audit commission

Office for Standards in Education

INSPECTION OF

ROYAL BOROUGH OF KINGSTON UPON THAMES LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY

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Commentary

1. Kingston upon Thames is the second smallest of the 33 London boroughs. It has very low unemployment and a mainly affluent population. The council has benefited little from additional government funding which is generally targeted at areas with high social deprivation. Overall, standards of attainment in schools are among the highest in the country. Nevertheless, the LEA has struggled recently to meet its very challenging attainment targets and recognises that further improvement is necessary, particularly for lower attaining pupils in Key Stage 4. The LEA is clearly committed to raising standards further and improving educational opportunities for all pupils and has good strategies and actions in place to achieve this.

2. The previous inspection in 1998 judged the LEA to be highly satisfactory; strengths clearly outweighed weaknesses. Since that time the LEA has made very good progress and now performs the great majority of its functions well. There are now many strengths and very few weaknesses. Overall, this is a good LEA. It has good capacity to improve further and implement the few recommendations of this report. The inspection has confirmed the outcomes of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) for Kingston upon Thames, published in December 2002, which awarded the education service three stars (the highest category) for its current performance and for its capacity to improve.

3. There are a number of significant factors that account for this improvement and the LEA's current performance. The council has established a clear and well-focussed framework for improvement. Education is a high priority for the council and is well resourced. Equally the council is committed to partnership working and improving opportunities for those children and young people most at risk of social exclusion or with additional educational needs. The most senior education officers are providing excellent leadership and the council's broad aims are reflected well in the strategic planning of the education and leisure directorate.

4. The quality and analysis of data on the LEA's and schools' performance are central to the directorate's effective planning and strategy for improvement. They are used well to identify priorities and actions. This is particularly evident in the challenge and support to schools, helping them develop the capacity to manage their own improvement and, similarly, in the leadership and planning of support for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and in improving social inclusion. The LEA has been successful in gaining the support of schools and there is close alignment of schools' and the LEA's priorities. In particular, schools welcome the renewed professional partnership that has been developed since the last inspection. Schools and other partners are consulted well and involved in decision making so that there is now a strong sense of common purpose.

5. The LEA's evaluation of its own performance is generally very accurate. Officers know its strengths and weaknesses well. It recognises that the effectiveness of its support to schools in procuring high quality services to support school management needs to be improved and that this weakness is affecting the capacity of schools to develop autonomy and effective self-management in all aspects of their work.

Main Findings

Corporate strategy and LEA leadership

- Education is a high priority within the corporate aims of the council. The council is committed to sustaining and improving the funding for education and targeting it where it is needed most. Elected members provide good leadership.
- The leadership by senior officers responsible for education is very good.
- The council and the directorate for education and leisure are committed to working in partnership at strategic and operational levels. Partnerships across the council, with schools and with other agencies are good.
- The LEA's officers know their own and schools' strengths and weaknesses well. The ability to identify strengths and areas for improvement is based on very effective analysis of data and performance. This is used intelligently to inform the LEA's self-evaluation processes. It is also the main reason for the good quality of its planning.
- The council's scrutiny arrangements require further improvement.

Strategy for education and its implementation

- The strategy for education and school improvement is good and is being implemented effectively. The criteria for monitoring the implementation of strategic plans, however, are not always clear or sharp enough.
- Strategies have the support and confidence of schools, which are clearly involved in determining priorities for continuing improvement.
- The attainment of pupils generally is high and above or well above national averages. However, in most cases, the LEA's targets for improving attainment have not been met. It has good strategies in place to address this shortfall and, rightly, has a particular focus on raising the attainment of lower achieving pupils in Key Stage 4.
- Procedures for monitoring, challenging, supporting and, where necessary, intervening in underperforming schools are generally good. They are based on increasingly incisive evaluation of the schools' performance.
- The LEA has developed highly satisfactory strategies for the recruitment and continuing professional development of teachers and senior managers in schools.

Support for improving education in schools

- Overall, the LEA provides good support to schools in their efforts to improve. There has been significant progress since the last inspection, particularly in improving some functions that were previously unsatisfactory.
- These improvements stem from good leadership and strategic direction by senior officers and a professionally challenging partnership with schools. There is a strong commitment to supporting schools' autonomy and self-management.
- The expertise of school improvement services has improved and is now good. Good quality data analysis enables them to be deployed effectively.

