foundation for effective teaching. Students generally plan lessons satisfactorily, but often provide pupils with too little challenge. Students receive considerable guidance from schools on classroom management, but the quality of this is insufficiently high. The area in which most students experience the greatest difficulty appears to be assessment, recording and reporting, where students

are not always able to integrate these elements fully into their planning and teaching.

174. The courses observed were generally well structured and provided good coverage of the National Curriculum and post-16 syllabuses. The training activities in schools and HEI were frequently good. The HEI had clear quality assurance arrangements which were well documented and draw on a wide range of evidence, but there were some inconsistencies in the application of the quality assurance procedures to partnership schools.

School-centred initial teacher training (SCITT)

175. School-centred initial teacher training has continued to expand, albeit slowly, and there are now some 20 consortia offering primary or secondary training. Many courses are still becoming established, so judgements often refer to an early stage of their development. Overall, the courses are of adequate quality with two unsatisfactory exceptions, one primary and one secondary.

176. Students on SCITT courses generally achieve satisfactory levels of teaching competence, although few so far have achieved the highest levels. Students' subject knowledge and general understanding of the National Curriculum requirements are mainly adequate, but some need to acquire closer familiarity with them through using the programmes of study in their planning.

177. Students are generally competent classroom managers, but the quality of their planning is variable. On some courses there is excessive reliance on the schools' schemes of work and, in the case of secondary design and technology, students at times depend too much on the projects adopted by the school. Students' knowledge of assessment procedures and approaches and their competence in assessment practice had weaknesses in more than half the courses inspected.

178. The quality of course planning is variable. In some courses poor planning inhibits students' training experience because different course elements are linked inadequately. The provision in general professional studies is broadly satisfactory. However, although some courses are good, others lack sufficient progression and coherence and have insufficiently close links with subject studies.

179. The amount of time provided for the students' training varies considerably. As is common with other

providers, in secondary design and technology and in secondary science, there have been persistent weaknesses in SCITT provision. In these subjects, it has been difficult on one-year programmes to compensate for weaknesses in students' subject knowledge outside students' main subject specialisms. Curriculum coordinators in the primary schools are not yet sufficiently involved in providing training in both core and foundation subjects.

180. The quality of mentors' support for students is uneven. There is good practice, but in some courses mentors' lesson observations are not focused clearly enough in attempting to cover and judge several competences simultaneously, they fail to make sufficiently pointed comments about the particular lesson being observed.

181. Quality assurance arrangements are sound overall. However, in some courses the development of students' teaching competences is not monitored sufficiently closely. On occasions, the teachers' assessments used in the award of qualified teacher status lack the necessary rigour.

Continuing professional development and in-service education and training

182. OFSTED conducted a survey of the effectiveness of INSET provision which was completed in 1996. In almost three-quarters of the schools visited there were some positive effects of INSET, but only in half of them was there a clearly discernible improvement in the quality of pupils' learning and the standards they achieved. The effects were often relatively small, but some benefits, such as increased knowledge, the acquisition or reinforcement of teaching skills, and greater confidence, were observed. Other positive consequences were improved school and subject documents, the more effective use of resources, and better subject coordination.

183. The individual INSET activities inspected, whether closure days, sessions after school or similar activities organised outside the school at HEI or professional development centres, were mostly taught well and received positively. However, significantly, the quality of planning was not always good enough to ensure that INSET actually improved teachers' performance.

184. Most schools were able to identify their wider INSET needs. However, some schools were ineffective at

identifying the needs of individuals or groups of staff because arrangements for monitoring their teaching were inadequate.

185. The longer-term evaluation of INSET was generally weak. Schools gave too little attention to evaluating the impact of training on the performance of individual teachers, or the standards achieved by pupils. The appraisal of teachers generally had little effect on schools' INSET practice.

186. Local education authorities continue to be the main providers of INSET, but they operate in an increasingly competitive environment in which schools are becoming more discriminating about how to deploy their funds. Very few schools have access to reliable information to assist their choice of provider from the private sector.

187. There is a need to ensure that INSET is directed more specifically at improving the quality of teaching and learning and at raising pupils' achievements. More needs to be made of staff appraisal, together with the monitoring by staff of the quality of teaching and learning. Evaluation of INSET needs to be more systematic with closer attention to questions of value for money. The development of an up-to-date directory on the range and quality of INSET providers in any locality would be extremely helpful.

HEADLAMP

188. The Headteacher's Leadership and Management Programme (HEADLAMP) was introduced under the auspices of the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) to promote and provide INSET for new or recently appointed headteachers. OFSTED inspected a sample of providers and headteachers, most of whom had either just started on training and development activities or had still to make a start. Many providers had little or no response to their attempts to recruit at that stage. However, certain providers – notably LEAs and Diocesan Education Boards – had recruited strongly from the primary phase. The main training and development strategies used were group training and mentorship. The use of consultants was expanding. Few headteachers had so far showed great interest in having their work accredited for further qualifications.

