



Office for Standards
in Education

INSPECTION OF
SALFORD
LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY

Lead Inspector Heather Richardson HMI

2003

Context of the inspection

This inspection of Salford local education authority (LEA) was carried out by Ofsted in conjunction with the Audit Commission under section 38 of the Education Act 1997.

This report provides a commentary on the inspection findings, including:

- the progress the LEA has made since the time of its previous inspection in 2000;
- the overall effectiveness of the LEA and its capacity to improve further;
- the LEA's performance in major aspects of its work; and
- recommendations on areas for improvement.

The commentary is followed by more detailed judgements on the LEA's performance of its individual functions which sets the recommendations for improvement into context.

All functions of the LEA have been inspected and judgements reached on how effectively they are performed. Not all functions were subject to detailed fieldwork, but in all cases inspectors reached their judgements through an evaluation of a range of material. This included self-evaluation undertaken by the LEA, data (some of which was provided by the LEA), school inspection information, HMI monitoring reports, and audit reports. In addition, the inspection team considered the earlier Ofsted/Audit Commission report on this LEA and a questionnaire seeking the views of all schools on aspects of the work of the LEA. In those areas subject to fieldwork, discussions were held with LEA officers and members, headteachers and governors, staff in other departments of the local authority, diocesan representatives, and other agencies and LEA partners.

Inspection judgements are made against criteria that can be found on the Ofsted website. For each inspected function of the LEA an inspection team agrees a numerical grade. The numerical grades awarded for the judgements made in this inspection are to be found in Appendix A. These numerical grades must be considered in the light of the full report. Some of the grades are used in the Comprehensive Performance Assessment profile for the education service.

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Commentary

Salford is a city of contrasts. It remains overall one of the most deprived areas of the country, although there are pockets of relative affluence. The council's focus on regeneration has resulted in substantial redevelopment, including Salford Quays. The population has fallen by 4.5% since the previous inspection.

The performance of Salford schools is generally in line with that found in similar authorities.¹ Aspects of attainment are below the national average at all key stages, particularly in secondary schools where this is most marked at the higher levels of attainment. With the exception of mathematics at Key Stage 3, the gap between the level of attainment found nationally and that in Salford schools had widened, but unvalidated data for 2003 shows a rise in levels of attainment in Salford schools. The LEA's 2002 targets were ambitious and not met; many targets for 2004 are unrealistic given current levels of attainment.

There have been major changes within both the council and the directorate of education and leisure since the previous inspection. The council now has a cabinet style administration and one cabinet member acts as the lead member for education. The current senior management team of the directorate of education and leisure is, with one exception, entirely different from the team that was itself new at the time of the previous inspection. In the time following that inspection, turbulence in the senior management team was accompanied by a breakdown in relationships with schools and the momentum for improvement was constrained. Since March 2002, under the leadership of the current director, the LEA has restructured, secured new senior appointments, re-established priorities and substantially restored relationships with schools.

At the time of the previous inspection in 2000, the LEA was highly satisfactory. It is now satisfactory. Despite substantial progress since the appointment of the new director of education and leisure, the overall progress that the LEA has made since the previous inspection is unsatisfactory. However, given that the LEA now has stable and competent management and improved structures, its capacity for further improvement is highly satisfactory; at the time of the inspection, evidence of sustained impact had not yet been fully demonstrated for capacity to be good. The LEA has a sound knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses, as demonstrated by the close correlation between the self-evaluation produced for this inspection and the inspection findings.

A number of significant factors account for the current performance of the LEA and the variable progress it has made since the last inspection:

- the new director of education and leisure has provided strong and sensitive leadership;
- the commitment of the director and her team to raising standards and improving the quality of provision for children and young people in Salford is recognised by elected members, schools and other partners;
- there is a coherent corporate vision for education in the context of the regeneration of the city;
- there is greater transparency in the workings of the LEA;

¹ Salford's statistical neighbours are: Kingston upon Hull, Coventry, Halton, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Oldham, Rochdale, Sandwell, South Tyneside, and Sunderland.

- good strategic partnerships have developed, both cross-directorate and with external partners, with an increasing number of successful operational partnerships;
- priorities in the community and corporate plans are reflected consistently in directorate and service plans; and
- the LEA has refined many of its structures and procedures to improve the efficiency and monitoring of its services.

However:

- planned outcomes, most notably in relation to higher standards of attainment, have not yet been achieved;
- some partnerships within the directorate lack the coherence to deliver services effectively;
- performance management is inconsistent and, in some areas, lacks rigour;
- insufficient use is made of data to inform analyses;
- evaluation is under-developed; and
- despite rapid progress during the last 18 months, there is still some legacy of the turbulence in the LEA. Lapsed progress on some activities has not been fully recovered and many initiatives are still new, aspirational or untested.

Main findings

Corporate leadership of education

- Education is a high priority for elected members, demonstrated in funding which has been consistently above the education Standard Spending Assessment (SSA).
- The targeting of funding to priorities has improved since the previous inspection.
- The LEA's recovery from the period of turbulence has resulted from decisive action by elected members, working with the chief executive, to secure the right appointments and tighten monitoring procedures.
- Elected members and officers do not shy away from taking difficult decisions that are in the interests of the whole of the city.
- The evaluation of performance, policy and planning in some instances lacks sufficient rigour to inform subsequent decisions.
- As yet, there is insufficient sustained impact on performance.

Strategy for education

- The LEA's strategy for school improvement links appropriately with corporate plans and priorities.
- The effectiveness of the implementation of plans is varied but the LEA has taken steps to improve the quality of provision, with some success.
- The LEA's use of data has improved, including the way data are used to focus resources on need. However, it is not yet sufficiently sophisticated in tracking pupils' attainment and in securing effective service improvement planning.
- There has been some highly satisfactory work with schools in special measures and with serious weaknesses, which is well regarded by headteachers and governors.
- There are some good examples of joint initiatives, but integrated service delivery within the education and leisure directorate is at an early stage overall.
- Support for schools in raising the attainment of minority ethnic and Traveller pupils is unsatisfactory.

Support to improve education in schools

- The LEA provides satisfactory support to schools for improving the education they offer.
- Decisive action has resulted in significant changes in both the organisation of services and the personnel involved, and this is beginning to have a positive impact on schools.
- Much depends on the LEA's ability to recruit and retain suitable staff for the new posts in its school improvement service. This is crucial for secondary schools, where the support is unsatisfactory.
- Support for the major national strategies, such as literacy and numeracy, has at least been sustained at the levels found at the time of the last inspection. This support benefits from competent staff who are highly regarded by schools.
- The LEA has long placed considerable emphasis on developing schools' self-evaluation skills. However, limitations in the information given to governors, and in the development of their expertise, are weakening the impact of this work.
- There is an appropriate emphasis on self-managing schools, although some work is still to be done to help schools to become effective purchasers of services.

Special educational needs

- The quality of the LEA's support for special educational needs (SEN) is varied.
- There has been a marked improvement in the vision and strategy for inclusion which incorporates special educational needs. The strategy is now highly satisfactory.
- Some procedures are not yet fully established and therefore aspects of the LEA's support for SEN are unsatisfactory.
- Despite many improvements, statutory obligations are not fully met.
- The LEA does not yet systematically monitor spending or measure outcomes sufficiently well to determine value for money.

Social inclusion

- There have been some significant improvements in the LEA's support for social inclusion, but some weaknesses remain.
- A clear policy and strategic framework have been established, and there is now strong collaboration with other council services and with other agencies.
- Good leadership and the recent restructuring of services have led to greater coherence in the planning and the delivery of support for inclusion.
- The LEA has had some success in closing the gaps in attainment and improving the educational opportunities of several groups of children and young people most at risk of exclusion, such as children who are looked after by the council.
- The performance and progress of all groups of vulnerable children are not adequately monitored.
- Support for behaviour in schools and the LEA's effectiveness in combating racism are unsatisfactory.

Recommendations

This report makes a number of fundamental recommendations that are key to the further progress of the LEA. Work should begin on these immediately. The first two recommendations relate to several aspects of the work of the LEA. The recommendations are:

In order to improve the quality of performance management:

- ensure that all service plans and action plans, including the Education Development Plan (EDP), contain specific targets and milestones and, where possible, that they are costed; and
- ensure that officers at all levels monitor progress regularly, make incisive evaluations of progress in the areas of work for which they are responsible and take prompt action to address any slippage.

In order to raise achievement and improve the rigour of monitoring and evaluation in the LEA and schools:

- improve the use of data to ensure that:
 - the detail and analysis of data are sufficiently robust to enable groups of pupils to be identified and their progress monitored;
 - rigorous analysis of data is used to challenge schools, assess service performance and inform policy and planning; and
 - elected members, officers, teachers and governors are skilled in the use of data as required.

In order to ensure that the LEA's strategy for education has a greater impact on the achievements of children and young people:

- extend integrated service delivery.

In order to improve the effectiveness of provision for special educational needs:

- in conjunction with relevant agencies, ensure that statutory requirements for the completion of statements are met; and
- ensure a rigorous monitoring system for schools' expenditure on SEN and that pupils' progress is established and its outcomes are evaluated.

In order to improve support for raising the achievement of minority ethnic pupils:

- ensure that the work of the Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service (EMTAS) is consistent with that of the school improvement service and is focused on developing schools' own capacity to bring about improvement; and
- ensure that the work of the Traveller Education Service is better focused on raising the achievement of Traveller children.

In order to improve support for child protection:

- establish clear procedures for ensuring that all designated teachers receive training and that accurate and up-to-date records of training for child protection are kept.

In order to improve the targeting of the LEA's activities to combat racism:

- monitor the returns from schools on racist incidents and evaluate the effectiveness of the revised procedures.

In order to improve provision for pupils who have no school place:

- revise arrangements for accessing alternative placements to ensure that all excluded pupils receive full-time alternative provision from the fifteenth day following exclusion.

In order to support schools further in the management of pupils' behaviour:

- ensure that the new draft behaviour strategy takes full account of all other related initiatives and strategies and is implemented rapidly;
- ensure that all schools are consulted on the development of guidance on managing behaviour, and on effective approaches to supporting behaviour; and
- improve the targeting of support on areas of greatest need.

In order to improve the effectiveness of governing bodies:

- ensure that the recommendation from the previous report is fully met, and provide the necessary training, information and support to governing bodies to enable them to undertake fully their role in school improvement.

In order to improve the allocation of resources to priorities:

- provide medium-term indicative budgets for all schools, taking into account the projected changes in pupil numbers.

The report also makes the following recommendations:

In order to improve the quality and effect of the monitoring, intervention, challenge and support provided to schools:

- include discussions about the achievement of attendance targets as a routine element of the school improvement service's annual target-setting visit to schools.

In order to improve the recruitment and retention of teachers:

- build the current activities into a coherent strategy that supports both recruitment and retention.

In order to improve support for 14-19 education:

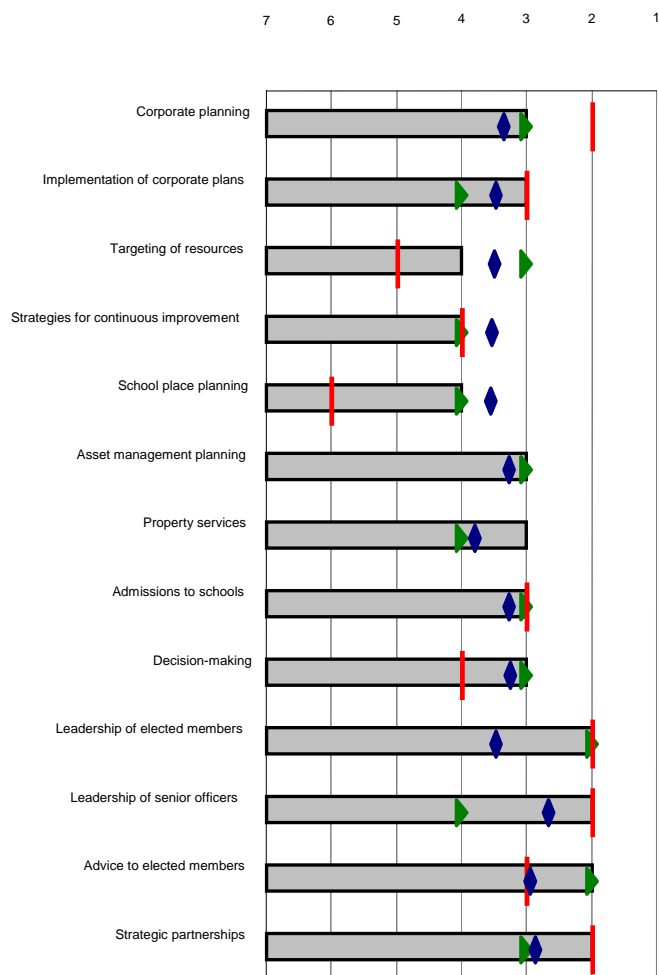
- improve joint planning and the co-ordination of partnership working between the Connexions service and the youth service.

In order to improve the quality of grounds maintenance:

- work with schools and partners to improve the clarity of service specifications and service level agreements, and to develop quality assurance procedures.

Section 1

Corporate leadership of education



The bar represents the grade awarded to the LEA, the triangle represents the LEA's self-evaluation grade, the vertical line represents the LEA's previous grade and the diamond represents the average grade of all LEAs inspected in the last year. 1 = Very Good, 2 = Good, 3 = Highly Satisfactory, 4 = Satisfactory, 5 = Unsatisfactory, 6 = Poor, 7 = Very Poor.

Summary

1.1. The council has clear priorities and a well-articulated understanding of the relationship between school improvement, social inclusion and regeneration. This understanding underpins its vision for the city and the drive for improvement. There is a broad consensus with partners that the strategic priorities are the right ones for Salford, and these priorities are reflected at all levels of planning. The targeting of resources to priorities has improved since the previous inspection, with more funding delegated to schools. Education is now a key contributor to the delivery of the council's community strategy and to promoting social inclusion.

1.2. Elected members provide good leadership for education. Their commitment is evident in the first of their pledges, 'better education for all', as well as in the sustained levels of

funding for the education service. Procedures, notably the scrutiny of decisions and monitoring of progress, have improved. However, the evaluation of performance, policy and planning in some instances lacks sufficient rigour to inform subsequent decisions.