- Support for schools' self-evaluation is very effective. Outcomes are used intelligently to inform the LEA's and schools' priorities for improvement and to match the level of the LEA's support and intervention to schools' needs.
- The LEA's support for the implementation of the national strategies is now good and significantly improved since the last inspection.
- The LEA has been less successful in its role of commissioning good quality management services or in assisting schools in achieving Best Value when procuring goods and services. This has reduced the capacity of the schools to develop autonomy and self-management in all aspects of their work.
- Overall, management services are satisfactory. Nevertheless, property services remain unsatisfactory. The LEA has, however, put measures in place to improve the service and prospects for improvement are good.

Special educational needs

- There has been significant improvement in the LEA's provision for pupils with special educational needs. It is now good and some aspects are very good.
- The strategy for SEN is clear, and planning of services is focussed on developing schools' capacity to meet the needs of pupils. The long-term strategy is sensibly based on an investment in intervention to help pupils at an early stage to avoid expensive resourcing at a later date.
- The numbers of pupils on the SEN registers of schools are falling and fewer pupils are referred for assessment of SEN statements.
- The LEA is good at monitoring the progress of pupils with SEN and in evaluating schools' effectiveness in supporting them.
- There is further scope for developing the outreach role of special schools to support pupils in mainstream schools.
- The speed with which the LEA itself produces statements of SEN is excellent, but there are excessive delays when other agencies are involved.

Social inclusion

- There has been a marked improvement since the last inspection in the LEA's overall approaches to social inclusion. It is now good or very good and there are no significant weaknesses.
- The council has made clear its commitment to improving the educational opportunities for those at risk of social exclusion; a clear policy framework has been established. There is high quality leadership by service managers and strong collaboration with other agencies.
- The LEA has been successful, in partnership with schools, in reducing unauthorised absence and the numbers of pupils permanently excluded. The rate for reintegrating excluded pupils into schools and colleges is good.
- Good support is given to children who are at risk. There are secure procedures for children who are looked after by the council. Few racist incidents are reported in schools. Support for behaviour in schools is very good.
- Pupils' attainment in some of the schools in the areas of greatest disadvantage is not yet adequate.

Recommendations

This report makes a small number of recommendations, which will contribute to the further progress of the LEA. They are:

In order to assist schools with their purchasing decisions:

- review, in consultation with schools, the presentation, timing and information provided on services for schools so that they include:
    - details of all services that can be purchased by schools from the council;
    - information on centrally resourced services available to schools; and
    - guidance on appropriate service level agreements and service standards with external providers.

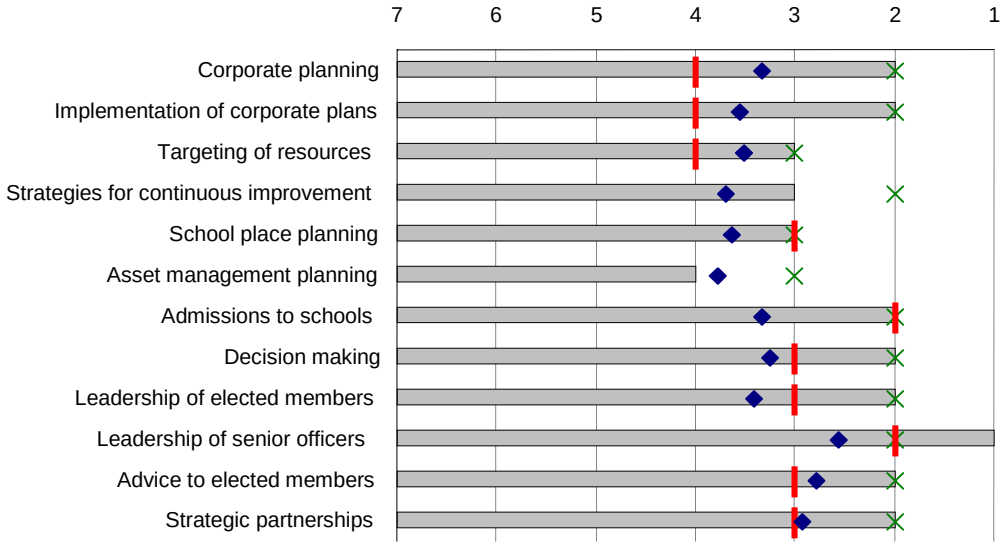
In order to improve the efficiency of the monitoring and evaluation of education planning, particularly the Education Development Plan (EDP):

- establish unambiguous success criteria for all actions;
- establish more precise milestones for actions; and
- include more precise information on the costs of actions within priorities.