189. Headteachers of very small schools reported some difficulty in operating within the HEADLAMP scheme, because of the differing nature of management in such

schools. Many headteachers, especially of primary schools, were reluctant to embark on training that took them out of their schools, and showed a marked preference for local provision. Secondary headteachers had limited opportunities to engage in locally-based group activities and were building their own HEADLAMP programmes in a more piecemeal way than their primary colleagues. The degree of governors' involvement has varied, but governors generally value the scheme's intentions.

Specialist Teacher Assistant Pilot Scheme

190. The Specialist Teacher Assistant (STA) Pilot Scheme aims to prepare adults in giving support to qualified teachers in teaching the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics, especially at Key Stage 1. The original scheme was launched in 1994 and was extended for a further year. In the first year, 26 pilot courses catered for almost 1,000 students, a further 14 courses started in the second year, when the number of students increased to 1,600.

191. Typically, the students are women with school-age children and with some experience of work with children in schools or playgroups. Most are currently employed in support roles in primary schools; some are voluntary helpers. They have generally not been involved in academic study since leaving school. Many have the educational qualifications of GCSEs in English and mathematics at level A–C, or equivalent, the basic requirement.

192. Most of the year-long part-time courses concentrate sufficiently on work in reading, writing and mathematics to equip the students to give special support in the basic skills. The courses also deepen the students' awareness of their role and the context within which they work, including an introduction to the National Curriculum, managing behaviour and how pupils learn. The quality of the training sessions is generally satisfactory and many sessions are good. Insufficiently demanding work was observed in only a few cases. In some courses, arrangements for quality control and assurance are unsatisfactory.

193. Schools have different ideas about their role and this needs further clarification. The mentor forms an essential link between the school and the provider, but some courses lacked mentors and many of the initial proposals give insufficient weight to mentor training.

194. The pilot scheme has illustrated that trained STAs can make a valuable contribution to the development of children's basic skills in literacy and numeracy. The STAs are enthusiastic, committed and becoming increasingly confident. Some schools are already drawing on their skills to the benefit of teachers and pupils. Schools must now give careful consideration to the effective deployment of the STAs, during their training and once they are qualified.

The appraisal of teachers and headteachers

195. The OFSTED inspection found that appraisal had an observable impact on teaching and learning in only one in five of the schools inspected. In most, appraisal was too isolated from school development and INSET planning, and in some it was seen as being exclusively for the self-development of individual teachers. However, teachers valued the recognition of their achievements which appraisal provided and frequently reported that it had increased their self-confidence and improved general morale. The use and quality of classroom observation as part of appraisal of teachers were variable. Not all teachers had been observed teaching, as required by the DFE Circular 12/91, and appraisers did not make judgements against consistent criteria. Consequently, the appraisal interview was not always sufficiently focused on improving teaching. Many headteachers saw a need to set sharper targets, better linked to classroom practice and school management, but it is difficult to see how they can achieve this in the absence of more and better classroom observation of the quality of the teaching.

196. The training for appraisal was largely appropriate, with the best being of high quality. Inspection identified a need for continued training for those taking up appraisal responsibilities. The timetable for appraisal had been largely met but reduced priority to appraisal had led to a timetable slippage in some schools.

197. The appraisal of headteachers proved inherently more time consuming than that of teachers, generally because of the range of tasks to be observed. In a significant minority of cases, the conduct and focus of the process lacked sufficient clarity.

198. Now that the appraisal system is in place, schools need to review their policies and practice. If it is to be truly effective, appraisal must be integrated fully into the overall management of schools and the link with pay and promotion should be reviewed. The system is presently functioning well below its full potential. It is clearly not contributing enough to raising pupils' standards of achievement and improving teachers' levels of performance and it is often failing to provide value for money.

Local education authority (LEA) support for raising achievement

LEA Services

199. LEA advisory services/inspectorates range in size from about six to 60 inspectors and advisory teachers. The current average is about 15 inspectors per LEA. Most LEAs manage to cover the National Curriculum subjects and religious education, though in smaller authorities even this basic level of provision may depend upon the appointment of advisory teachers on short-term contracts and upon collaborative arrangements with other LEAs. This is particularly the case in the new unitary authorities. In general, primary schools receive less phase support than secondary schools. Headteacher appraisal in both phases is reported to be undertaken less frequently than previously. The level of support available to schools from LEA learning and behavioural support services for pupils with special educational needs varies widely, particularly for pupils with statements.