1.3. Salford recognises that it has much to do to improve. The LEA has made significant progress in the last 18 months under the strong and sensitive leadership of the new director of education and leisure and the re-established senior management team. However, the progress it has made since the previous inspection, including its response to the recommendations from that inspection, has been variable and often too slow, and is thus unsatisfactory overall. This is, to a large extent, the consequence of events within the LEA following the previous inspection. Instability and lack of capacity within the senior management team of the directorate of education and leisure contributed to a loss of confidence in the LEA by its schools. The lack of progress has also been exacerbated by inconsistency in the quality of plans which hindered effective performance management. Despite this, the LEA has tackled some issues, including surplus secondary school places, with vigour.

1.4. Leadership by senior officers is good. Priorities have been established clearly and activity has been accelerated to fulfil action plans. Structures and personnel to secure further improvement are largely in place. The LEA has been proactive and largely successful in restoring and developing relationships with its schools and with other partners. This has resulted in good capacity for further improvement.

1.5. There is a strong culture of partnership working, both across the directorates and with external agencies. The directorate of education and leisure is now seen, and sees itself, as an effective contributor to the corporate agenda. The corporate commitment to multi-agency approaches to delivering objectives is reflected in strong strategic partnerships and, increasingly, in effective operational work. This is exemplified by the work of the children's services planning forum that is bringing greater coherence to services for children.

1.6. The LEA has a sound knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses. There is a close correlation between the findings of this inspection and its self-evaluation.

1.7. Corporate planning for education and its implementation

- At the time of the last inspection the clarity and consistency of corporate plans was good. They are now highly satisfactory, and reflect more exacting standards of planning. The implementation of plans remains highly satisfactory.
- The council's priorities, over which there is clear consensus with partners, reflect the needs of the area and are themselves reflected consistently in corporate plans. There is an overt commitment to ensuring the council's priorities are seen to be relevant by the citizens of Salford. This is demonstrated most clearly in the council's six pledges and illustrated in the steps taken to make the plans accessible to a wide audience.
- Education is a high priority and is central to fulfilling the council's vision 'to create a city in which people choose to live and work'. The priority is expressed principally in the community plan theme 'a learning and creative city' and in the first of the city council's pledges 'better education for all'. It is also echoed, albeit with varying precision, in those themes and priorities which address social inclusion.
- The council and its officers have responded appropriately to external criticism of their plans. Plans are well sequenced and linked with the financial planning cycle. The LEA has recently developed a common planning framework. This framework has the capacity

to improve consistency of practice between services, including the regular reviews of performance, but it is not yet fully tested. Cross-cutting objectives are supported effectively by working structures at directorate level.

- Elected members and senior officers recognised the need to strengthen both formal monitoring procedures and the level of contact with schools. The LEA has tightened its procedures for monitoring plans and the lines of responsibility and accountability are now clear.

Area for improvement

- *The reporting of some activities focuses too much on actions undertaken rather than on outcomes secured. Evaluation of activities does not sufficiently identify what is working and why, and thus does too little to inform future planning. Monitoring and evaluation are currently impeded by the lack of precision in some success criteria in plans.*

1.8. Leadership by elected members and the advice given to them

- Elected members continue to provide good leadership of education in Salford. The quality of advice given to elected members was highly satisfactory at the time of the last inspection. It is now good.
- The council's long-term record of securing and allocating resources to education demonstrates members' commitment to education. There is now a greater emphasis on what the funding is achieving, but procedures are not yet sufficiently robust for secure value for money judgements to be made consistently.
- Elected members from all political parties have a clear understanding of education as the key to the regeneration of the city and to achieving social inclusion. This represents a marked development from an earlier emphasis on regeneration through employment opportunities towards a more holistic approach to regeneration. Members recognise, for example, how extended schools can contribute to promoting social inclusion within their communities.
- A clear lead is provided by both the leader of the council and the lead member for education. They demonstrate a secure understanding of the key issues relating to education in Salford. Their expertise is recognised by other members and by officers.
- Good structures are in place to ensure that elected members receive timely and clear information. Written reports identify the rationale for, and the implications of, a course of action. The flow of information has improved under the current director and includes regular briefings and opportunities for all members to question officers.
- There has been a clear focus by members on improving the effectiveness of their working practices. They have, for example, taken steps to improve the rigour of scrutiny through addressing procedures and members' training, including good use of expert and beneficial advice from other LEAs.
- These improvements reflect elected members' and officers' commitment to transparency and clarity in ensuring that the directorate functions well and the LEA retains the confidence of schools.

1.9. Leadership by senior officers

- The leadership by senior officers was good at the time of the previous inspection and remains so. There is good capacity for further improvement because the new senior

management team is now fully staffed, is clearly committed to tackling the substantial agenda and can already demonstrate significant progress.

- The LEA has experienced some instability since the last inspection, including an almost total replacement of the senior management team of the directorate of education and leisure. This instability contributed to a lack of sufficient progress on priorities and was accompanied and exacerbated by a loss of confidence in the LEA by its schools. The full complement of the senior management team has only recently been achieved.
- The LEA is now seen by partners, including its schools, as back on course and making significant progress. The legacy of the past means that schools remain cautious as to whether the LEA will be able to fulfil all its commitments, but partnership and trust between schools and the LEA have improved. There is a strong consensus among schools and other partners that the right priorities are being tackled, that key and often difficult decisions are being taken and, especially, that there is now a transparency in the way the LEA works.
- This confidence in the LEA is attributable primarily to the work and integrity of the current director who, with her senior management team, has made substantial progress in building relationships with schools and other partners in the 18 months since her appointment. The responsibilities of the deputy and assistant directors have been reviewed to ensure their alignment with corporate objectives. Activity on established priorities such as special educational needs has been accelerated, and consensus built on emerging priorities. The director has secured the trust of schools, elected members and partners who recognise her strong commitment, and that of the senior management team, to working with them for the benefit of the children and young people of Salford.
- The senior management team has a secure understanding of where strengths and weaknesses lie. The self-evaluation for this inspection drew carefully on an appropriate range of evidence and used the criteria for judgements self-critically. The inspection findings broadly correlate with the LEA's self-evaluation.
- The chief executive's sound understanding of key educational issues and of the relationship between school improvement, social inclusion and regeneration results in good support and challenge to the directorate of education and leisure. Performance management is improving and is complemented by a range of mechanisms for gathering information, including appropriate contacts with schools.

1.10. Targeting of resources

- The allocation of resources to priorities was unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection. Progress since then has been sound. This aspect is now satisfactory.
- In recent years, the council has funded the education service at a level between three and five percentage points above the authority's Standard Spending Assessment. This is consistent with its commitment to education, made explicit in the council's pledge of 'better education for all'. For 2003-2004, the council has increased the schools' budget in line with the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) benchmark figure.
- Centrally-retained budgets are well monitored and effectively controlled. The council has limited premature retirement costs, which contribute significantly to the above-average strategic management budget.
- The last inspection recommended that the LEA should, in consultation with schools, increase the level of delegation of resources. Progress in this aspect has been satisfactory; in 2002/03, the LEA delegated 87% of available funding, a rate equal to the average in similar authorities. The local schools budget in 2002/03 was a little higher than in similar authorities for primary schools and significantly so for secondary schools. Nevertheless,

the individual schools budgets for primary and secondary schools remained marginally below those in similar authorities, mainly because of the high level of delegation of resources to special schools.

- There have been improvements in the formula by which resources are distributed to schools. The significant reduction in the small schools protection factor, and the increase this year in the proportion of SEN funding delegated to schools, are decisions that have the potential to improve efficiency in the use of resources.
- Following a period during which consultation with schools was inadequate and improvements were slow to take effect, headteachers are now better informed about and involved in decisions relating to the distribution of the schools' budget. The Schools' Forum has made a positive contribution to the transparency of the process.
- The authority is making good use of the increased capital funding available to it to improve the quality of school buildings. Schools are well supported in bidding for external grants, and there is good co-ordination of additional funding to ensure priorities are targeted.

Areas for improvement

- *Despite improvements, the formula for distributing resources to schools remains over-complex.*
- *The council is beginning to develop a medium-term financial strategy. However, the process has not yet yielded indicative budgets for the education service or routinely for individual schools. This fact, together with rapidly falling school rolls, has contributed to the above average proportion of schools that have deficit budgets.*

Recommendation:

In order to improve the allocation of resources to priorities:

- provide medium-term indicative budgets for all schools, taking into account the projected changes in pupil numbers.

1.11. Strategies to promote continuous improvement, including Best Value

- The LEA's strategies to promote continuous improvement were satisfactory at the time of the last inspection and remain so. There has been sound progress since the last inspection, particularly with regard to improving performance management. There are promising signs, but many developments are too new to have made a full impact to date. Nevertheless, they contribute to the judgement that the authority has a highly satisfactory capacity for further improvement.
- The authority's external auditor has judged that the Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP) for 2002/03 fully meets statutory requirements. As well as reviewing past performance, the BVPP and its successor for 2003/04 both provide a useful overview of the council's planned activity for the year ahead in relation to each of its six pledges, and set out the council's contribution to the community plan for Salford.
- Improved performance management and increased stability in staffing are beginning to produce benefits. Clear corporate guidance is resulting in greater consistency in the quality of operational service plans and better linkage between these plans and the strategic plans at corporate and directorate levels.

- The most recent BVPP reports improvement against almost two-thirds of the relevant indicators. This is in marked contrast to the previous plan, which reported deteriorating performance against over half the indicators. The latest BVPP also reports a slight increase in the proportion of indicators in which targets were met. Unvalidated data on school performance in 2003 indicate some improvement, but most results have yet to narrow significantly the gap between the LEA's performance and national averages.
- The council's progress towards its targets is monitored regularly and thoroughly by senior officers and elected members. The scrutiny committee receives detailed quarterly reports showing the latest performance outcomes and comparisons with similar authorities.
- Weaknesses in performance management and a lack of adequate management information have contributed to the slow completion of some Best Value reviews conducted within the directorate. Nevertheless, the process has already led to benefits through the restructuring of the school improvement service. The review of services to schools has also yielded some improvement, and the setting up of a brokerage in partnership with seven other local authorities and a partner from the private sector offers further potential benefits.
- The authority has learned from the advice received from various external sources. Future Best Value reviews will benefit from the revised corporate guidance about the scoping and conduct of reviews and from improvements in the quality and quantity of management information available to officers.

Area for improvement

- *Although the quality of planning has improved, there remains some inconsistency in the extent to which service plans are costed and include specific, measurable targets and success criteria. This limits the effectiveness of the monitoring of progress and the evaluation of the impact of service plans.*

Recommendations:

In order to improve the quality of performance management:

- ensure that all service plans and action plans, including the Education Development Plan, contain specific targets and milestones and, where possible, that they are costed; and
- ensure that officers at all levels monitor progress regularly, make incisive evaluations of progress in the areas of work for which they are responsible and take prompt action to address any slippage.

In order to raise achievement and improve the rigour of monitoring and evaluation in the LEA and schools:

- improve the use of data to ensure that:
 - the detail and analysis of data are sufficiently robust to enable groups of pupils to be identified and their progress monitored;
 - rigorous analysis of data is used to challenge schools, assess service performance and inform policy and planning; and
 - elected members, officers, teachers and governors are skilled in the use of data as required.

1.12. Strategic partnerships

- The LEA's effectiveness in collaborating with council departments and other agencies was good at the time of the last inspection. It continues to be so. The LEA's contribution to strategic partnerships in the intervening period has not always been effective. However, improvements have been made since the appointment of the new director of education and leisure and, overall, the LEA has made highly satisfactory progress. The LEA has good capacity to improve further.
- There is now a strong culture of partnership working across directorates and with major external partners, and a clear corporate commitment to multi-agency, cross-cutting approaches to delivering strategic priorities, for example in the development of more integrated children's services and the city's own Children's Trust.
- There are shared priorities for education across strategic and operational partnerships. These are clearly articulated, and actively addressed through the delivery of specific corporate themes, including those which address issues of social inclusion.
- The education and leisure directorate has very good relationships with the police, social services and health at the level of strategic planning. A clear and coherent approach brings together operational partnerships through the children's services planning forum and the development of a council-wide strategy for sharing information on children and young people.
- Members of the directorate senior management team are deployed appropriately to work with multi-agency partnerships and to represent education on key cross-cutting corporate themes. Heads of major services are clear on their responsibilities for cross-cutting initiatives and service planning is being tightened to ensure a clearer focus on the delivery of key priorities.
- Local and school-level partnership work has had a significant impact on pupils' achievements where this has been most needed. Examples include the co-location of staff and joint commissioning with social services in the provision of special support units for children with special educational needs and behaviour problems, and joint initiatives with health and the primary care trust in schools. The LEA's effective partnership with the local Learning and Skills Council, has contributed to much needed improvements in post-16 participation rates and provision for pupils aged 14-19.

Area for improvement

- *The LEA has sound partnership arrangements with the dioceses through regular joint meetings. Nevertheless, these meetings do not have sufficient focus on strategic consideration of proposed developments to enable the dioceses to contribute fully to the LEA's school improvement agenda.*

1.13. School place planning

- The LEA's effectiveness in this aspect of its work was poor at the time of the last inspection. Although there is more to be done, there has been satisfactory progress in reducing surplus places since then, and the LEA's work is now satisfactory. The increased corporate ownership of the need for change indicates that the capacity for further improvement is good.
- The latest available comparative data show that about 15% of places in both primary and secondary phases are surplus. Though significantly higher than in similar authorities, this represents a marked improvement since the last inspection, particularly in secondary

schools. Only two secondary schools now have more than a quarter of their places empty, but over one fifth of primary schools remain in this position.

- The reorganisation of secondary schools has been vigorous. There are three fewer schools than formerly, and by September 2003 secondary surplus places had fallen to 11%. Further firm plans to replace and refurbish schools will both reduce capacity and improve conditions in others.
- The cabinet has recently approved a thorough review of primary school provision. Appropriately, the council has taken corporate ownership of the process to ensure that decisions take full account of the rapid changes emerging from the city's regeneration agenda, and the potential for the community use of school buildings.
- Proposals for primary schools include a closure and some amalgamations. More generally, however, the LEA plans to work with governors to pool capital assets in order to reduce the capacity of individual schools while simultaneously improving the quality of the remaining buildings. The proposals represent effective co-ordination of capital resources.
- The LEA projects that surplus capacity in both secondary and primary schools will fall to below 11% by 2004. However, pupil numbers are projected to continue to decline, so that surplus places are likely to rise again after 2004. While the accuracy of forecasts for the LEA as a whole and for areas within the city has improved to a satisfactory level, officers recognise that forecasts for individual schools can be subject to a higher margin of error. The school organisation plan rightly specifies appropriate thresholds to trigger the further review of individual schools should numbers on roll decline significantly.
- The level of surplus places in Roman Catholic voluntary aided schools is higher than in community and voluntary controlled schools. Roman Catholic schools were not included within the scope of the primary review. However, the level of partnership between the diocese and the LEA has improved significantly. The diocese is understandably committed to maintaining a presence in some of the most deprived areas of the city, but nevertheless has firm plans to reduce capacity in the primary sector.