In order to improve the allocation of resources to priorities:

- co-ordinate, prioritise and support bidding for external funding and grants.

Section 1: Corporate strategy and LEA leadership



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Summary

1.1. The council has established clear priorities and objectives for improving local services within the borough. Raising standards, enhancing the quality and effectiveness of schools and improving social inclusion are all afforded high priority within the policy programme. These strategic priorities are based on wide consultation and a determination by the council to work in partnership with agencies and local neighbourhoods.

1.2. Planning within the education and leisure directorate is well informed by the council's priorities. The responsibilities of senior officers cut across directorates and initiatives, enabling statutory and other key plans to be well linked. The corporate planning cycle is clear and matched appropriately to the financial planning cycle.

1.3. Elected members provide good leadership for education. Their commitment is demonstrated through the levels of funding to schools. They take their monitoring role seriously. There are effective structures in place for the approval of plans and for evaluating their outcomes, but the authority recognises the need to develop the skills of councillors in undertaking scrutinies. Senior officers and service managers provide very good leadership. Relationships with elected members, schools and partners are highly effective and lead to a sense of common purpose within the borough.

1.4. Strategies to promote continuous improvement are also highly satisfactory. The Best Value Performance Plan is good. The outcomes of Best Value reviews completed in the education and leisure directorate have led to improved and efficient service delivery. The performance management framework which links individual, team and service plans to corporate objectives is sound.

1.5. The strategic approach to working in partnership across the council and with external partners is a strength of the LEA. This collaboration is helping to build its capacity to undertake initiatives and improve service delivery. The LEA's work in developing opportunities for 14-19 year olds and in early years education is a good example of highly effective partnership work.

1.6. Kingston upon Thames LEA knows itself well. There is a close correlation between the outcomes of this inspection and the LEA's self-evaluation. The LEA's self-awareness is based on good analysis of data to identify strengths and areas for development. This in turn informs good planning and service delivery in almost all of its functions.

1.7. Corporate planning and implementation

- At the time of the previous inspection the clarity, consistency, coherence and feasibility of corporate plans were satisfactory. This inspection and the Corporate Assessment inspection by the Audit Commission in December 2002 confirm it is now good. Following local elections in May 2002 the council has set out six strategic priorities for improvement in its policy programme 'What we are going to do next'.
- The priorities are supported by 23 strategic objectives for improving council services that are based on the outcomes of a survey of residents. Education is given high priority within the policy programme, reflecting the council's strong commitment to raising standards and improving the quality of educational provision.
- The council is now taking a measured and systematic approach to developing a community plan based on the stated objectives and a firm commitment to partnership and neighbourhood working.
- The council's strategic objectives inform planning at directorate level. In the education and leisure services directorate the key plan is the EDP. This contains clear priorities for improvement in which actions refer across to other key plans where appropriate.
- The corporate planning cycle is clear and linked to the financial planning cycle. Directors of services have suitable cross-cutting responsibilities that add strength to co-ordinated planning and service delivery.
- The council takes its monitoring role seriously. Key performance indicators are monitored well through the 'Everyone Counts' sub-group and this is improving service delivery**.**

1.8. The leadership of elected members and senior officers and decision making

- Previously these functions were highly satisfactory or better, and the leadership of senior officers was good. This inspection confirms the LEA's self-evaluation that there has been further improvement. The leadership and decision making of elected members are now good and the leadership of senior officers is now very good.

1.9. **Leadership provided by elected members**

- Elected members provide good leadership. Education is a high priority within the aims of the council and these inform the strategic objectives stated within the policy programme. The council's commitment to education is further reflected in the funding allocated to schools.
- The executive and education overview panels monitor strategic education plans systematically. Procedures for delegation of powers to officers have recently been revised and are clear and appropriate.
- Schools and other partners confirm that members include them appropriately in consultation arrangements and decision making.