200. Re-structuring of services has led in some LEAs to greater effectiveness. This is particularly so when the careful identification of priorities and the systematic evaluation of different support strategies have created an enhanced sense of purpose and direction. Few LEAs have introduced formal systems for appraising their inspectors. If appraisal does take place, it is usually on a voluntary basis.

Strategies used by LEA inspectors

201. Many LEAs continue to attach each inspector, irrespective of their specialism or phase experience, to a group of schools. This practice can increase the amount of contact between secondary subject specialists and primary schools, but it can also reduce the inspector's effectiveness. Many primary headteachers are deeply and understandably sceptical when advice is offered to them by inspectors who have not themselves taught primary school children. If inspectors are to work outside their particular specialism, they should receive more extensive and systematic induction and training than usually happens at present.

202. More inspectors are focusing their efforts on improving teaching, but more could yet be done. In particular, joint classroom observations by the inspector and senior management within the school, which has proved to be an effective tactic, is not widespread. Neither, surprisingly, is the provision of detailed feedback on the teaching which has been observed. A number of LEAs are now seeking to identify and act upon ineffective teachers.

203. Monitoring visits, in one form or another, are a feature of the work of most LEAs. Some such visits lack rigour and focus and tend to dwell on established strengths rather than identifying and helping to tackle weaknesses. Monitoring is most effective when it is based on prior agreements with schools over targets for evaluation, the criteria which are to be used to define success, the evidence to be collected, and the methods to be used.

204. INSET is increasingly provided by semi-independent LEA departments run on a quasi-business basis. Only a small number of LEAs focus INSET clearly on pupils' standards of achievement. These authorities usually have written objectives for raising standards and they target specific issues such as literacy. However, even where there is a post for staff development within an LEA there is usually only minimal evaluation of the impact of INSET on the quality of teaching, and, crucially, upon the standards of pupils' achievements. Too often INSET is not directly related to the classroom, but has more to do with planning or administrative systems. It is not easy in such cases to establish any impact on teaching quality and higher pupil performance.

LEAs and OFSTED inspections

205. This year, as last, there is evidence that LEAs are concentrating too much of their resources on pre-OFSTED preparation. Where this is a genuine attempt to assist the school to use the OFSTED *Framework* to evaluate its own provision and act on the outcome of the evaluation, schools benefit substantially; where it is designed primarily to assist the school to present itself favourably in the inspection, it is unjustified.

206. Most schools receive some LEA input on action planning following an OFSTED inspection, but the implementation of school plans is rarely monitored systematically. Any monitoring that does occur is too often ad hoc and is usually conducted by link advisers on routine visits which might serve a range of purposes. There are, however, examples of more carefully planned support when LEAs rightly target schools with serious weaknesses or requiring special measures and divert significant resources in order to ensure that progress is monitored carefully.

207. About one in eight LEAs does not undertake Section 10 inspections. Depending upon income generation targets, most of those that do spend between 7 per cent and 27 per cent of their time on OFSTED inspections, mainly of secondary schools. Overall, the trend towards undertaking fewer inspections noted last year is slowing down.
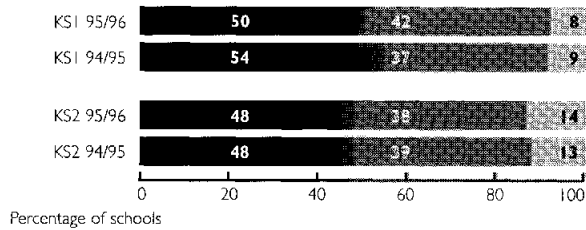
208. Increasing numbers of LEAs are now drawing on analyses of inspection evidence provided by OFSTED to gain an overview of the quality of educational provision and to help them focus support for schools. Summary inspection reports are often discussed by members of education committees in order to inform policy and planning decisions.

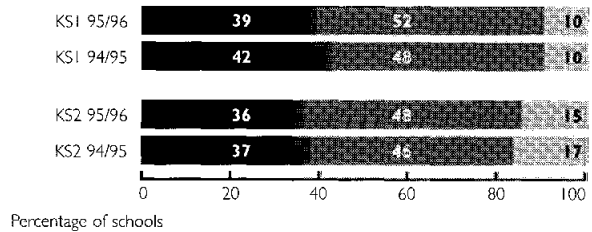## Evaluating school effectiveness

209. In addition to using their own monitoring visits and OFSTED inspections to evaluate school effectiveness, LEAs use a range of other indicators. A wide range of data is now available about examination and National Curriculum assessment results, though not all schools make National Curriculum test scores available to LEAs. Several LEAs are concerned about differences in the achievement of boys and girls and of minority ethnic groups and travellers, but few are yet monitoring and analysing pupil achievement or attendance rates in a systematic way. A significant number of LEAs makes effective use of value-added analyses and in a small number of authorities schools receive an analysis of their own performance and that of schools serving similar communities.