Area for improvement

- *Schools are critical of the LEA's planning of school places. In the secondary sector, the relocation of pupils into temporary accommodation pending new building has caused some disruption to teachers and pupils. In the primary sector, the LEA has not fully succeeded in communicating effectively its main aims of increasing schools' viability and stability, and improving their facilities in order to raise standards.*

1.14. Asset management planning

- The previous inspection report recommended that the LEA should increase the level of investment in the maintenance of school buildings and agree the priorities for investment with schools. The LEA has made good progress in relation to these recommendations. The quality of asset management planning is now highly satisfactory.
- The LEA is making good use of the increased level of capital funding available to it in recent years. It has benefited from increases both in formula allocation and in funding allocated as a result of competitive bids. In addition, the LEA is making increasing use of alternative sources of procurement such as the Private Finance Initiative. Credits to the value of about £64 million have now been approved for the renewal of three special schools and three high schools.
- There has been good progress in reducing the maintenance backlog in school buildings. The need to invest in high priority work has reduced by about a third over the last three

years. However, much remains to be done; at almost £1300 per pupil, the backlog remains higher than in most authorities.

- The current asset management plan has been favourably assessed by the DfES. Though not yet available in electronic form, the authority has up-to-date and accurate information about the condition, sufficiency and suitability of its schools.
- Schools have been involved effectively in asset management planning. The process is transparent and equitable, and schools are well informed about the LEA's priorities in terms of capital investment. They are fully aware of their own responsibilities in maintaining the authority's assets. Many schools have prepared their own asset management plans.

1.15. Property services

- The quality of property services was satisfactory at the time of the last inspection. There has been further sound progress since then and services are now highly satisfactory.
- Schools are able to access a good range of qualified technical support to advise them about building projects and maintenance work. Appropriately, this includes advice about contractual matters for those schools wishing to procure their own building services.
- The availability of good data contributes effectively to schools' ability to plan for the future and to the successful management of building projects, whether funded by schools or by the council.
- Almost all schools purchase the LEA's 'responsive repair and maintenance' service. This service provides well-regarded maintenance contracts for equipment such as heating systems, as well as prompt emergency repairs when necessary.
- There is some variability in the quality of the building work undertaken on behalf of the LEA and its schools. However, improvements in the procurement process to ensure a greater focus on quality are beginning to produce benefits.

1.16. Admissions to schools

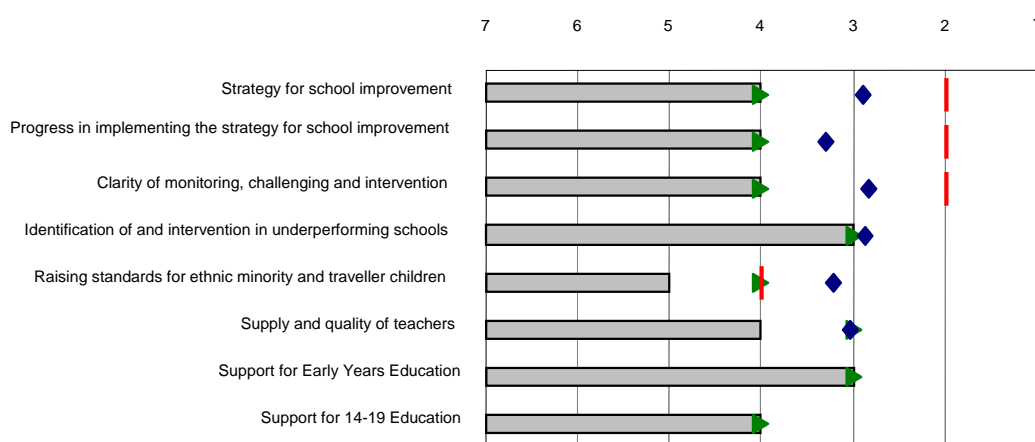
- The LEA administered the admissions process in a highly satisfactory manner at the time of the last inspection and continues to do so.
- The admissions information available to parents meets statutory requirements. Though the high number of surplus places is a contributory factor, almost 92% of parents obtain a place in the school of their choice for their children. This is a similar proportion to that achieved in other comparable LEAs.
- The appeals panel deals with cases in good time so that pupils can attend induction days at their new schools. The panel overturns a low proportion of the decisions referred to it.
- Both primary and secondary schools note a significant improvement in the LEA's work on admissions. Nevertheless, secondary schools remain more critical than schools in most other LEAs. The LEA has shown its willingness to listen and to compromise over a proposed change to the over-subscription criteria for community secondary schools.
- The LEA already administers the admissions process on behalf of three voluntary aided secondary schools as well as for community schools. It is well placed to be able to introduce a fully co-ordinated system by September 2005.

1.17. Other aspects of corporate leadership of education

- No fieldwork was carried out on **decision-making**. All the indicators and evidence examined during the inspection of related areas confirm the LEA's self-evaluation that decision-making is highly satisfactory.

Section 2

Strategy for education



The bar represents the grade awarded to the LEA, the triangle represents the LEA's self-evaluation grade, the vertical line represents the LEA's previous grade and the diamond represents the average grade of all LEAs inspected in the last year. 1 = Very Good, 2 = Good, 3 = Highly Satisfactory, 4 = Satisfactory, 5 = Unsatisfactory, 6 = Poor, 7 = Very Poor.

Summary

2.1. The LEA has a satisfactory strategic approach to education, firmly stating its objectives in one of seven themes in the Community Plan. By thus embedding its educational aspirations in the council's priorities and connecting them to its social regeneration targets, more coherent service plans and cross-directorate accountabilities are developing. Specific aims for children and young people targeted at raising attainment, improving access and widening participation in education are outlined in the EDP, the Early Years Development and Childcare Plan and a range of plans relating to the education of 14-19 year olds. These plans are suitably cross-referenced. Systems for implementing and monitoring strategic plans are also satisfactory, demonstrating that officers and members have a clear commitment to cross-agency and cross-directorate working, which is providing focus and direction for developing work and is securing satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

2.2. In the period after the previous inspection, poor relationships with schools, staffing difficulties and a lack of clear direction resulted in unsatisfactory progress in the achievement of education objectives. For example, some EDP action relating to intervention in schools causing concern was belated and ineffective, and co-ordinated action in securing the supply and quality of teachers was relatively late in being addressed. However, shortcomings have been quickly recognised by the new senior management team, and much remedial action has been incisive and well targeted. Appropriately, a key focus has been on improving the quality of the LEA's monitoring and challenge procedures, while at the same time building schools' capacity for self-improvement. Nevertheless, intervention has not been sufficient to prevent one high school from being judged as having serious weaknesses, and a further two from being deemed to be in need of special measures.

2.3. Key factors in the success of recent approaches have been the transparency and openness developed between senior education managers and headteachers. This is resulting in partnership working, within and beyond the LEA, which is founded on mutual respect and trust. Such effective work with partners is a significant feature of the developing activities

around 14-19 education and the highly satisfactory provision for early years education. More fundamentally, the unequivocal focus on the needs of children and young people in Salford, and the restructuring of services to meet these needs, provides a firm foundation for future developments.

2.4. The LEA recognises that some refinement of procedures and rethinking of approaches are necessary if targets are to be achieved and its high aspirations for its children and young people are to be met. For example, the analysis of pupil level data is not yet sufficiently sophisticated to support improvement planning or to enable the progress of specific groups of pupils, such as minority ethnic and Traveller children, to be tracked. Furthermore, the performance targets set out in the EDP and in the Community Plan are very challenging, and, in some cases, unlikely to be achieved at the current rate of progress. This is the case at Key Stage 2 where, in spite of successful work with a number of under-performing schools, overall improvement in attainment has been slow and there remains a large gap between the LEA's targets and the achievement of schools. Moreover, weaknesses are evident in the extent of joint working between teams and services within the education and leisure directorate, and school governors are not sufficiently informed to enable them to be key players in the school improvement process.

2.5. The strategy for school improvement and progress in its implementation

- The LEA's strategy for school improvement, including the EDP, and its implementation are satisfactory. Details, such as those regarding intervention and support for schools causing concern, are expanded appropriately in other related policies. At the time of the previous inspection these judgements focused on the EDP and its implementation, both of which were good. Progress since that time, in addressing the wider national agenda to improve schools and raise standards, has been satisfactory, but made more difficult by the significant turbulence in the directorate that has reduced the confidence of schools in the strategy and its implementation. However, new structures have brought stability, and the capacity for improvement is satisfactory.
- Education Development Plan activities reflect national priorities and local needs, which have been identified through a detailed audit of data and other information. Objectives are appropriately ambitious. The inter-relationship between social inclusion priorities and the achievement of performance targets is fully recognised, and actions are aligned suitably to the city's regeneration agenda, as well as to other plans and initiatives such as Excellence in Cities (EiC).
- The EDP focuses appropriately on support, challenge and building capacity in schools. Schools recognise and support the management challenge implicit in this approach. The contribution of schools to the LEA's objectives is secured through annual discussions between school improvement officers and headteachers, based on a school self-evaluation schedule that is referenced to EDP priorities.
- Unvalidated 2003 results from Key Stage 2 tests show some improvement in English and a static picture in mathematics, but targets have not been met. At Key Stage 3, significant improvements are evident in English and mathematics, with a small improvement in science. Again, targets have not been met, although the rate of progress has been significantly enhanced. General Certificate of Secondary Education performance in five A*-C attainment is slightly higher than in 2002, but falls 5.9 percentage points below the LEA's target.
- The LEA's 2004 targets are very challenging. In some instances, for example English at Key Stage 2 and science at Key Stage 3, they are unrealistic and unlikely to be achieved

at the current rate of improvement. The schools' aggregated targets are also challenging but, given the LEA's planned actions and interventions, it is likely that 2004 performance will come close to meeting these.

- There is considerable evidence that EDP actions are being implemented. Where activity is explicitly focused, performance targets identified, and deadlines indicated, the effectiveness of action is clear and suitable priorities for further improvement are established.
- Education Development Plan progress is monitored regularly by senior staff, and suitable summary reports are made to elected members.

Areas for improvement

- *Some activities, costings and success criteria in the EDP and in related action plans lack specificity, and this means that monitoring and evaluation are insufficiently rigorous.*
- *Some actions, such as those on race equality and the recruitment and retention of teaching staff, are at an early stage of development and there has been slippage in implementation.*
- *Although there are some good examples of joint initiatives, integrated service delivery within the education and leisure directorate is at an early stage overall and joint actions are not adequately identified in the school improvement programme.*

Recommendation:

In order to ensure that the LEA's strategy for education has a greater impact on the achievements of children and young people:

- extend integrated service delivery.

2.6. The LEA's monitoring, challenge and intervention in schools and the targeting of support

- The LEA's definition and implementation of monitoring, challenge and intervention in schools are satisfactory. These were good at the time of the last inspection. Progress has been unsatisfactory, but the refocusing of the work of the school improvement service that has now taken place means that capacity for improvement is highly satisfactory. The LEA's focusing of support on areas of greatest need remains highly satisfactory as at the time of the previous inspection. Progress in this area has been satisfactory, and improvements in data analysis and the use of management information mean that the capacity for further improvement is good.
- Headteachers understand the LEA's role in monitoring progress and challenging them to improve, as well as their own responsibilities and those of other stakeholders. In consultation with schools, the LEA is clarifying details of its work in this area, and aligning it more closely to work undertaken with schools causing concern.
- The quality of LEA data has improved since the last inspection. Data are used effectively by officers, alongside wider school self-evaluation information, to monitor progress and identify those schools in need of intervention and support. Criteria for intervention are clear and well understood by schools, as is the detail relating to the programme of differentiated support. The data provided for schools are comprehensive enough to be

used to provide rigorous challenge in the target-setting process by both the LEA and by school managers, although practice varies.

- The school self-evaluation materials provide a useful model for review and development and are used extensively by schools.
- The rationale behind the restructuring of the school improvement service makes a clear distinction between the core provision of the LEA and that which schools must purchase. Schools understand this distinction.

Areas for improvement

- *Governors are inadequately informed about the LEA's monitoring, challenge and intervention strategies, including the target-setting process, and they are insufficiently confident in the analysis and interpretation of data.*
- *The LEA's expertise in and use of performance data to challenge schools have been inconsistent.*
- *Targets to improve attendance are set both at the LEA and schools level and agreed with the education welfare service, but do not form part of the school improvement service's annual target-setting process with schools.*
- *There is limited evidence that the LEA is as yet using effectively all the data at its disposal and linking information on such issues as attendance and attainment.*

Recommendation:

In order to improve the quality and effect of the monitoring, intervention, challenge and support provided to schools:

- include discussions about the achievement of attendance targets as a routine element of the school improvement service's annual target-setting visit to schools.

2.7. The effectiveness of the LEA's identification of and intervention in under-performing schools.

- The LEA's identification of and intervention in under-performing schools are highly satisfactory. At the time of the last inspection this function was very good but overall progress since that time has been unsatisfactory. However, there have been recent improvements in the LEA's systems and structures and the work of school improvement officers has been rationalised and refocused. This is resulting in greater challenge, more structured monitoring and effective support and intervention; the capacity for further improvement is good.
- The LEA has no primary schools in the DfES categories of intervention, as determined by Ofsted inspections. There are no schools designated as under-achieving.
- The LEA has eight schools facing challenging circumstances. These do not all require intervention, but appropriate measures are taken where needed.
- Data are used well to identify schools on the LEA's schools causing concern list. Intervention strategies, including the use of any necessary formal powers, are speedily and efficiently implemented, and, in the last year, the great majority of schools receiving additional support have made significant progress. Where necessary, the LEA explores more radical approaches.

- Headteachers and governors of schools in categories of concern receive well co-ordinated and effective support at all stages. The progress made by these schools is tracked thoroughly and reported regularly to governors and elected members. In almost all cases, schools are removed from designated categories well within the required timescales.