1.10. **Leadership of senior officers**

- Officers provide very good leadership. The director of education and leisure, other senior officers and service managers provide clear and focussed leadership and are managing the education service very effectively.
- The LEA's approach to school improvement is founded on a thorough knowledge of its schools. The trust between the LEA and its schools, judged to be lacking by the previous inspection, has fully recovered and relationships are now good.
- Officers have been successful in engaging schools and other partners through effective consultation and through including them in decision-making and partnership arrangements. Officers are committed to the promotion of self-managing schools and have high expectations of them. Consequently, there is a sense of common purpose between the education and leisure directorate and schools.

1.11. **Decision making**

- At the time of the previous inspection the speed, transparency and effectiveness of decision making were highly satisfactory. They are now good. The council has effective structures in place to approve plans and evaluate their outcomes. Greater transparency and consultation with schools have improved decision making and contributed to schools' increased trust and confidence in the LEA.
- Officers provide elected members with good advice. Reports are succinct, provide information on implications for the future, and this enables members to make sound and difficult decisions. The annual report of progress on the implementation of the EDP and of school performance, for example, provides a clear and comprehensive overview for members.

1.12. **Targeting of resources**

- The LEA has made good progress since the last inspection and has responded well to recommendations. Targeting of resources is now highly satisfactory, confirming the council's self-assessment.
- Spending on education reflects the council's priorities, which are clearly defined in their strategic plans. The priority accorded to education is reflected in the funding of the service above the Standard Spending Assessment (SSA). The

budget has increased from 0.3 per cent above SSA in 1998/1999 to 3.1 per cent above in 2002/2003. The council increased the schools' budget this year (2003/2004) in line with the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) benchmark figure.

- Kingston has the third lowest SSA per pupil of outer London boroughs and the LEA's expenditure per pupil is lower than the majority of these boroughs. (See Appendix B).
- However, the LEA remains a high delegator of funding to schools. Delegating mechanisms are transparent; schools report high levels of satisfaction with consultation processes and are clear about funding priorities. The funding formula is reviewed annually and the new schools forum has working groups looking at specific aspects of the funding formula such as age weighted pupil units.
- The LEA's centrally retained funding is either in line with, or lower than, comparator groups except in the area of special educational needs. Here Kingston is in the top quartile of outer London boroughs in the proportion of the local schools budget spent on the educational psychology service and statutory assessments, support for non-statemented pupils, and home-to-school transport.
- Both budget-planning processes and monitoring arrangements are thorough. The budget is closely monitored at departmental and at corporate level. Cabinet members receive monthly reports and projections, and the overview and scrutiny committee monitors financial progress quarterly. Further strengthening of its medium-term financial planning is a high priority for the council.
- The budget process includes an element of in-depth review of current and future spending needs by a working group of members. Additional money and savings in service costs are suitably targeted to priority areas such as early years and special educational needs as part of the corporate strategic objectives of raising attainment and improving social inclusion.
- Difficulties in controlling spending on SEN have been addressed through more accurate budget setting and the review of the SEN home-to-school transport policy.
- Schools are adequately supported and monitored in their budget making and control. Increased support is provided where there are difficulties and there are no schools with unlicensed deficits. There are a significant number of schools with high balances and these are investigated adequately.

Area for improvement:

- *Although the authority has improved its success in securing external funding, the education and leisure services directorate has limited arrangements to co-ordinate, prioritise and support grant bidding. Schools feel that they are missing out on relevant grants; primary schools rated this support in the bottom 25 per cent of LEAs surveyed.*

Recommendation:

In order to improve the allocation of resources to priorities:

- co-ordinate, prioritise and support bidding for external funding and grants.