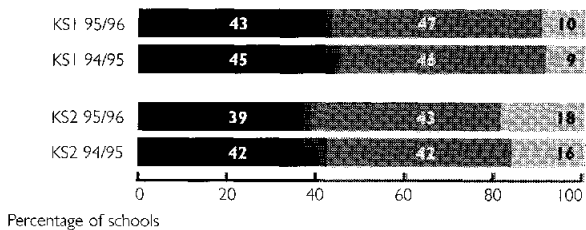# Annex I Standards of achievement in primary schools 1994/95 and 1995/96

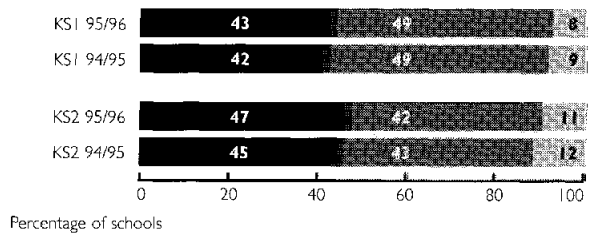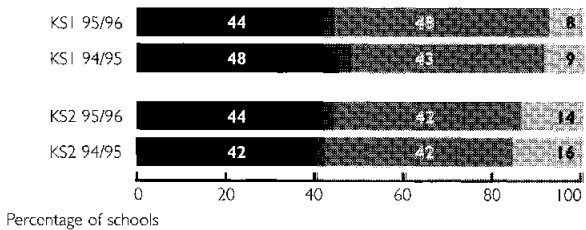## English

	good	balance of strengths and weaknesses	poor
KS1 95/96	50	42	8
KS1 94/95	54	37	9
KS2 95/96	48	38	14
KS2 94/95	48	39	13

Percentage of schools

Mathematics

	good	balance of strengths and weaknesses	poor
KS1 95/96	43	47	10
KS1 94/95	45	46	9
KS2 95/96	39	43	18
KS2 94/95	42	42	16

Percentage of schools

Science

	good	balance of strengths and weaknesses	poor
KS1 95/96	44	48	8
KS1 94/95	48	43	9
KS2 95/96	44	42	14
KS2 94/95	42	42	16

Percentage of schools

Design and Technology

	good	balance of strengths and weaknesses	poor
KS1 95/96	40	46	14
KS1 94/95	39	42	18
KS2 95/96	35	40	25
KS2 94/95	33	39	28

Percentage of schools

Information Technology

	good	balance of strengths and weaknesses	poor
KS1 95/96	34	43	23
KS1 94/95	35	44	21
KS2 95/96	30	37	33
KS2 94/95	30	32	38

Percentage of schools

Art

	good	balance of strengths and weaknesses	poor
KS1 95/96	48	42	10
KS1 94/95	45	42	13
KS2 95/96	47	37	16
KS2 94/95	44	38	18

Percentage of schools

Geography

	good	balance of strengths and weaknesses	poor
KS1 95/96	39	52	10
KS1 94/95	42	48	10
KS2 95/96	36	48	15
KS2 94/95	37	46	17

Percentage of schools

History

	good	balance of strengths and weaknesses	poor
KS1 95/96	43	49	8
KS1 94/95	42	49	9
KS2 95/96	47	42	11
KS2 94/95	45	43	12

Percentage of schools

Music

	good	balance of strengths and weaknesses	poor
KS1 95/96	51	41	8
KS1 94/95	51	40	9
KS2 95/96	54	33	13
KS2 94/95	54	31	14

Percentage of schools

Physical Education

	good	balance of strengths and weaknesses	poor
KS1 95/96	48	46	7
KS1 94/95	51	41	8
KS2 95/96	53	38	10
KS2 94/95	52	36	12

Percentage of schools

Religious Education

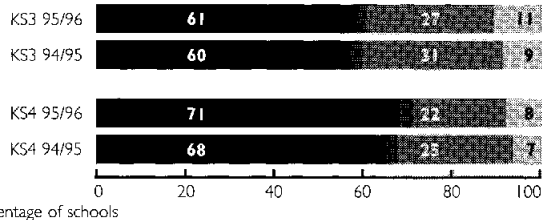|	good	balance of strengths and weaknesses	poor
KS1 95/96	37	54	9
KS1 94/95	40	47	13
KS2 95/96	40	45	15
KS2 94/95	37	46	17

Percentage of schools

■ good   ▨ balance of strengths and weaknesses   ░ poor

Includes all maintained infants schools, junior schools, primary schools and middle-deemed primary schools.
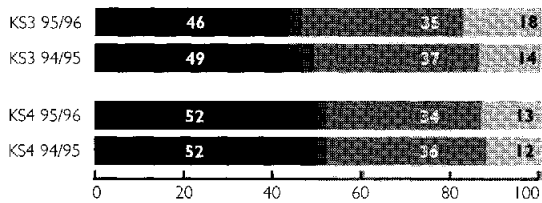These figures have been rounded and may not add up to 100 per cent.