Area for improvement

- *Intervention has not been sufficient or early enough to prevent two secondary schools (one, a special school for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties) from being deemed in need of special measures, and a further one being judged to have serious weaknesses.*

2.8. The supply and quality of teachers

- The LEA’s support for the supply and quality of teachers is satisfactory. This aspect was not inspected at the time of the last inspection.
- The recruitment and retention of teachers are now rightly included in the EDP priority ‘building capacity to manage improvement’, and an appropriate set of activities is outlined. This includes strengthening the LEA’s information base, and work with a range of LEAs and higher education partners to support both recruitment and retention.
- The LEA’s programme for continuous professional development is in transition as the school improvement service is restructured. Schools recognise the reasons for the interim nature of the current programme. Brokered support is now provided only on demand, but the LEA has clear plans for its development and quality assurance.
- Support for newly qualified teachers was not inspected in detail. Statistical and other indicators support the LEA’s self-evaluation that the provision is satisfactory.

Areas for improvement

- *The database of teacher vacancies is not sufficiently robust to target recruitment activity to meet longer-term needs or to inform the programme of professional development.*
- *The LEA has not yet fully articulated the relationship between recruitment and retention and translated this into a coherent strategy.*
- *Support for newly appointed headteachers is too variable, and is stronger for primary than secondary headteachers.*

Recommendation:

In order to improve the recruitment and retention of teachers:

- build the current activities into a coherent strategy that supports both recruitment and retention.

2.9. Raising the achievement of minority ethnic pupils, including Traveller children

- The LEA’s support for raising the achievement of minority ethnic pupils was satisfactory at the time of the last inspection. It is now unsatisfactory. Despite a number of improvements, key weaknesses in service planning and delivery remain.

- The LEA acted decisively to meet the increasing demands on the EMTAS, including a three-fold increase in the number of children requiring support, using a range of funding sources to increase staffing.
- Sound policies on equal opportunities, bilingualism and support for pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) have been developed. The LEA has provided satisfactory guidance to schools on supporting asylum seekers and pupils with EAL, and the work of the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service is effectively integrated with the LEA's strategies for improving literacy and numeracy. Curriculum materials and training to raise awareness of multi-cultural issues are sound, and appreciated by schools.
- Positioning the EMTAS within the School Improvement Division provides the potential for effective cross-service working and a clear focus on raising standards. However, responding to increased demand has exacerbated the pastoral and support role of services, particularly the Travellers Education Service, and reduced their intended contribution to the LEA's broader school improvement agenda.

Areas for improvement:

- *Insufficient progress has been made in addressing many of the activities in the EDP. There has been insufficient improvement in the analysis and use of performance data.*
- *The work of the EMTAS as a whole is not adequately supported by sufficient monitoring or evaluation. Although there have been improvements, data collection and analysis are still not sufficiently systematic or rigorous to ensure well-directed service planning and delivery and the evaluation of the effectiveness and value for money of the service.*
- *The LEA is now collecting data by ethnicity but, in the case of Travellers, these are not accurate, thereby masking evidence of attainment. Data analysis to support and challenge schools is weak and the LEA is not yet in a position to ascertain whether the attainment gap for some minority ethnic groups is being reduced.*
- *There is insufficient emphasis in the work of the EMTAS as a whole on developing the ability of schools to assess and support pupils themselves and, therefore, on increasing schools' capacity to raise attainment. The resources of the Traveller Education Service in particular are being misdirected by some schools to support SEN.*

Recommendations:

In order to improve support for raising the achievement of minority ethnic pupils:

- ensure that the work of EMTAS is consistent with that of the school improvement service and is focused on developing schools' own capacity to bring about improvement; and
- ensure that the work of the Traveller Education Service is better focused on raising the achievement of Traveller children.

2.10. Support for 14-19 education

- The LEA provides satisfactory support for 14-19 education. It has made satisfactory progress overall since the last inspection, and some significant progress in the last year. There are still some areas requiring improvement. Nevertheless, current strategies for further development and the impetus provided by the clear focus on 14-19 education within corporate priorities for education and the regeneration of Salford, indicate that there is good capacity for further improvement.

- There is now good liaison and support from the LEA for the range of groups established to promote the development and co-ordination of 14-19 education, including the forum established by secondary schools and the three colleges of further education, and the 14-19 participation group. The new director of education and leisure took rapid and decisive action to support these developments, for example through the secondment of a secondary headteacher to review existing provision. The LEA has subsequently appointed a new co-ordinator for 14-19 education.
- There is an effective partnership with the local Learning and Skills Council, and good liaison with external agencies and work-based trainers. This, combined with the systematic response by the Lifelong Learning Partnership in addressing the recommendations of the Ofsted area-wide inspection of 14-19 provision in 2000, has led to improvements in both the range and relevance of provision in schools and colleges.
- The Lifelong Learning Partnership has made good use of models of effective practice in other areas and has undertaken some analysis of labour force needs that are well linked to corporate priorities for regeneration, for example in improving the provision of specialist courses in construction.
- Improvements in the participation and retention rates of young people in post-16 education are well above the national average. However, participation rates are still below 70%, just over 8% below the national average. Even with the current rate of improvement, the local public service agreement target is not realistically achievable.
- The LEA has a clear focus on supporting those schools achieving less than 25% GCSE grades A*-C and on reaching the government's target of an average of 38% of pupils achieving five A*-C grades in GCSE examinations by 2004. Given the rate of improvement between 2001 and 2003, it is unlikely that these targets will be achieved.

Area for improvement:

- *The LEA made a good contribution to the strategic development of Salford Connexions, at its formative stage. Senior officers and elected members are represented on the Connexions Executive Board, but the quality of the links between some of the LEA's services and Connexions is too variable. This is particularly the case with the youth service where effective joint planning has been impeded.*

Recommendation:

In order to improve support for 14-19 education:

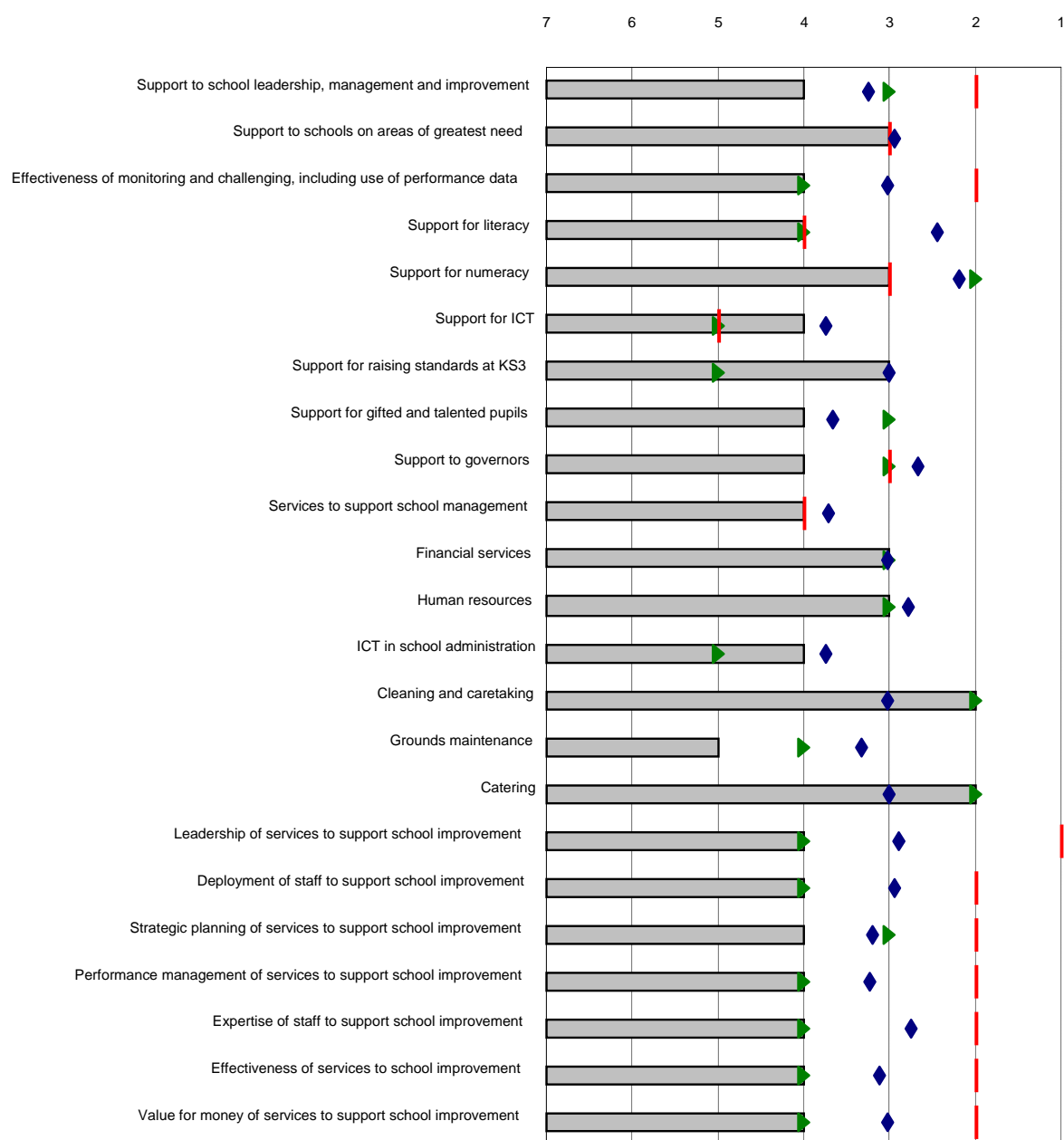
- improve joint planning and the co-ordination of partnership working between the Connexions service and the youth service.

Other aspects of the strategy for education

- The council has a long-standing commitment to **early years education**, which is reflected securely in its strategy for education and well supported by effective partnership working. This area of work and support was rated as highly satisfactory in the LEA's self-evaluation statement. No detailed inspection was carried out in this area, but on the basis of the evidence submitted to support the LEA's self-evaluation, this judgement is confirmed.

Section 3

Support to improve education in schools



The bar represents the grade awarded to the LEA, the triangle represents the LEA's self-evaluation grade, the vertical line represents the LEA's previous grade and the diamond represents the average grade of all LEAs inspected in the last year. 1 = Very Good, 2 = Good, 3 = Highly Satisfactory, 4 = Satisfactory, 5 = Unsatisfactory, 6 = Poor, 7 = Very Poor.

Summary

3.1. The LEA provides satisfactory support to schools for improving the education they offer. It has no major areas of weakness but no major strengths either. Services overall give satisfactory value for money. There has been improvement in the support for curriculum and administrative use of ICT since the last inspection, but in several other functions the standard of support has declined. This largely coincided with the period of instability in the LEA described earlier in the report. Significant changes have recently taken place in both the

organisation and staffing of services. These are beginning to have a positive impact. Services have started to improve and the confidence of schools has begun to be restored. There are clear signs that a very different and much more productive partnership is being built under the leadership of the new senior management team. The overall capacity to improve is at least satisfactory and, in several functions, it is good.

3.2. Although aspects of support for schools delivered through the LEA's school improvement service have suffered as a result of the difficulties in the LEA, the support provided for the major national strategies such as literacy and numeracy has at least been sustained at the levels found in the last inspection and has led to modest improvements. Support for the implementation of the Key Stage 3 strategy is highly regarded by schools and the 2003 unvalidated results indicate higher attainment. Support for the national strategies is also now beginning to benefit from the clearer vision and stronger management skills of the new senior management team. The individual strengths of staff in these teams, which are considerable collectively, and in some individual cases outstanding, are beginning to be used better than hitherto. The capacity for improvement is good.

3.3. The LEA has long placed considerable emphasis on developing schools' self-evaluation skills. Written guidance on this is good and suitable training has been made available. Good comparative performance data are provided to schools to aid the process, although the use of data varies. The weak link has been in providing appropriate challenge mainly, but not solely, in the secondary sector. Much will depend on the LEA's ability to recruit and retain suitable staff for the new posts in its school improvement service. Steps have already been taken to engage more effectively with headteachers and chairs of governors on the review of performance and plans.

3.4. The LEA has taken reasonable steps to ensure that schools have access to management support services that meet their needs. Only one service, grounds maintenance, is unsatisfactory and catering, cleaning and caretaking are good. The LEA is currently taking action to increase significantly the information provided to schools on alternative suppliers. Useful steps are also being taken by some of its own services to widen the choice they offer, although the LEA acknowledges that more remains to be done.

3.5. Support to school leadership and management

- Previously good support deteriorated in the years following the last inspection, and is now satisfactory overall. Support for primary schools has remained largely adequate, but that for secondary schools has key weaknesses.
- The breakdown in understanding and trust between headteachers and the LEA is now being repaired by the new director and senior staff. They have made a good start on re-establishing a relationship on which effective challenge and support for school leadership and management can be based.
- The restructuring of the school improvement service, following a Best Value review, is well designed to improve the support available to schools, and particularly secondary schools, from school improvement officers. Annual meetings held with headteachers and chairs of governors to review schools' performance and establish the range of support required to secure improvements have already been strengthened.
- Primary school advisers have retained credibility with schools. In contrast to secondary schools, management and efficiency in primary schools have improved significantly in recent years.

- Service plans do not consistently provide a secure basis for rigorous scrutiny, monitoring of progress and the evaluation of impact.
- Written materials to support schools' self-evaluation are good and the LEA has facilitated access to good training opportunities. However, it has not been able to supplement this in secondary schools with consistently effective support and appropriate challenge through the work of link advisers with individual schools.
- Notes of advisers' visits to schools are given to the headteacher, but are not consistently sent to the chair of governors.
- Support for new senior managers in schools is satisfactory, but, at secondary level, depends substantially upon self-help within the secondary headteachers' group. Support for middle managers is also satisfactory. Satisfactory steps are taken to disseminate good practice.
- Schools are provided with good data on pupils' performance and advice on its use.

Areas for improvement

- *The support to secondary schools provided by school improvement officers is unsatisfactory and the LEA is, rightly, taking steps to recruit and retain appropriate officers.*
- *The LEA has only partially responded to the recommendations within the earlier report. It is not yet consistent in providing written reports to governing bodies that clearly identify schools' main strengths and weaknesses. This, together with governors' lack of information and expertise in relation to monitoring and target setting noted earlier, militates against their leadership role in school improvement, and does not align well with the EDP priority about building capacity for self-managing schools.*

Recommendation:

In order to improve the effectiveness of governing bodies:

- ensure that the recommendation from the previous report is fully met, and provide the necessary training, information and support to governing bodies to enable them to undertake fully their role in school improvement.