1.13. **Strategies to promote continuous improvement, including Best Value**

- Kingston has in place highly satisfactory strategies to promote continuous improvement. Its comprehensive improvement strategy takes account of external inspection and evaluation reports and includes a thorough Best Value programme.
- The importance given to continuous improvement is highlighted both by the fact that one of the council's six strategic aims is to provide best value in all services and in the appointment of an executive member with portfolio responsibilities for Best Value and performance management.
- The Best Value Performance Plan is good. Corporate Best Value guidance is well developed and reviews have been targeted according to clear criteria to identify high risk, under-performing or high cost functions. Appropriate arrangements are in place for the formal reporting of performance information to officers and elected members. Performance in the key strategic objectives in the policy programme is reported three times a year to the executive, as are any improvement plans that require additional funding.
- A significant number of Best Value reviews have been completed in the education and leisure services directorate, including, for example, the inspection and advisory service, SEN services and the social inclusion service. These reviews have led to improved and more efficient service delivery.
- Overview panels are involved in various stages of Best Value reviews, but more work is required to develop the scrutiny function of councillors.
- Audits are comprehensive and a range of management data and information is used to assess progress and target action. External reviews, such as those by IDeA (Improvement and Development Agency) and the Audit Commission, have been acted upon.
- Kingston has a sound performance management framework in place that links directorate and team plans, and individual performance, to corporate objectives. A sub-group ('Everyone Counts') has been established to embed performance management across the council and to ensure staff are clear about how their personal aims link through to the council's strategic aims and their own team plan.
- Team plans are well established within the directorate and are updated annually. Although the action plans within them contain much appropriate detail, they are sometimes vague over timescales and the resourcing of specific activities.

Area for improvement

- *Schools have suffered from the poor performance management of corporate outsourced services involving estate management and payroll. The authority has, however, learnt from mistakes made in the contract and monitoring arrangements in the past and improved systems are now in place with new contractors. It is too early to assess the effect of these, although initial signs are positive.*

1.14. **Strategic partnerships**

- The LEA has taken a strategic approach to partnerships and its work in this area is good. It has improved since the last inspection when it was highly satisfactory.

- The first two objectives of the council policy programme give priority to improvements in partnership working across directorates and with outside agencies and groups. Generally, there is a shared understanding among the various partnership groups of the key objectives of the council.
- The LEA currently has over 100 partnership groups working on different activities and initiatives. These were created partly out of the need to build capacity for service delivery and partly out of a commitment to involve the public, private and voluntary sectors. The LEA concedes that it should rationalise attendance by officers in order to maintain a focus on key priorities.
- There is good collaborative work with the police on aspects of social inclusion, for example in improving attendance, and with social services in meeting the council's duties regarding child protection and looked after children.
- The remit of the strategy and partnership group for the development of 14-19 education is to develop policy and strategy to improve educational opportunities for all young people, increase their participation, and raise achievement. The strategy has been developed to meet the local priority in the EDP to broaden curriculum opportunities for 14-19 years-olds and is underpinned by a borough-wide review of post-16 provision. This has been accepted by elected members and schools. One early outcome has been the collaboration between two schools, supported by the LEA and funded by the Learning and Skills Council, to federate their sixth forms in order to remove surplus provision and increase local participation.
- There is effective collaboration between the LEA and the Early Years & Childcare Development Partnership (EYDCP). The LEA has provided good support to the development of the partnership and its contribution to improving early years provision. There are shared priorities and activities in the EDP and EYDCP plan for raising attainment and improving provision across the full range of early years settings. Leading teachers in the foundation stage are deployed well to ensure that support is focussed on areas of greatest disadvantage. Evidence from Ofsted inspection reports shows that this partnership is proving effective. There is good or very good provision in a very high proportion of foundation stage classes and similar provision in the voluntary and private sector is equally effective.

1.15. **Asset management planning**

- The effectiveness of Kingston in discharging asset management planning is satisfactory. The current asset management plan (AMP) was graded by the DfES as satisfactory for the statement of priorities and satisfactory with areas of good practice for the local policy statement.
- The schools' premises consultative group is involved in all aspects of the development of premises. For the first time, in March 2003, a conference dealing with asset management and premises was held, which was a valued and welcome development.
- Data on the condition and suitability of premises are regularly updated and are available electronically to schools. A software package is being developed so that shortly it will be interactive for schools.
- Schools are supported in producing their own AMPs and the LEA has effective systems in place to monitor the devolved funds for capital improvements against AMP priorities.

- The commitment and quality of the current senior staff are helping to restore the confidence of the schools, and the potential for continuing improvement is good.