English

	good	balance of strengths and weaknesses	poor
KS3 95/96	61	27	11
KS3 94/95	60	31	9
KS4 95/96	71	22	8
KS4 94/95	68	25	7

Percentage of schools

Mathematics

	good	balance of strengths and weaknesses	poor
KS3 95/96	46	35	18
KS3 94/95	49	37	14
KS4 95/96	52	34	13
KS4 94/95	52	36	12

Percentage of schools

Science

	good	balance of strengths and weaknesses	poor
KS3 95/96	51	38	11
KS3 94/95	51	37	12
KS4 95/96	55	33	12
KS4 94/95	54	31	15

Percentage of schools

Design and Technology

	good	balance of strengths and weaknesses	poor
KS3 95/96	58	32	10
KS3 94/95	51	35	14
KS4 95/96	57	31	11
KS4 94/95	50	32	17

Percentage of schools

Information Technology

	good	balance of strengths and weaknesses	poor
KS3 95/96	42	28	30
KS3 94/95	45	33	22
KS4 95/96	37	32	31
KS4 94/95	44	33	23

Percentage of schools

Art

	good	balance of strengths and weaknesses	poor
KS3 95/96	59	29	12
KS3 94/95	57	31	11
KS4 95/96	68	21	12
KS4 94/95	65	27	8

Percentage of schools

Geography

	good	balance of strengths and weaknesses	poor
KS3 95/96	52	38	10
KS3 94/95	53	38	9
KS4 95/96	59	31	10
KS4 94/95	59	31	10

Percentage of schools

History

	good	balance of strengths and weaknesses	poor
KS3 95/96	56	35	9
KS3 94/95	53	36	11
KS4 95/96	67	26	8
KS4 94/95	65	26	9

Percentage of schools

Modern Languages

	good	balance of strengths and weaknesses	poor
KS3 95/96	51	35	15
KS3 94/95	54	31	15
KS4 95/96	50	31	18
KS4 94/95	49	35	16

Percentage of schools

Music

	good	balance of strengths and weaknesses	poor
KS3 95/96	50	30	20
KS3 94/95	46	36	18
KS4 95/96	65	26	9
KS4 94/95	61	29	10

Percentage of schools

Physical Education

	good	balance of strengths and weaknesses	poor
KS3 95/96	67	27	6
KS3 94/95	62	32	7
KS4 95/96	66	30	4
KS4 94/95	59	33	8

Percentage of schools

Religious Education

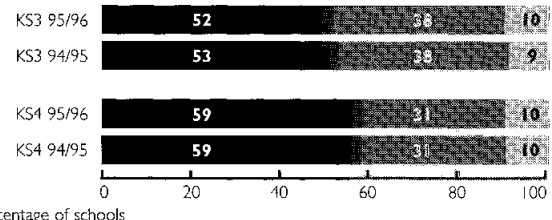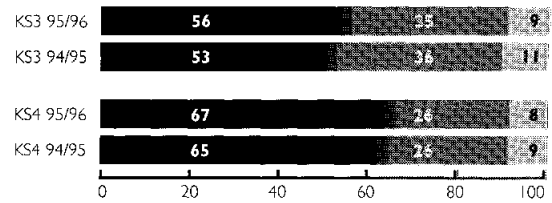|	good	balance of strengths and weaknesses	poor
KS3 95/96	48	34	18
KS3 94/95	46	33	20
KS4 95/96	42	37	21
KS4 94/95	43	33	23

Percentage of schools

Includes all maintained secondary schools, and middle-deemed secondary schools. These figures have been rounded and may not add up to 100 per cent.
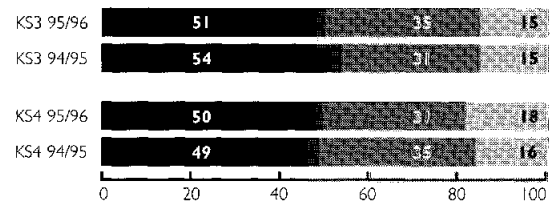
■ good   ▓ balance of strengths and weaknesses   ░ poor