3.6. The effectiveness of services to support school improvement

- The LEA's performance is satisfactory in all these aspects. Progress since the last inspection, when it was good, has been unsatisfactory. Service instability significantly contributed to this deterioration. However, in the past 18 months a good start has been made in rigorously addressing the problems that had developed. The capacity to improve is good.
- In the period after the previous inspection the deployment and expertise of staff, especially in relation to secondary schools, proved problematic, resulting in ineffective support in particular for whole school management issues. The breakdown of relationships with secondary schools was also a significant factor. The credibility of the LEA and its ability to influence schools suffered accordingly.
- The new director has given clear leadership. Relationships with schools have improved and the LEA's vision for school improvement is being reviewed and refreshed in consultation with them. The new deputy director, who has responsibility for school

improvement, has been in post for only a few weeks but has made a positive start in establishing working relationships with schools and in identifying the issues to be addressed.

- The school improvement service has been radically restructured following a Best Value review. The LEA has thus taken decisive action to address the weaknesses in the service. Much still hinges on its ability to recruit and retain staff of the required calibre to the new posts, and the LEA has taken positive steps to address pay and conditions of service issues to attract and retain appropriately qualified and experienced staff who will have credibility in schools.
- New arrangements are being introduced to strengthen the rigour of monitoring and evaluation and thus improve the performance management of individuals and services.
- Service effectiveness is variable, with relative strength in the primary sector and weakness in secondary, mainly on whole school management issues. Expenditure on inspection and advisory services is broadly average and value for money is satisfactory.

Areas for improvement

- *Planning documents do not provide a sufficiently precise basis for the effective monitoring of progress and the evaluation of impact. The link between planned activities and the delivery of strategic priorities is not always clear.*
- *The review of work plans and performance for individual members of staff is of variable breadth and quality.*

The LEA's support for the implementation of national strategies:

3.7. Support for literacy

- The LEA's support for raising standards in literacy is satisfactory, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Intervention and support have been targeted effectively at schools' needs, which have been identified from focused analyses of performance data. As a result of the restructuring of the school improvement services, the management of primary literacy is now secure and the capacity for further improvement is good.
- Standards at Level 2 and above at Key Stage 1 have improved. Unvalidated data for 2003 indicate that these are now higher than the national average. At Level 3, results in reading have fallen. The most significant improvements have been made in writing, reflecting the focus of much of the LEA's training and classroom support.
- At Key Stage 2, results at Level 4 and above fell in 2002 but have risen in 2003. Unvalidated data show that the gap between Salford's average and the national average is reducing. Level 5 performance does not match that achieved in 2002 and is below the national average. The planned foci on raising teachers' expectations, the use of ICT and the development of curricular targets are appropriate in the light of these results.
- Rates of improvement are below or well below the national average at both key stages. The LEA's and schools' aggregate targets have not been met at Key Stage 2. Progress between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 is well below average and the focus on this area is entirely appropriate.
- Strong emphases on improving teaching strategies and developing leadership and management expertise have had positive effects that are illustrated in the outcomes of Ofsted's most recent cycle of primary school inspections. Suitably flexible and creative approaches to raising standards in literacy are encouraged.

- Schools are positive about the support provided by the LEA and understand the differentiated nature of this work. The intensive support provided to specific schools has resulted in improvements in all cases, with some significant gains in a number of schools.

Areas for improvement:

- *The high quality data and information available are not sufficiently exploited to ensure that the needs of all groups of pupils, such as those who are gifted or whose attendance is poor, are adequately addressed.*
- *Joint working with family support teams and with the school improvement services such as the behaviour support team are under-developed, but some suitable improvement work is under way.*
- *Although there has been some progress in raising standards, neither the LEA's target nor the schools' aggregate target has been met.*

3.8. Support for numeracy

- Support for raising standards in numeracy is highly satisfactory, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Work with schools is suitably differentiated according to needs identified from an analysis of performance data. Improvements are evident in the outcomes of the most recent cycle of Ofsted inspections in schools. Areas for further focus and development by the LEA are identified clearly and the capacity for further improvement is good.
- Standards at Level 2 and above at Key Stage 1 have risen and unvalidated data for 2003 show that attainment is now above the national average. The proportion of pupils achieving Level 3 and above has also risen, against the national trend. Examples of the LEA's support in specific schools, particularly through the mathematics recovery programme, indicate that the targeted work has been successful.
- At Key Stage 2, Level 4 attainment in 2003, using the unvalidated data, shows a small improvement, although results are 10 percentage points below the LEA's target and eight percentage points below the schools' aggregate target. At Level 5 and above, improvements are more significant and Salford's results are now only one percentage point short of the national average. This improvement reflects the strong focus the LEA places on higher level achievement, including its commitment to the World Class Tests. Nevertheless, results are three percentage points below the LEA's target and two percentage points below the schools' aggregate target.
- The LEA monitors schools' performance carefully and useful plans are now in place to collect and collate optional test data, thus enabling greater challenge through the analysis of local comparative information.

Areas for improvement:

- *Rates of improvement are below or well below the national average at both key stages. Progress between Key Stages 2 and 3 is below average and the LEA is rightly targeting activity on the transfer between the key stages.*
- *Although the LEA has high quality data and information, these are not sufficiently exploited to help the specific targeting of more complex needs.*

3.9. Support to schools for raising standards at Key Stage 3

- The LEA's support for schools is highly satisfactory and, given the calibre of consultants, the capacity for further improvement is good.
- The Key Stage 3 strategy manager and the consultants are highly regarded in schools as outstanding classroom practitioners. Their work with teachers places heavy emphasis on developing skills and understanding, challenging assumptions, celebrating good practice, building confidence, and encouraging collaborative working. Schools acknowledge that they have had a significant impact on changing practices in schools.
- The LEA's strategy is well co-ordinated, links well with other strategies such as EiC, and is well understood by schools. Key reasons for this are the close working relationships within the team of consultants and the regular and productive meetings with secondary school co-ordinators.
- Pupils' performance at Key Stage 3 has improved in mathematics at a rate better than the national trend, but has fluctuated in English and science. Performance has remained below the national average. However, unvalidated data for 2003 shows that the gap between Salford and the national average has decreased in all three subjects.
- Performance has fallen short of the LEA's targets in recent years. The 2004 targets are unrealistic given current performance. However, performance was closer to the schools' own aggregated targets in 2003 and thus the 2004 targets for English and mathematics are challenging but achievable. The gap between performance and schools' aggregated targets in science is considerable.
- Support for assessing pupils' performance and improvement planning is good. Schools' plans are closely scrutinised by the LEA and challenged where necessary. Support is appropriately differentiated to reflect need.
- Schools are effectively supported in identifying and helping pupils likely to have difficulties when transferring to secondary school. There is good collaboration in such respects with the EiC project. Useful packages to support transition between Key Stages 2 and 3 have been developed.
- Good practice is disseminated effectively. There is extensive use of leading teachers and departments. The effective support and encouragement given by the consultants to collaborative working within schools have assisted the development of cross-curricular initiatives.

Area for improvement

- *As with other aspects of the LEA's work, planning documents do not provide a sufficiently precise basis for the effective monitoring of progress and the evaluation of impact.*

3.10. Support for raising standards in information and communication technology

- The LEA's support to schools in information and communication technology (ICT) has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. However, the LEA has not yet responded fully to the recommendation from the previous inspection that it should develop a vision and strategy for ICT and share it with schools. In addition, delays in the provision of the required infrastructure have inhibited developments in the use of ICT in the curriculum.
- The LEA's revised strategy document is in draft, and outlines a vision for the future that includes both the curricular and administrative uses of ICT. Arrangements for involving

elected members, schools and other council departments in planning and in monitoring progress have been significantly strengthened.

- The LEA's support for schools in assessing pupils' performance and in improvement planning is good. There is an appropriate emphasis on self-evaluation, but school plans are also scrutinised by the LEA and support is provided as necessary.
- The performance of Salford's schools in ICT is comparatively strong at secondary level. The proportion of schools with good or very good standards in ICT has increased significantly over recent years. The LEA's support for Key Stage 3 is particularly strong.
- Primary schools' performance has improved but remains comparatively poor by national standards. In addition to its focus on supporting the assessment of pupils' performance in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, the LEA has developed guidance and materials for the Foundation Stage. Advanced skills teachers have only recently been appointed but a key focus of their work will appropriately be on Key Stage 2, where standards are currently weakest.
- The LEA has met national targets for the provision of New Opportunities Fund training, Internet access and broadband.

Areas for improvement

- *The draft of the new strategy document and its action plans have yet to be completed and shared with key stakeholders. Strategies at the corporate and education directorate levels are also insufficiently clearly linked.*
- *The delays and difficulties in the delivery of the LEA's own plans for providing the broader infrastructure have inhibited the use of ICT in classrooms. The division of roles and responsibilities between departments of the council, associated difficulties in co-ordinating activity, and unsatisfactory performance management have played a significant part in this. Recent changes in such respects are well designed to secure improvement.*
- *The provision of technical support for schools has been fragmented and unsatisfactory in certain respects.*

3.11. Support for gifted and talented pupils

- The LEA's support to schools to help them extend the achievements of gifted and talented pupils is satisfactory. At the time of the Ofsted thematic inspection of the EiC in Salford (2001), the LEA's support for these pupils in schools involved in EiC was highly satisfactory. This continues to be the case. However, EiC involves only a small number of primary schools. The LEA has not made sufficient progress in helping all schools to identify and support pupils with particular talents in the arts and sport.
- The LEA has provided sound guidance, appropriate in-service training and, where necessary, challenge to EiC schools on the range and quality of support they provide for both gifted and talented pupils, and in the targets they set for gifted pupils. It has also provided a well-balanced range of activities to help meet the needs of these pupils. Summer schools and central and outreach programmes for talented pupils in EiC schools have been well targeted and well received. Some innovative support has been provided through the City Learning Centres for both ICT and programmes such as the master classes in English and mathematics.
- The percentage of schools where gifted and talented pupils make good progress is above statistical neighbours and the national average. The attainment of more able pupils is generally in line with statistical neighbours.

- The LEA has undertaken some analysis of the relative performance of the gifted and talented cohorts in EiC schools and, at the time of the thematic inspection, could demonstrate some significant improvements in the achievements of these pupils. Appropriate steps have been taken to challenge EiC schools to analyse performance data and to monitor the progress of pupils more effectively, but there has been little discernable development in its own comparative analysis and benchmarking of the performance of gifted and talented cohorts in schools.

Area for improvement

- *The LEA has not given priority to the identification of and support for gifted and talented pupils in all schools as part of its overarching school improvement strategy. From the good head start provided by the EiC initiative, it has now fallen behind many other LEAs in this respect. Guidance and criteria on the identification of gifted and, in particular, talented pupils have not been disseminated to all schools. Good practice is well disseminated across EiC schools and the small primary cluster, but is not systematically shared across the primary sector as a whole.*

3.12. The effectiveness of the LEA's services to support school management

- This aspect of the LEA's work was satisfactory at the time of the last inspection and remains so.
- The previous report recommended that schools should be provided with a clear definition and specification for each service, details of costs, and methods by which the service is to be monitored and evaluated. The LEA has taken several time-consuming and generally well-conceived steps to meet this recommendation, but schools have yet to become effective purchasers of traded services. The majority of schools continue to buy services from the council despite expressing limited satisfaction with the quality of some of the services that they receive.
- The directory of services to schools provides brief details in a common and helpful format about how to access a wide range of council services, both traded and centrally funded.
- All traded services now offer service level agreements to schools. The agreements span three years but may be terminated by either party with two months' notice.
- In partnership with seven neighbouring local authorities and a partner from the private sector, the LEA has led the development of a brokerage for a wide range of services to schools. It is too early to assess the impact of this initiative, but it will provide schools with information about a wider range of service providers than is available at present.
- Appropriately, the broker will provide an annual audit of service quality so that schools are able to gauge quality as well as price. The brokerage has, therefore, the capacity to raise the quality of services and to improve schools' effectiveness as the buyers of services.

Area for improvement

- *Schools are critical of the clarity of service specifications. The lack of summary information about service level agreements within the service directory is a potential inhibitor to schools' decision-making.*

3.13. Information and communication technology strategy, infrastructure and support for administration

- This function is satisfactory. In common with the LEA's support for the curriculum use of ICT, planning documents adequately outline the vision for the future, but are insufficiently precise for the close monitoring of progress and the assessment of impact. The LEA is, rightly, now approaching planning and performance monitoring for both the curricular and administrative uses of ICT as an integrated exercise. Recent improvements to the LEA's planning and performance monitoring processes, as well as an agreed increase in staffing, are beginning to prove beneficial to both elements of service. Other planned changes, particularly in revising and clarifying departmental responsibilities and ensuring wider school involvement in service planning and performance review, indicate satisfactory capacity for further improvement.
- Basic systems for electronic communication and data exchange are adequate. However, delays in delivering aspects of the infrastructure planned have frustrated schools and hindered the development of applications. There has also been a relative inability on the part of the technical support services to respond flexibly to differing needs. The LEA is responding to the latter weakness by taking steps to offer a much wider range of service choice to schools.
- Satisfactory progress has been made in developing the LEA's pupil database. Less progress has been made in integrating this with school-related information, much of which is still held in free-standing systems. The LEA makes reasonable use of its Internet site to disseminate information.

Areas for improvement

- *Project management for the delivery of infrastructure improvements has not been sufficiently rigorous to ensure timescales were kept.*
- *The development of an integrated school and pupil database has been relatively slow.*

3.14. Cleaning services

- This area was not inspected during the last inspection. The authority provides a good cleaning service to schools.
- Details of the service are set out clearly in the information provided to schools. The service has developed a comprehensive awareness of schools' needs and service level agreements are suitably flexible.
- The service uses up-to-date equipment and techniques. Staff are suitably trained to work within the parameters of the service's health and safety and risk assessment policies, and the service has achieved Investor in People status.
- Schools wishing to make alternative arrangements for cleaning have access to effective advice and client support.

3.15. Grounds maintenance services

- This area was not inspected during the last inspection. Despite some strengths, the service provided to schools is unsatisfactory because it does not adequately meet their needs. However, the LEA's involvement in the new brokerage arrangements contributes positively to its satisfactory capacity for improvement.
- The service is provided by the council's environmental services directorate and offers a wide range of technical expertise to maintain the full range of schools' outdoor sites.
- Although 80% of schools purchase the service, schools represent a very small proportion of the service provider's business. As a result, the service does not have the necessary awareness of and responsiveness to schools' needs as customers.

Areas for improvement

- *The information provided in the directory of services to schools and in the service level agreement is too technical. Misunderstandings about what is covered under the agreement contribute to delays in carrying out the work and to dissatisfaction with its quality.*
- *The service has insufficient information about the quality of its work in schools and the degree of schools' satisfaction with it.*
- *There is no client support service available to support schools wishing to make their own arrangements.*

Recommendation:

In order to improve the quality of grounds maintenance:

- work with schools and partners to improve the clarity of service specifications and service level agreements, and to develop quality assurance procedures.