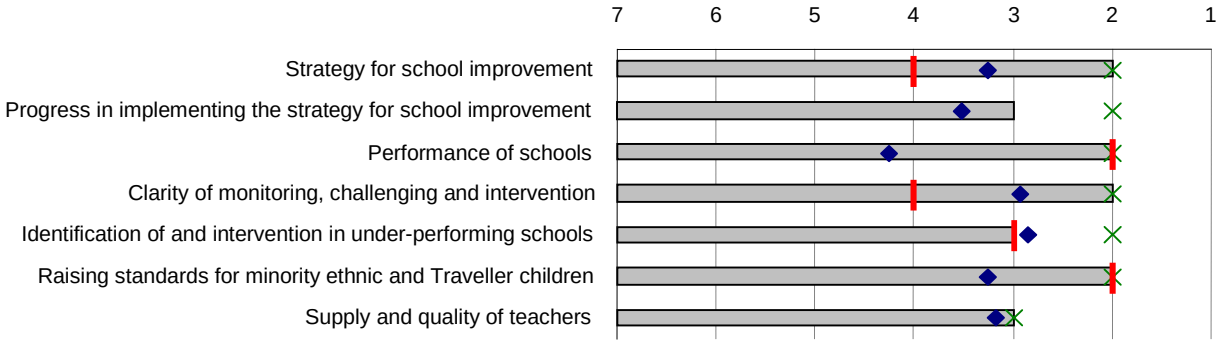
Area for improvement

- *Priorities for school investment are agreed with schools. However, the school survey showed that the majority of schools were still not clear about the LEA's asset management planning processes.*

1.16. **School place planning and admissions**

- No fieldwork was conducted on these two functions. On the basis of key performance indicators, the quality of school place planning remains highly satisfactory and that of school admissions good.

Section 2: Strategy for education and its implementation



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Summary

2.1. The strategy for school improvement is good and has improved significantly since the last inspection. The quality of the overall strategy and its effective implementation, combined with the high quality leadership of senior and other officers, have been key factors in the LEA's improvement. Prospects for further improvement are good.

2.2. The LEA's strategy and its priorities for improvement set out in the EDP are seen as relevant by schools. Their own improvement plans are aligned well to the actions in the EDP. The LEA has achieved a good balance between national and local priorities and, through effective consultation, has achieved strong support from schools. Action plans are generally clear, although, in some cases, success criteria are ambiguous and the lack of key milestones for many actions reduces effectiveness.

2.3. The LEA has a robust approach to monitoring and evaluation. The annual progress report for 2002 indicates that most of the outcomes or planned actions are being successfully achieved. Where they have not, for example in achieving predicted levels of attainment, the progress report has also been used to adjust action plans where necessary.

2.4. The EDP is linked effectively to other key and statutory plans. For example, planning and support for the continuing implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy are effective and there has been significant progress since the last inspection. Similarly, there has been improvement in the LEA's effectiveness in identifying and intervening in under-performing schools, and in securing improved provision for vulnerable pupils as part of the council's commitment to social inclusion.

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

including school performance

- The LEA's strategy for school improvement was satisfactory at the time of the last inspection. It is now good. It has clear and well-substantiated priorities that stem from a thorough analysis of data and other evidence. The LEA has ensured that the programme reflects national and local priorities and has aligned numerous statutory plans well. Thorough consultation with schools and other stakeholders has secured support for the relevance of priorities to schools' own needs. The LEA's joint annual review process with schools has further ensured the alignment of school improvement plans with the EDP priorities and actions.
- Attainment generally remains high and above or well above national averages. In 2002, the standards achieved in primary schools in national tests place the LEA in the top ten per cent nationally. Overall, standards achieved at higher levels of national tests in all key stages are well above average and at General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), for example, were the fourth highest in the country.
- Since the last inspection overall levels of attainment have continued to rise, but, given the LEA's high baseline of performance, have not consistently risen as fast as they have nationally. The LEA's strategy rightly recognises the need to address those areas where performance is below the national average, for example in the proportion of pupils achieving one or more GCSE grades at A*-G.
- Attainment targets are very challenging. In 2002, there was a high correlation between schools' aggregated targets and the LEA's targets. Nevertheless, apart from Key Stage 3, actual attainment fell short of the targets set. Targets for 2003 and 2004 are equally challenging, but the LEA's actions and interventions, following a rigorous analysis of the reasons for previous performance, demonstrate its continuing determination to reach those targets.
- The LEA has robust systems in place to monitor the implementation of its school improvement programme. The annual progress report for 2002 shows that all proposed actions are being taken and, apart from achieving targeted levels of attainment, the majority are leading to the intended outcomes. Implementation has, therefore, been highly satisfactory overall.
- The evaluation process is leading to regular adjustment of actions within priorities. These are clearly stated in the revised action plan document for 2003-2004.
- Performance management measures at all levels are adequate to check the progress of the strategy.