Annex 3

Figure 1

Average GCSE points score per pupil against eligibility for free school meals – LEA comprehensive schools 1996
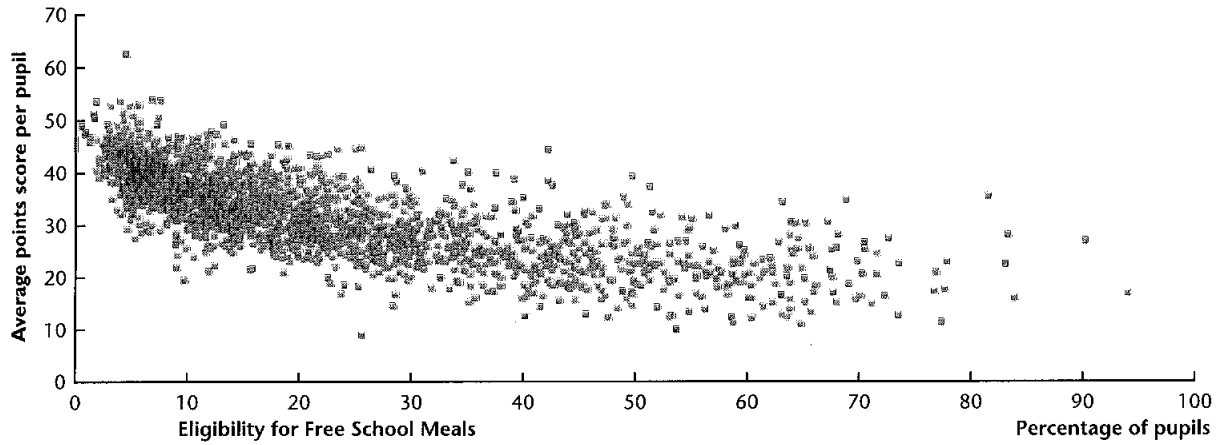

Eligibility for Free School Meals — Percentage of pupils

Figure 2

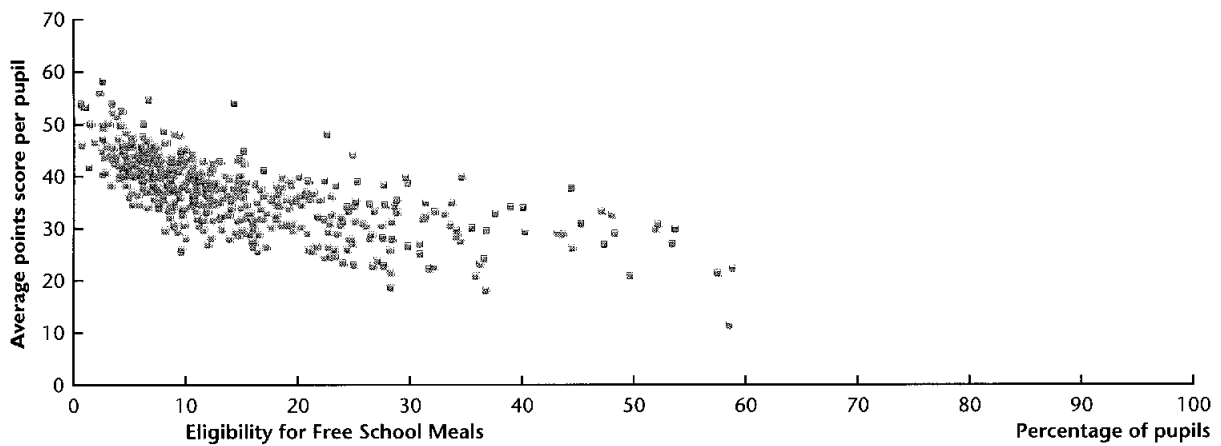**Average GCSE points score per pupil against eligibility for free school meals – GM comprehensive schools 1996**

Eligibility for Free School Meals — Percentage of pupils

Figure 3

Comparison of average GCSE points score per pupil in LEA and GM schools against eligibility for free school meals 1996