3.16. Catering services

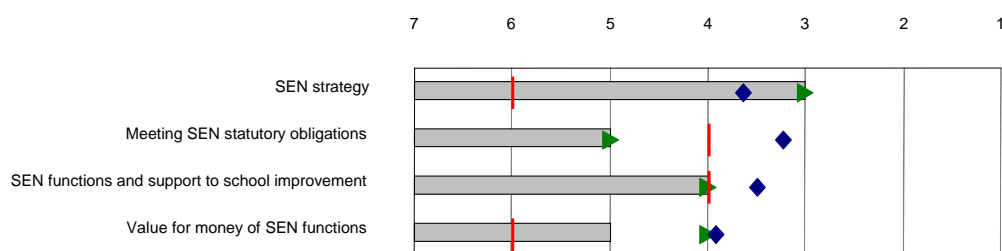
- This aspect was not inspected during the last inspection. The authority provides a good catering service to schools.
- Almost all schools in Salford use the authority's in-house catering service. They judge the service to be better than satisfactory and their views compare favourably with those of schools in most other LEAs.
- The take-up of free school meals is a little higher than average. Pupils, parents and teachers are able to express their views about the quality of meals on an innovative and well-used website.
- The service has a good level of awareness of the quality of its performance in comparison with similar services in the north-west of England. Costs compare favourably with other services that deliver similar quality.
- Monitoring arrangements are appropriate. The few schools that have chosen to make their own catering arrangements can also access the monitoring service, as well as client support and advice in procuring alternative providers.
- The service has developed useful curricular materials, including a manual to assist schools in achieving healthy schools awards.

3.17. Other aspects of support to improve education in schools

- Support for **governors** was highly satisfactory at the time of the last inspection. It is now satisfactory. No detailed inspection was carried out but, during the course of inspecting other aspects of the LEA's work, some weaknesses in the support for governors were identified, notably in the information provided to governors and the development of their expertise.
- **Financial support services** and **human resources** were not inspected previously. Evidence submitted for this inspection indicates that support is highly satisfactory. No detailed inspection was carried out.

Section 4

Special educational needs



The bar represents the grade awarded to the LEA, the triangle represents the LEA's self-evaluation grade, the vertical line represents the LEA's previous grade and the diamond represents the average grade of all LEAs inspected in the last year. 1 = Very Good, 2 = Good, 3 = Highly Satisfactory, 4 = Satisfactory, 5 = Unsatisfactory, 6 = Poor, 7 = Very Poor.

Summary

4.1. As at the time of the previous inspection, the LEA's support for special educational needs is variable and some aspects are unsatisfactory. Under-capacity at senior management level, together with some vacancies in other key appointments, have resulted in a lack of continuous progress in all aspects of the LEA's support for SEN since the previous inspection.

4.2. The council's vision and strategy for inclusion and SEN have improved significantly since the previous inspection and its strategy is now highly satisfactory. The improvement is the result of the commitment of elected members and the actions of recently appointed senior officers, who have accelerated the pace of change and secured schools' support for inclusion. Substantial progress has been made in implementing the strategy in recent months, but many measures are too recent to evaluate their impact on raising attainment.

4.3. Most aspects of the LEA's fulfilment of its statutory duties have improved, but the speed of completion of statements is a weakness and renders this function unsatisfactory overall. Value for money is also unsatisfactory because the LEA is not yet systematically monitoring the progress of pupils and schools' SEN expenditure. However, the high calibre of officers' work and the rate of progress in the last 18 months demonstrate the LEA's commitment to, and capacity for, improvement.

4.4. The effectiveness of the strategy for special educational needs

- The strategy for SEN was poor at the time of the previous inspection. The recommendations to develop a SEN and inclusion policy and a detailed long-term SEN strategy have been met. Good progress has been made over the last 18 months and the strategy for SEN is now highly satisfactory.
- The SEN and inclusion policy is clear and reflects the government's programme of action to increase the inclusion of pupils with SEN into mainstream schools.
- There has been extensive consultation on the policy and strategy for SEN, which are widely supported by schools. Detailed action plans and a range of targets accompany the strategy, but as yet these do not include targets to raise attainment levels of pupils with SEN.

- The authority's approach is to empower schools to take responsibility for all pupils with SEN. To support this approach, further delegation to schools of SEN funding for statements of SEN was undertaken in April 2003. There was good consultation and schools support the new funding arrangements.
- The SEN partnership board receives regular monitoring reports concerning the implementation of the action plan. These are communicated to elected members, who take overall responsibility for the SEN strategy. An evaluation of the strategy is being undertaken currently by the LEA.

Area for improvement

- *The targets that accompany the strategy do not yet include specific ones to raise the attainment levels of pupils with SEN.*

4.5. Statutory obligations

- At the time of the previous inspection this function was satisfactory. Despite highly satisfactory progress in many aspects of the LEA's duties, the meeting of statutory obligations is now unsatisfactory because of the low level of statements issued within 18 weeks. However, the recent improvements and good plans for the future indicate good capacity for further improvement.
- The LEA has improved its procedures for making statutory assessments. Appropriately, a new multi-agency panel has been established to oversee the process.
- Firm action has been taken to remedy the reasons for poor completion rates of statements of special educational needs. The LEA now has a full complement of staff, and officers are working with outside agencies to improve the overall rate of completion of statements within the timescale. There are early indications that the action taken has the potential to reduce significantly the time taken to complete statutory assessments.
- Statements are reviewed each year. They specify in detail how pupils' needs should be met. A lack of specificity on the level of support to be allocated has been rectified in new draft statements.
- Good parental information and guidance are provided in clear leaflets. There is a well-established parent partnership scheme which has recently been expanded.

Area for improvement

- *The rate of statements completed within 18 weeks is, as the LEA recognises, unacceptably low. Only 20% were completed within 18 weeks in 2002/03. However, when exceptions such as late advice from external agencies are excluded, 67% were completed within the timescale.*

4.6. Special educational needs support for schools

- This aspect of support remains satisfactory. Progress since the previous inspection has been satisfactory overall, but erratic. The new management team has accelerated developments during the last 18 months. The recent pace of change and secure plans for the future indicate good capacity for further improvement.
- The criteria for statutory assessment have been revised and are good. They reflect the requirements of the Code of Practice and have been widely circulated to schools. Review of the support identified in statements is developing but not yet fully in place. The

agreement between health, social services and education on the funding implications of pupils' SEN statements is good.

- There has been further delegation of SEN resources to schools and new smaller central support teams have been established. The criteria for delegation are clear and have been subject to good consultation. The new funding framework is transparent, matches pupils' needs and is understood by schools.
- There is an extensive training programme for special educational needs co-ordinators, which is highly regarded. The LEA provides reasonable support to SEN co-ordinators in developing policy and individual education plans (IEPs). All pupils entitled to have an IEP have one, although the quality of these varies. An analysis of school inspection reports indicates that the progress of pupils with SEN is highly satisfactory in primary schools. At secondary level progress is more inconsistent, especially at Key Stage 4.
- The educational psychology service has been badly affected by staffing difficulties. It is now fully staffed and has appropriate action plans. A consistent approach to planning is evident which, together with the newly restructured education inclusion service, has the potential to provide more consistent support.

Area for improvement

- *Support for raising the attainment of pupils with SEN and, notably, support for target-setting in special schools, lack coherence between services in the directorate of education and leisure.*

4.7. Value for money

- At the time of the previous inspection, value for money in relation to SEN was poor. Some progress has been made, but value for money is still unsatisfactory. The LEA has implemented the recommendations from the previous inspection to review SEN funding and to develop transparent and equitable criteria for allocating resources. However, currently there is no systematic monitoring of schools' SEN expenditure or the progress of pupils. The LEA recognises this weakness and has good plans for improvement in place. The capacity for further improvement is good.
- Monitoring of the LEA's SEN budget is good. Expenditure is carefully monitored to ensure good budget control at both service and strategic level. Criteria and moderation procedures are effective in deploying resources.
- The performance management of services to support SEN is developing well, with clear responsibilities and regular monitoring. The LEA recognises the need to ensure the impact of services on pupils' attainment is evaluated.
- Schools have been provided with clear information on the respective roles and responsibilities of the schools and the LEA.
- Salford's overall SEN spending and its special schools spending are high in comparison with similar authorities. In 2002/03 SEN-related budgets accounted for almost 21% of the LEA's expenditure on schools, compared with 16% for similar authorities. The high cost of independent special schools is partly due to the use of a local independent provider for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders. This is planned expenditure in response to increasing demand.

Area for improvement

- *The LEA recognises the need to develop its monitoring systems in relation to school expenditure on SEN and pupils' progress. While SEN developments are part of the*

school improvement officers' agenda this year, there is a need for a whole directorate approach and strategy to monitoring SEN. There are plans in the LEA to achieve this, and these need to be completed and implemented. The current lack of systematic monitoring of SEN means that the LEA cannot be sure if the SEN budget provides value for money.

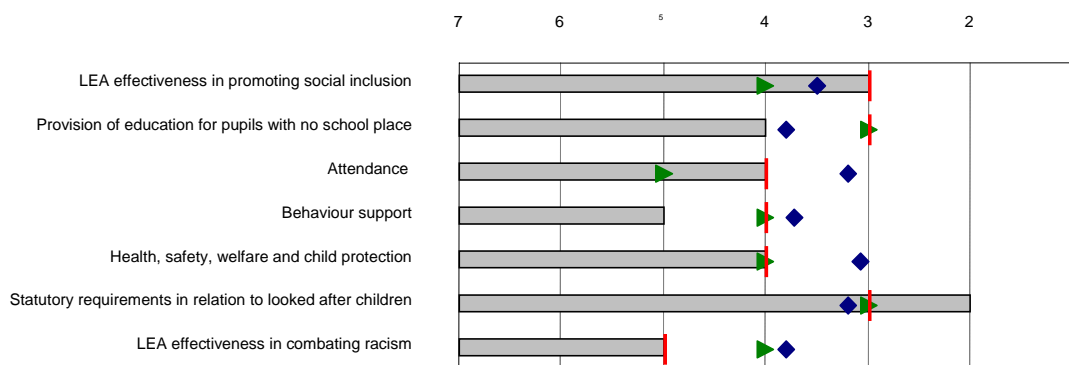
Recommendations:

In order to improve the effectiveness of provision for special educational needs:

- in conjunction with relevant agencies, ensure that statutory requirements for the completion of statements are met; and
- ensure a rigorous monitoring system for schools' expenditure on SEN and that pupils' progress is established and its outcomes are evaluated.

Section 5

Social inclusion



The bar represents the grade awarded to the LEA, the triangle represents the LEA's self-evaluation grade, the vertical line represents the LEA's previous grade and the diamond represents the average grade of all LEAs inspected in the last year. 1 = Very Good, 2 = Good, 3 = Highly Satisfactory, 4 = Satisfactory, 5 = Unsatisfactory, 6 = Poor, 7 = Very Poor.

Summary

5.1. The LEA's contribution to the promotion of social inclusion continues to be highly satisfactory. There have been some significant improvements in the council's vision and strategies for tackling under-achievement and social deprivation as part of its corporate priorities for regeneration. There is now a clear framework of policy established by elected members which reflects their high aspirations, and those of officers, for improving the quality of support to children and young people. The council has made a clear commitment to improving the educational achievements of vulnerable groups within the community and has, for example, taken the decision to support the creation of Salford's own Children's Trust to develop this work. Education now contributes effectively to the council's and other directorates' major plans and initiatives to support social inclusion.

5.2. There remain weaknesses, however, in aspects of the LEA's support to schools and to some groups of children and young people. Its support for improving behaviour in schools and for combating racism is unsatisfactory. The LEA does not adequately monitor improvements in the attainment and progress of all minority ethnic children. Despite successful efforts to make adequate provision for pupils permanently excluded from schools, the LEA does not ensure that all these pupils have access to that provision within the required time of 15 days.

5.3. Nevertheless, on balance, the LEA has made satisfactory progress overall. Planning and delivery of support for social inclusion are based on multi-agency approaches to link the work of services across the council. There is now a clear and coherent approach to rationalising operational partnerships through the children's services planning forum. The LEA has a clearer focus on closing the gap in attainment and improving the educational opportunities of most groups of more vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils. It has had some success, notably for looked after children, whose levels of attainment are improving at a faster rate than that found nationally. Ofsted inspections of schools in Salford show that the ethos in primary schools is generally good, and is improving in secondary schools. Levels of absence and exclusion from schools remain stubbornly high but are reducing; in the case of permanent exclusions, at a rate above the national average. The reduction in teenage

pregnancies is higher than the national average, with very successful reintegration of these pupils into mainstream education.

5.4. Given the developments in strategic planning, the success of a number of partnership initiatives, and recent improvements in the overall organisation of education services supporting social inclusion, the LEA's capacity to improve its contribution to promoting social inclusion is at least highly satisfactory.

5.5. The overall effectiveness of the LEA's strategy for promoting social inclusion

- The overall effectiveness of the LEA's strategy for promoting social inclusion was highly satisfactory at the time of the last inspection. The general level of quality of the functions inspected was satisfactory, with some weaknesses. This continues to be the case.
- Although some related functions have not improved sufficiently, the LEA has made satisfactory progress overall in promoting social inclusion. There have been significant improvements since the appointment of the new senior management team, including collaboration with other council services and with other agencies.
- There are active and effective partnerships at all levels with the police, social services and health through the primary care trust. There is good liaison with other key partners, for example with the local Learning and Skills Council to address the council's inclusion target of improving access to continuing education and training post-16. Planning and delivery of support for social inclusion are based on multi-agency approaches in order to link work across directorates and external agencies more effectively.
- Education now contributes well to the council's and other directorate's major plans and initiatives to support social inclusion. Additional funding is actively sought and creatively used. Joint commissioning and appointments of staff have contributed to improvements in support for child protection and for children looked after by the council, and in some specialist provision for children with severe social and behavioural problems.
- The restructuring of services within the education and leisure directorate is leading to greater coherence and integration in planning and in the delivery of support for inclusion. Satisfactory systems for monitoring the impact, effectiveness and performance management of inclusion and access services are being introduced.
- The LEA is now monitoring the achievement of most groups of pupils at risk of social exclusion and is beginning to use the data to identify areas needing improvement and additional support. Nevertheless, the performance and progress of all minority ethnic children are not adequately monitored.

5.6. Provision of education for pupils who have no school place

- Provision for pupils with no school place is satisfactory. Sufficient progress has been made in developing most aspects of provision, though a weakness remains in the provision for pupils who are permanently excluded from schools.
- The LEA has been effective in reviewing its provision. Good progress has been made in procedures for tracking individual pupils. The vulnerable children inclusion policy currently being developed has the potential to develop further the multi-agency approach to improve the education of children otherwise than at school.
- Links between the four pupil referral units and alternative providers are well developed. Pupils' progress is monitored effectively in both LEA and alternative provision. The LEA is active in working to improve attendance rates in the pupil referral units. Referral systems are effective and are supported by clear documentation and good guidance.

- The hospital school and home tuition service provide effective support and alternative provision for pupils out of school because of illness. The LEA has targeted support at reducing the high numbers of pregnant schoolgirls and teenage mothers in Salford, with very good results, and successful multi-agency approaches have led to a reduction above the national average. Ninety per cent of schoolgirl mothers are successfully reintegrated into mainstream education and all Year 11 pupils have exceeded individual attainment targets.

Areas for improvement

- *The LEA has made significant efforts to ensure that it can provide full-time alternative education for pupils who are permanently excluded from school. The provision is available, but not all pupils receive this provision by the fifteenth day after a permanent exclusion and the target for improvement is unacceptably low.*
- *The number of excluded pupils reintegrated into mainstream schools in 2002/03 (16) was low.*

Recommendation:

In order to improve provision for pupils who have no school place:

- revise arrangements for accessing alternative placements to ensure that all excluded pupils receive full-time alternative provision from the fifteenth day following exclusion.

5.7. Attendance

- Support for improving attendance is satisfactory, as is progress since the last inspection. The recommendation from that inspection to review the deployment of education welfare officers has been addressed successfully. Support to schools is allocated according to need, based on clear and appropriate criteria.
- The existing strategy to improve attendance in schools, introduced in 2002, is highly satisfactory, with relevant action plans both in the EDP and at the level of service planning. A new draft attendance strategy has been developed which outlines the responsibilities of schools more clearly. This has the potential to enhance multi-agency working to improve pupils' attendance at school.
- The LEA meets its statutory and legal responsibilities and is making increasing use of its legal powers when appropriate. Fast track prosecutions, the behaviour improvement programme, a three-fold increase in the number of truancy sweeps, and a reward scheme for good attendance have all led to a concerted emphasis on improving attendance across Salford's schools.
- Attendance in Salford's schools continues to be below that in similar authorities and well below national averages. Authorised absence was well above other LEAs. However, data for 2002/03 indicate improvements in attendance in both primary and secondary schools.
- There is an increasing emphasis on data analysis following the recent appointment of additional staff to support this work as part of the local public service agreement target to improve attendance in secondary schools.

5.8. Behaviour support

- The LEA's support to schools to improve pupils' behaviour was satisfactory at the time of the last inspection. It is now unsatisfactory. Despite success in reducing permanent exclusions from schools, there are significant weaknesses in the LEA's support, particularly in the lack of adequate written guidance to schools on managing behaviour. Appropriate action is planned by senior management to address these weaknesses.
- There has been a significant reduction in the number of permanent exclusions. The LEA's figures show a continuing trend, from 77 permanent exclusions in 2001/02 to 57 in 2002/03. However, this has been accompanied by a significant increase in fixed-term exclusions. There are limited mechanisms for targeting support to schools where there are concerns over behaviour.
- A successful pupil placement panel, made up of representatives of the LEA and schools, was widely regarded as having made a significant contribution to the reduction in permanent exclusions in Salford. As a result of the withdrawal of support by some secondary schools, the panel is not now functioning and, collectively, schools and the LEA have not yet resolved this.
- There is a satisfactory behaviour support plan, which has a range of appropriate activities. The new draft behaviour strategy is clearly linked to wider developments in inclusion and SEN support and will bring the developing initiatives together. There have been some training courses for teachers, for example on restraint techniques, but there is not a well-developed training programme.

Areas for improvement

- *Schools are not sufficiently clear about the LEA's approach to supporting the management of pupil behaviour because, at present, learning mentor and learning support unit programmes within the EiC initiative, the Key Stage 3 strategy, and the LEA's support for behaviour do not form part of an overall strategy for managing pupils' behaviour.*
- *There is insufficient focus by the LEA on preventive work, together with inadequate guidance to schools on managing pupils' behaviour and insufficient dissemination of good practice.*

Recommendations:

In order to support schools further in the management of pupils' behaviour:

- ensure that the new draft behaviour strategy takes full account of all other related initiatives and strategies and is implemented rapidly;
- ensure that all schools are consulted on the development of guidance on managing behaviour, and on effective approaches to supporting behaviour; and
- improve the targeting of support on areas of greatest need.

5.9. Child protection

- The LEA continues to provide satisfactory support for child protection and plays an active role in protecting children from harm. This is largely as a result of the council's

strong focus on multi-agency support for vulnerable pupils and good co-operation and joint working between the education and leisure directorate and social services.

- A number of successful joint initiatives have been developed, for example in supporting early years centres and in the provision of secure care units. A weakness remains in the training of designated teachers but, overall, progress since the last inspection has been highly satisfactory.
- The LEA contributes fully to the work of the area child protection committee. Education has played an active and effective role in developing agreed procedures. Schools are provided with clear guidance and effective referral procedures have been developed; resulting in significant improvement in the quality of referrals from schools.
- A range of jointly planned and jointly delivered training for child protection is provided, and there are effective working relationships between schools and social workers. All schools have designated teachers and up-to-date lists are maintained.

Area for improvement

- *The take-up of training by designated teachers is not adequately monitored. The area child protection committee is aware of the need to revise and re-provide refresher training for designated teachers in schools, but the LEA and social services currently lack any record of which schools have not received training.*

Recommendation:

In order to improve support for child protection:

- establish clear procedures for ensuring that all designated teachers receive training and that accurate and up-to-date records of training for child protection are kept.

5.10. Looked after children

- The LEA's contribution to the care, welfare and attainment of children looked after by the local authority was satisfactory at the time of the last inspection. It has improved significantly and, as a result of the priority given by the council and highly effective multi-agency approaches, it is now good.
- There are over 600 looked after children in Salford, which is high in comparison with the national average. The local authority has recently expanded the education support team to enhance further the support it provides as part of the vulnerable children strategy. A good handbook on joint-working procedures for schools and community and social services has been published, and schools receive appropriate information on individual pupils. Elected members receive regular reports on looked after children.
- The strong multi-disciplinary approach is linked to clear strategies in Quality Protects and the EDP to raise the attainment of looked after children. Targets are challenging and levels of attainment are rising. Provisional GCSE results for 2003 indicate further improvement, with 75% of these pupils in Year 11 achieving one or more A*-G grades and 50% achieving five or more A*-G grades at GCSE. This is well above the national average for these pupils.
- There is a good range of initiatives to promote the attainment of looked after children, including a multi-agency awards ceremony, paired reading schemes in some care homes, and programmes to improve the effectiveness of personal education plans (PEPs). Every

school has a designated teacher and all pupils have PEPs. The EDP priority is well supported by well-planned activities and an extensive, well received, training programme.

5.11. Measures to combat racism

- The effectiveness of the LEA in combating racism was unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection. Despite much sound developmental work, it remains unsatisfactory. The LEA has not yet collected data on racist incidents from all schools, or analysed available data and used the results to effect change. However, the LEA has recently revised its procedures and an assistant director has assumed overall responsibility for this area. There is now good capacity for further improvement.
- The LEA's response to the recommendations in the previous report was tardy. Momentum was lost because of changes in the senior management team, resulting in weaknesses in the monitoring of key activities and in liaison with partners.
- The LEA has, albeit belatedly, circulated a revised draft policy to schools that complies with the Race Relations Amendment Act. Appropriate steps have been identified to follow this up in schools through school improvement officers' visits and agendas for governing body meetings.
- The LEA now has an appropriate system in place for the recording and reporting of racist incidents. Good use has been made of links with other LEAs in developing the system and the clear guidance that accompanies it. Nevertheless, these new procedures have yet to be put to the test.
- The council has recognised the importance of work to combat racism and has strengthened its commitment. It is taking positive action to improve support for asylum seekers through the strategic group established by the chief executive. A new Equal Opportunities post in the directorate of education and leisure has been created to develop the links between corporate and directorate activity and provide support to schools.

Area for improvement

- *The LEA does not yet have any secure data that it can use to target future activity more precisely.*

Recommendation:

In order to improve the targeting of the LEA's activities to combat racism:

- monitor the returns from schools on racist incidents and evaluate the effectiveness of the revised procedures.

5.12. Other aspects of social inclusion

At the time of the last inspection the LEA was taking reasonable steps to meet its duties in relation to **health and safety**. On the basis of evidence provided, including schools' view that the effectiveness of the LEA's support has improved since the last inspection, provision remains satisfactory. No detailed fieldwork on this function was undertaken in this inspection.

APPENDIX A

JUDGEMENT RECORDING STATEMENTS for Salford LEA Autumn 2003 inspection

No	Required Inspection Judgement	Grade	Fieldwork
Context of the LEA			
1	The socio-economic context of the LEA	6	NF
2	The performance of schools	5	NF
3	Funding	3	NF
Overall Judgements			
50	The progress made by the LEA overall	5	
51	The LEA's capacity for further improvement and to address the recommendations of the inspection	3	
52	Overall effectiveness of the LEA	4	
BLOCK 1 - Corporate Strategy and LEA Leadership			
43	The clarity, consistency, coherence and feasibility of corporate plans	3	
44	The implementation of corporate plans	3	
6	The extent to which the LEA targets resources on priorities	4	
7	The extent to which the LEA has in place strategies to promote continuous improvement, including Best Value	4	
34	The effectiveness of the LEA in relation to the provision of school places	4	
35	The effectiveness of the LEA in discharging asset management planning	3	
20c	Property Services	3	
36	The effectiveness of the LEA in relation to admissions to schools	3	
45	The speed, transparency and effectiveness of decision-making (particularly financial decision-making)	3	NF
46	The leadership provided by elected members	2	
47	The quality of leadership provided by senior officers	2	
48	The quality of advice given to elected members	2	
49	The effectiveness of the co-ordination of actions in support of priorities involving collaboration between several agencies	2	
BLOCK 2 - Strategy for Education and its implementation			
4	The LEA's strategy for school improvement including the EDP and EiC.	4	
5	The progress on implementing the LEA's strategy for school improvement including the EDP and EiC	4	
8	The extent to which the LEA has defined monitoring, challenge and intervention and shared those understandings with schools	4	
11	The effectiveness of LEA identification of and intervention in under-performing schools	3	
16	Support for raising standards of ethnic minority and Traveller children including the effective deployment of the ethnic minority and Traveller achievement grants	5	

21	The extent to which the LEA is successful in assuring the supply and quality of teachers	4	
53	Support for Early Years' Education	3	NF
54	Support for 14 – 19 Education	4	
BLOCK 3 - Support to school leadership and management, including schools' efforts to support continuous improvement			
18	Support to school leadership and management, including support to schools' efforts to achieve continuous improvement	4	
9	The extent to which the LEA's support to schools is focused on areas of greatest need	3	
10	The effectiveness of the LEA's work in monitoring schools and challenging them to improve, including the use made of performance data	4	
12	Support for raising standards in Literacy	4	
13	Support for raising standards in Numeracy	3	
14	Support to schools for raising standards in and the curriculum use of information and communications technology	4	
15	Support for raising standards at Key Stage 3	3	
17	Support to schools for gifted and talented pupils	4	
19	Support to school governors	4	NF
20	The effectiveness of the LEA's services to support school management	4	
20a	Financial services	3	NF
20b	Human Resources	3	NF
20d	Services for ICT in school administration	4	
20e	Cleaning and Caretaking	2	
20f	Grounds maintenance	5	NF
20g	Catering	2	
22	The effectiveness of the leadership of services to support school improvement	4	
23	The effectiveness of the deployment of staff to support school improvement	4	NF
24	The effectiveness of strategic planning of services to support school improvement	4	
25	The effectiveness of the performance management of services to support school improvement	4	
26	The standard of expertise of staff to support school improvement	4	NF
27	The effectiveness of services to school improvement	4	
28	Value for money of services to support school improvement	4	
BLOCK 4 - Special Educational Needs			
29	The effectiveness of the LEA's strategy for SEN	3	
30	The effectiveness of the LEA in taking steps to meet its statutory obligations in respect of SEN	5	
31	The effectiveness of the LEA in exercising its SEN functions to support school improvement	4	
32	The extent to which the LEA exercises its SEN functions in a way which provides value for money	5	
BLOCK 5 - Social Inclusion			
33	The overall effectiveness of the LEA in promoting social inclusion	3	

37	The extent to which the LEA meets its statutory requirements in relation to provision for pupils who have no school place	4	
38	The extent to which the LEA meets its statutory requirements in relation to school attendance	4	
39	The extent to which the LEA meets its statutory requirements in relation to behaviour at school	5	
40	The extent to which the LEA meets its statutory requirements in relation to health and safety and child protection	4	
41	The extent to which the LEA meets its statutory requirements in relation to provision for looked after children	2	
42	The effectiveness of the LEA in combating racism	5	

Note: 'NF' under fieldwork means that no fieldwork was conducted on this function during this inspection.

JRS numerical judgements are allocated on a 7-point scale:

- Grade 1 - Very good
- Grade 2 – Good
- Grade 3 - Highly satisfactory
- Grade 4 – Satisfactory
- Grade 5 – Unsatisfactory
- Grade 6 – Poor
- Grade 7 - Very poor

APPENDIX B

Context of the LEA

The City of Salford is one of ten metropolitan councils in Greater Manchester. It stretches from inner city through suburban areas to green belt. Some areas are affluent but, as at the time of the last inspection, there are pockets of severe deprivation and overall Salford is the 21st most deprived area in the country. Substantial regeneration, including the business and cultural centre of Salford Quays, is transforming the city. The overall population has declined by 4.5% since the last inspection, from 225,900 to 215,882. The number of pupils on roll at maintained mainstream schools has also fallen, declining by 5.3% from 33,268 in January 1999 to 31,515 in January 2003. The percentage of the school population of minority ethnic heritage is broadly in line with the national figure, but the number of pupils from families who are asylum seekers and refugees has trebled since the last inspection.

The percentage of pupils eligible for free schools meals in maintained primary (28.6%) and secondary schools (24.8%) is higher than the national figure, but broadly in line with that of similar authorities.

The percentage of pupils in primary schools with a statement of special educational needs (1.9%) is below the national average. In secondary schools, the percentage (4.1%) is broadly in line with the national average.