- GM Comprehensive Schools
- LEA Comprehensive Schools

Eligibility for Free School Meals — Percentage of pupils
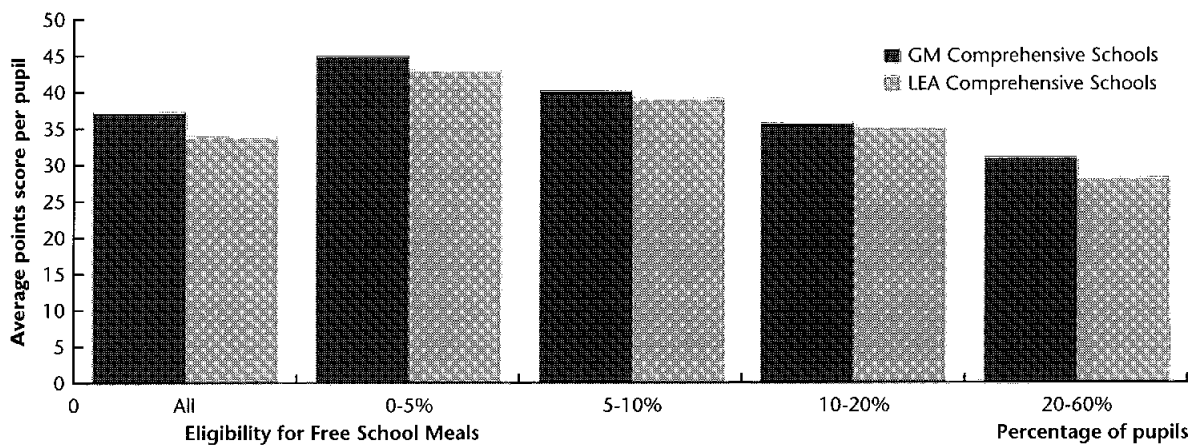
Annex 4

Inspection evidence 1995/96

Section 10[21] inspections

The Section 10 inspections of primary, secondary and special schools were carried out by registered inspectors, additional inspectors and a small number by HMI. There were in all 5,284 such inspections: 4,077 of primary or nursery schools, 853 of secondary and 354 of special schools.

HMI inspections

During the year HMI made some 2,410 inspection visits to schools, including:

- 950 to primary schools;
- 1,350 to secondary schools;
- 110 to special schools;

These visits included inspections of more than 290 schools identified as having serious weaknesses or requiring special measures. They also included investigations of, amongst other things, the implementation of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs, the Part One GNVQ pilot, exclusions from secondary schools, assessment in GNVQs and the teaching of reading in primary schools.

The sample of schools inspected by HMI included schools of 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 Family Literacy projects, grants to national voluntary youth organisations, the youth service's contribution to drug education, and quality assurance in local authority services, across a range of LEAs.

In addition, HMI inspected a range of initial teacher training providers including school-centred initial teacher training and the Specialist Teacher Assistant Pilot. The five year programme of inspection of appraisal of teachers was completed, the management of INSET was inspected in 70 schools and a sample of providers of the Headteacher's Leadership and Management Programme was inspected.

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21 Section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996 (previously Section 9 of the Education [Schools] Act 1992).

Annex 5

Interpreting inspection evidence

Section 10 inspection evidence

Evidence from Section 10 inspections for 1995/96 contained a number of distinct sections:

- judgements on individual lessons – graded on a five point scale;
- judgements on features of the school, such as overall standards of achievement – graded on a seven point scale;
- written evidence supporting these judgements;
- published reports;
- information on the school provided by the headteacher.

All of these sources of evidence were used to produce this Annual Report. The quantitative judgements have been based on grades provided by inspectors which have been checked against the supporting textual information. A statistical summary of these inspection grades for primary and secondary schools is available on request from OFSTED.

Standards of achievement

Inspectors made two separate judgements of standards of achievement:

- standards of achievement in relation to national norms;
- standards of achievement in relation to pupils' capabilities.

Comparison with norms is a key part of the measurement of standards, but it does not tell us the whole story. Able pupils who are achieving levels which are above the average could still be under-achieving if their results do not fully reflect their capabilities. Conversely, pupils of low ability might be doing very well if they are working to their full capability even though the level of their achievement is below national expectations for pupils of a similar age. Judgements in this report on standards of achievement refer to standards in relation to pupils' capabilities.

Inspectors judge the standards in individual lessons. They also make an overall key stage judgement on standards for each National Curriculum subject and for the whole school. 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 schools these overall judgements have been used rather than lesson judgements wherever possible.

Interpreting grades

Inspectors use a seven point scale when grading standards and other features of schools. For standards, grades 1–3 indicate good standards (strengths outweigh weaknesses) where pupils consistently achieve well. Grades 5–7 are used where standards are poor (weaknesses outweigh strengths) and pupils under-achieve. The midpoint of the scale used in 1995/96 indicated a balance of strengths and weaknesses. Further analysis shows that in schools graded 4, standards vary considerably both within and between subjects. For example, over 90 per cent of schools graded 4 for Key Stage 4 had at least one subject where standards were poor; two-thirds had two poor subjects. Grades and text from lessons show a similar variation within subjects. Schools which are graded 4 for standards against students' capabilities therefore need to improve to bring more consistency to pupils' achievements in line with those schools that are graded 1–3.

The quality of teaching

Direct observation in lessons provides the clearest view of the quality of teaching. Inspectors use a five point scale. Grades 1 and 2 indicate very good or good quality, and grades 4 and 5 indicate unsatisfactory (some shortcomings) or poor quality (many shortcomings). The midpoint Grade 3 is used to indicate satisfactory or sound teaching. In this Report, lesson grades have been used to provide the quantitative overviews of the quality of teaching.