Education provision is available for all three and four year olds whose parents seek it, in a variety of settings.

There are four early years' centres, 84 primary schools and one primary special school in Salford. There are 14 comprehensive schools, all of whom are for pupils aged 11-16, and three secondary special schools. In addition, there are four pupil referral units and one hospital school. Five primary and two secondary schools have Beacon status.

Funding data for the LEA

Gross individual school budget per pupil:	LEA	Statistical Neighbours	Outer London	England
Primary	2094	2163	2121	2223
Secondary	2826	2832	2784	2929
Special	13629	10188	11420	12055

Source: CIPFA Section 52 data 2002-03

Centrally retained funding (£ per pupil)	LEA	Statistical Neighbours	Outer London	National
Strategic management	143	114	120	101
School improvement	21	29	28	30
Access	78	98	102	130
Special educational needs	198	145	143	160

The education SSA for Salford Metropolitan District Council in 2002-2003 was marginally higher than that in similar authorities and other metropolitan districts, but a little lower than the national average. The authority attracts above-average levels of additional revenue and capital funding to supplement that received through SSA.

Performance data for the LEA

Data on schools causing concern

Special measures

- There are currently two schools in special measures, one secondary school and one secondary special school. At the time of the previous inspection, one school was in special measures.

Serious weaknesses

- There is currently one secondary school with serious weaknesses. At the time of the previous inspection two primary schools and one secondary school had serious weaknesses.

Under-achieving schools

- There are currently no schools in the under-achieving category.

Schools in challenging circumstances

- There are currently eight schools facing challenging circumstances.

Number of schools removed from or placed into these categories

- One school, a secondary special school, moved from serious weaknesses into special measures in the academic year 2002-2003.

Pupils' attainment

Age 7 - Key Stage 1 Level 2 and above

	READING				WRITING				MATHEMATICS			
	'99	'00	'01	'02	'99	'00	'01	'02	'99	'00	'01	'02
LEA	84.0	84.2	84.4	84.0	84.6	85.4	85.9	84.0	89.5	89.9	90.8	89.0
SN*	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	C	A	B	B	C
Nat	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	D	B	C	C	D
Nat Diff	1.9	0.4	0.0	-0.5	1.4	0.5	-0.2	-2.3	2.3	-0.4	-0.4	-1.8

This compares Salford's (LEA) performance with that of its statistical neighbours (SN) and the national average (Nat).

A – well above average; B – above average; C – broadly in line with the average; D – below average; E – well below average.

Trends 1999-2002: all well below both the national trend and that of statistical neighbours, except reading which is below the national trend.

Age 7 Key Stage 1 Level 3 and above

	READING				WRITING				MATHEMATICS			
	'99	'00	'01	'02	'99	'00	'01	'02	'99	'00	'01	'02
LEA	28.4	24.3	25.5	27.5	7.9	8.2	9.6	10.7	20.2	22.5	23.9	26.2
SN	B	C	C	B	C	C	C	B	B	C	C	C
Nat	C	D	D	C	C	C	C	C	C	D	D	D
Nat Diff	-0.8	-3.4	-3.3	-2.4	-0.1	-0.5	0.2	1.4	-1.0	-2.6	-3.7	-4.9

Trends 1999-2002: writing is in line with the national trend, reading is below and mathematics well below the national trend.

Age 7 Key Stage 1 Average Point Score

	READING				WRITING				MATHEMATICS			
	'99	'00	'01	'02	'99	'00	'01	'02	'99	'00	'01	'02
LEA	15.7	15.5	15.6	15.6	14.0	14.2	14.4	14.3	15.4	15.8	16.0	16.1
SN	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	C	C	C
Nat	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	D
Nat Diff	0.1	-0.1	-0.1	-0.2	0.1	0.0	0.1	-0.1	0.1	-0.2	-0.3	-0.4

Trends 1999-2002: reading and writing broadly in line with the national trend, mathematics is below the national trend.

Age 11 Key Stage 2 Level 4 and above

	MATHEMATICS				ENGLISH				SCIENCE			
	'99	'00	'01	'02	'99	'00	'01	'02	'99	'00	'01	'02
LEA	70.2	72.3	70.0	72.5	70.8	74.6	73.0	71.6	77.5	83.7	86.2	83.2
SN	B	B	C	C	B	B	C	C	B	C	C	C
Nat	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	D	C	C	C	D
Nat Diff	1.2	0.6	-0.7	-1	0.3	-0.4	-2.1	-3.2	-1.2	-1.4	-1.7	-3.7

Trends 1999-2002: all are well below the statistical neighbours' trend and English is well below the national trend; mathematics and science are both below the national trend.

Age 11 Key Stage 2 level 5 and above

	MATHEMATICS				ENGLISH				SCIENCE			
	'99	'00	'01	'02	'99	'00	'01	'02	'99	'00	'01	'02
LEA	21.8	25.8	22.8	25.1	20.3	27.0	22.7	24.1	24.2	33.5	31.9	34.9
SN	C	B	C	C	B	B	C	C	C	C	C	C
Nat	C	C	C	C	C	C	D	D	D	C	C	C
Nat Diff	-1.4	1.5	-1.8	-2.0	-1.2	-1.1	-5.3	-4.0	-2.7	-0.7	-1.8	-2.5

Trends 1999-2002: mathematics and science are below the national trend, English is well below.

Age 11 Key Stage 2 Average Point Score

MATHEMATICS	ENGLISH	SCIENCE
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	'99	'00	'01	'02	'99	'00	'01	'02	'99	'00	'01	'02
LEA	26.3	26.7	26.4	26.7	26.2	26.9	26.5	26.5	27.1	28.0	28.2	28.1
SN	B	B	C	C	B	B	C	C	C	C	C	C
Nat	C	C	C	C	C	C	D	D	C	C	C	D
Nat Diff	0.0	0.1	-0.1	-0.2	0.0	-0.1	-0.5	-0.5	-0.2	-0.2	-0.2	-0.4

Trends 1999-2002: all are below the national trend.

Age 14 Key Stage 3 Level 5 and above

	MATHEMATICS				ENGLISH				SCIENCE			
	'99	'00	'01	'02	'99	'00	'01	'02	'99	'00	'01	'02
LEA	53.4	57.0	58.8	60.6	56.2	52.3	58.1	54.1	43.5	49.9	57.6	56.6
SN	C	C	C	C	C	D	C	D	C	C	C	C
Nat	D	D	D	D	D	E	D	E	D	D	D	D
Nat Diff	-9.4	-8.6	-8.2	-7.4	-7.9	-11.9	-7.0	-13.5	-12.0	-10.2	-9.0	-11

Trends 1999-2002: English is well below both the national and statistical neighbours' trends, mathematics is above both trends and science is in line with the national trend and well above that of statistical neighbours.

Age 14 Key Stage 3 Level 6 and above

	MATHEMATICS				ENGLISH				SCIENCE			
	'99	'00	'01	'02	'99	'00	'01	'02	'99	'00	'01	'02
LEA	26.2	30.0	31.5	34	19.9	16.8	25.5	19.5	13.9	18.2	22.4	19.1
SN	C	C	C	C	C	D	C	D	C	C	C	D
Nat	E	E	E	E	D	E	D	E	E	E	E	E
Nat Diff	-11.6	-11.1	-11.4	-11.6	-7.7	-11.4	-6.5	-13.6	-10.1	-11.3	-11.7	-14.4

Trends 1999-2002: mathematics and science are below the national trend, English is well below.

Age 14 Key Stage 3 Level 7 and above

	MATHEMATICS				ENGLISH				SCIENCE			
	'99	'00	'01	'02	'99	'00	'01	'02	'99	'00	'01	'02
LEA	7.1	8.9	12.0	10.7	4.1	2.4	7.2	4.6	1.8	1.5	3.3	3.8
SN	C	C	C	C	C	D	C	D	C	C	C	C
Nat	D	E	D	E	D	E	D	E	D	E	D	E
Nat Diff	-7.0	-9.1	-7.5	-9.6	-2.5	-4.4	-2.2	-6.5	-3.7	-4.9	-4.9	-6.9

Trends 1999-2002: all are below the national trend.

Age 14 Key Stage 3 Average Point Score

	MATHEMATICS				ENGLISH				SCIENCE			
	'99	'00	'01	'02	'99	'00	'01	'02	'99	'00	'01	'02
LEA	31.6	32.4	32.6	33.0	31.1	30.8	32.2	31.2	29.9	30.4	31.6	31.4
SN	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	D	C	C	C	C
Nat	D	D	D	D	D	E	D	E	D	D	D	E
Nat Diff	-2.0	-1.9	-1.9	-1.9	-1.3	-1.8	-0.9	-2.3	-1.7	-1.7	-1.7	-2.1

Trends 1999-2002: mathematics and science are in line with the national trend, English is below.

Age 16 GCSE

	1+ A*-G				AVERAGE POINT SCORE				Capped AVERAGE POINT SCORE
	'99	'00	'01	'02	'99	'00	'01	'02	'02
LEA	95.6	95.9	95.9	95.7	32.0	33.2	33.0	32.9	29.9
SN	B	B	C	B	C	C	C	D	C
Nat	C	C	C	C	E	E	E	E	E
Nat Diff	-0.1	0.1	-0.1	-0.3	-6.1	-5.5	-6.2	-7	-4.6

	5+ A*-C				5+ A*-G			
	'99	'00	'01	'02	'99	'00	'01	'02
LEA	34.8	36.7	37.2	36.9	88.6	90.9	91.3	88
SN	C	C	C	C	C	B	B	B
Nat	E	D	E	E	D	C	C	C
Nat Diff	-11.8	-11.1	-11.6	-13.4	-2.3	0.0	0.2	-1.1

- Trends 1999-2002: one A*-G rate of improvement over three years is well above the SN trend and above the national trend; five A*-C rate of improvement over three years is below the SN trend and below the national trend; average point score rate of improvement over three years is below the SN trend and broadly in line with the national trend

Age 16 GCSE Boys/Girls

		1+ A*-G			AVERAGE POINT SCORE			5+ A*-C		
		LEA	SN	Nat	LEA	SN	Nat	LEA	SN	Nat
2001	Boys	94.7	C	C	30.3	D	E	31.8	C	E
	Girls	97.0	B	C	35.7	C	E	42.6	C	D
2002	Boys	94.8	B	C	30.3	C	E	30.7	C	E
	Girls	96.5	B	C	35.7	D	E	43.4	C	E

Age 16 GCSE looked after children

	1+ A*-G		5+ A*-C	
	'01	'02	'01	'02
LEA	60.0	67.0	5.0	7.0
SN	60.0		1.7	
Nat	52.4		7.1	
Nat Diff	5.6		2.1	

Value-Added

Measure	Year	LEA	SN	National
KS2 to KS3	2002	97.9	n/a	n/a
KS3 to GCSE/GNVQ	2002	97.3	n/a	n/a

A LEVEL

There is no post-16 provision in Salford's high schools and no data are currently available.

- Schools' performance

Ofsted (last inspection – overall performance)

Primary	% very good	% good	% requiring some improvement	% requiring much improvement
LEA	4.8	62.9	32.3	0
SN	9.6	55.8	33.0	1.6
Nat	12.5	58.4	27.2	1.9

Secondary	% very good	% good	% requiring some improvement	% requiring much improvement
LEA	0	25	75	0
SN	8.5	49.2	39.8	2.5
Nat	15.7	52.1	28.8	3.4

Attendance

Primary	Attendance %			Unauthorised Absence %			Target
	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002
LEA	93.4	93.3	93.0	0.6	0.6	0.5	
SN	D	C	D	C	C	C	
National	D	D	E	C	C	C	
Nat Diff	-1.0	-0.6	-1.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	

Trends 1999-2002: both in line with national trends

Secondary	Attendance %			Unauthorised Absence %			Target
	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002
LEA	89.8	88.5	87.8	1.2	1.3	1.6	
SN	C	D	D	C	C	C	
National	D	D	E	C	C	C	
Nat Diff	-1.6	-2.3	-3.4	0.1	0.1	0.4	

Trends 1999-2002: attendance is increasing at a faster rate than nationally, unauthorised absence is increasing at a faster rate than nationally.

Permanent exclusions

	Exclusions					
	Primary			Secondary		
	2000	2001	2002	2000	2001	2002
LEA	0.3	0.3	N/a	5.9	4.6	N/a
SN	B	C	N/a	A	A	N/a
National	C	C	N/a	A	A	N/a
Nat Diff	0.1	0.0	N/a	3.2	2.6	N/a

- Awaiting 2002 data

EDP Targets

		Actual 2001 (%)	Actual 2002 (%)	Actual 2003 (%)*	LEA Targets (%)			Schools' Aggregated Targets (%)			Nat Target 2004	Average Improvement		Required annual rate to meet 2004 target
					2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004		1999- 2002	2001- 2003*	
KS2	Level 4+ English	73.0	71.6	72.8	84	84	84	80	80	80	85	0.267	-0.1	6.2
	Level 5+ English	22.7	24.1	21.8	27	31	34		28	30	35	1.267	-0.45	4.95
	Level 4+ Maths	70.0	72.5	72.2	80	82	84	79	80	81	85	0.767	1.1	5.75
	Level 5+ Maths	22.8	25.1	28.0	28	31	34		30	32	34	1.1	2.6	4.45
KS3	Level 5+ English	58.1	54.1	61.5	68	70	72		67	68	76	-0.7	3.5	8.95
	Level 5+ Maths	58.8	60.6	64.5	65	69	71		67	67	76	2.4	3.85	5.2
	Level 5+ Science	57.6	56.6	57.3	66	66	70		65	65	73	4.333	-0.15	6.7
	Level 5+ IT		65	58.2	70	70	72		65	65	74			3.5
GCSE	5+ A*-C	37.2	36.9	37.0	42	43	44	40	43	40	55	0.7	-0.05	3.55
	5+ A*-G (incl. Eng/Math)		87.4*	86.8	87.3	90	92		91	91	93	0.2		2
	1+ A-G	95.9	95.7	95.8	100	100	100					-0.03		
	Average Point Score	33.0	32.9	33.0	36.0	36.1	36.8		36.3	34.0	41.9	0.3		1.95
Looked After Children	1+ A*-G	60.0	70.3	75.0								-6.5		
	5+ A*-C	2.0	5.4	14.0			14.0							
% half days missed	Primary	6.7	7.0	6.3		6.0	5.5							
	Secondary	11.5	12.2	10.8		9.8	8.6							
	Special	12.6		14.2		11.7	10.5							

* 2003 results (and five + A*-G) data provided by LEA and not yet validated.