Year-on-year comparison

The inspection cycle has now run for three years in secondary schools and two years in primary schools. Because large and broadly representative samples are inspected each year, year-on-year comparisons can now be made with more confidence than in the past. Nevertheless, trends still need to be treated with some caution.

Changes in the *Framework*

In April 1996, a new *Framework For Inspection* was introduced. This contains some changes in the judgements that are graded and the criteria used. In addition, lessons are now graded on a seven point scale. None of these changes affect the analysis of inspections covered by this Report, but they will influence the content of next year's Report.

Annex 6

OFSTED publications 1995/96

Priced publications

The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools: Standards and Quality in Education 1994/95
0 10 263496 3   £12.00

Subjects & Standards: issues for school development arising from OFSTED inspection findings 1994–5 Key Stages 1& 2
0 11 350078 5   £6.95

Subjects & Standards: issues for school development arising from OFSTED inspection findings 1994–5 Key Stages 3 & 4 and Post-16
0 11 350079 3   £6.95

The Implementation of the Code of Practice for Pupils with Special Educational Needs
0 11 350080 7   £7.95

The Gender Divide: performance differences between boys and girls at school
0 11 350082 3   £7.95

Assessment of GNVQs in schools 1995/96
0 11 350083 1   £6.95

Part I GNVQs Pilot: Interim Report 1995/96
0 11 350086 6   £6.95

Physical Education & Sport in Schools: A survey of good practice
0 11 350075 0   £4.50

Exclusions from Secondary Schools 1995/6
0 11 350087 4   £6.95

Vocational Education in Taiwan
0 11 350081 5   £6.95

Recent Research on the Achievements of Ethnic Minority Pupils
0 11 350084 X   £9.95

Worlds Apart? A Review of International Surveys of Educational Achievement involving England
0 11 350085 8   £8.95

Grants to National Voluntary Youth Organisations 1993–1996
0 11 350089 0   £5.50

Standards in Public Examinations 1975 to 1995: A report on English, mathematics and chemistry examinations over time
(Available from SCAA Publications. Tel: 0171 243 9419 £3.00 ref: KS4/96/639)

Characteristics of Good Practice in Food Technology KS 1–4 (joint OFSTED/DfEE)
0 11 270951 6   £10.95

Effective Sixth Forms
011 3500777   £6.50

Promoting High Achievement – for pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools
011 3500769   £4.50

Survey of Careers Education and Guidance in Schools
011 3500742   £3.95

Unpriced publications

Corporate Plan 1996/7 – 1998/9	HM 100
Publications Catalogue 1993–95	HMI 087
Consultation on arrangements for the inspection of maintained schools from September 1997	HMI 003K
Outcome of Consultation on New Cycle	HMI 099
LEA support for school improvement: proposals for consultation	HMI 103
Framework for the Assessment of Quality & Standards in Initial Teacher Training	HMI 101
Inspecting Pupil Referral Units: Guidance which supplements the Framework and Handbooks	HMI 102
Code of Practice for Reporting on Particularly Good or Poor Teaching	HMI 018
Registered Inspector's Report Form	HMI 023
Guidance Notes on the Code of Practice	HMI 020
Making the Most of Inspection: A guide to inspection for schools and governors	HMI 088
School Inspections: A guide for parents	HMI 089
School Action Plans: Planning for improvement	HMI 077
The Teaching of Reading in 45 Inner London Primary Schools	HMR 27/96/DS
A Review of Vocational GCSE Courses	HMR 79/96/NS
Raising Achievement of Bilingual Pupils 1995–96	HMR 26/96/NS

The Appraisal of Teachers 1991–95	HMR 18/96/NS
Schools in the Manningham Area of Bradford	HMR 88/96/DS
The Education of Travelling Children	HMR 12/96/NS
Business Education and Economics	HMR 65/95/NS
Adult Education and Youth Work within Local Education Authorities: A Review of the Year 1994/95	HMI 082
The Adult Community College, Colchester	HMR 4/96/FE
Greenwich Community College	HMR 37/96/DS
The Adult College, Lancaster	HMR 47/95/FE
Youth Work in Rotherham	HMR 63/95/DS
Setting targets to raise standards: a survey of good practice (joint OFSTED/DfEE)	Ref: 0855 22486X
Aspects of Youth Work in Southwark	HMR 53/95/DS
Partnership – schools and higher education in partnership in secondary initial teacher training	HMI 063

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Reports on individual state-funded schools are available from the schools themselves or on the Internet. The address for the OFSTED website is:

http://www.open.gov.uk/ofsted/ofsted.htm

ISBN 0-10-266997-X

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