Area for improvement

- *The EDP and the revised plan for 2003-2004 continue to have success criteria that are not precise enough in defining the specific outcomes to be achieved. Actions also lack precise milestones. Each priority is costed, but it is less clear how each action is contributing to the overall cost. This limits the LEA's ability to judge cost effectiveness and value for money as part of the evaluation process.*

Recommendations:

In order to improve the efficiency of the monitoring and evaluation of education planning, particularly the Education Development Plan:

- establish unambiguous success criteria for all actions;
- establish precise milestones for actions; and
- include more precise information on the costs of actions within priorities**.**

2.6. **The extent to which the LEA has defined monitoring, challenge and intervention and shared those understandings with schools**

- This aspect of the LEA's work was satisfactory at the time of the previous inspection. It has improved and is now good.
- Schools have been fully consulted on, and involved in, the development of procedures for monitoring, challenging, supporting and, where necessary, intervening in schools to support improvement.
- Headteachers are very clear about the range of criteria used to categorise schools according to their performance and needs. Schools understand both the monitoring and intervention strategy, and what they can expect as LEA-funded or school-purchased services, and how the LEA's support is linked to the EDP and to schools' own development plans.

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

- The LEA's identification of under-performance, and its intervention to help bring about improved performance in those schools, have a number of strengths. Overall, however, they remain highly satisfactory. Given its better knowledge of its schools and monitoring of their performance, the LEA now has the capacity to improve further.
- The proportion of schools requiring significant improvement is below the national average. The proportion of schools judged by Ofsted to require special measures or to have serious weaknesses is broadly in line with the national average.
- No schools are now in special measures. Only one school is still designated as having serious weaknesses and is awaiting an Ofsted inspection to confirm its removal from this designation. However, since the last inspection, the two schools that have been in special measures were not removed within the timescales set by national criteria. One of the schools slipped from serious weaknesses into special measures.
- There are now comprehensive, robust procedures for identifying, monitoring and supporting schools causing concern. This is as a result of better data on performance, combined with more incisive evaluation of performance by the schools and the LEA. Areas of under-performance in schools are now clearly identified and monitoring arrangements enable all relevant services to raise concerns about any school.
- Schools are provided with sensible, well co-ordinated support to help them implement strategies for improvement. Elected members receive regular reports

on these schools. The LEA has used its statutory powers effectively to appoint additional governors in some schools.

- School intervention plans are generally well targeted. Improvement strategies are well matched to the needs of the school. Exit strategies for schools are jointly agreed and phased accordingly. Regular reports by the LEA's inspectors provide a good evaluation of progress, but (as detailed in Section 3) are not always clear enough on the time frames for, and outcomes of, the specific actions needed for future improvement.

2.8. Assuring the supply and quality of teachers

- Support for the recruitment and retention of teachers is highly satisfactory.
- The LEA has lower than average levels of teacher vacancies, but has not been complacent in developing a range of strategies to improve recruitment. The main barrier to recruitment in Kingston continues to be the very high cost of housing.
- The recruitment strategy manager is collaborating with the inspection and advisory service to develop a comprehensive database to identify trends and patterns in the workforce. This is used effectively to inform the recruitment strategy. There is evidence that the strategies are already having an effect; vacancy rates in primary schools, for example, have fallen to below two per cent.
- The LEA has been effective in supporting newly qualified teachers. Good recruitment packs and induction support contribute to the LEA's good record in the number of newly qualified teachers completing their induction year successfully and the high proportion continuing into a second year in Kingston schools.
- The LEA has a comprehensive programme to support the continuing professional development of its teachers. The joint annual review ensures that schools' staff development plans are analysed thoroughly and inform the programme so that it is responsive to schools' needs.
- The LEA generally provides effective induction for new headteachers and the national leadership programmes are actively promoted. Approaching half of the headteachers in the borough have completed the leadership programme for serving headteachers and a third of senior managers have, or are, completing the programme for those aspiring to headship. The LEA's professional development programmes and promotion of the national training programmes contribute to the good quality of leadership, management and teaching in Kingston schools.

***Areas for improvement**:*

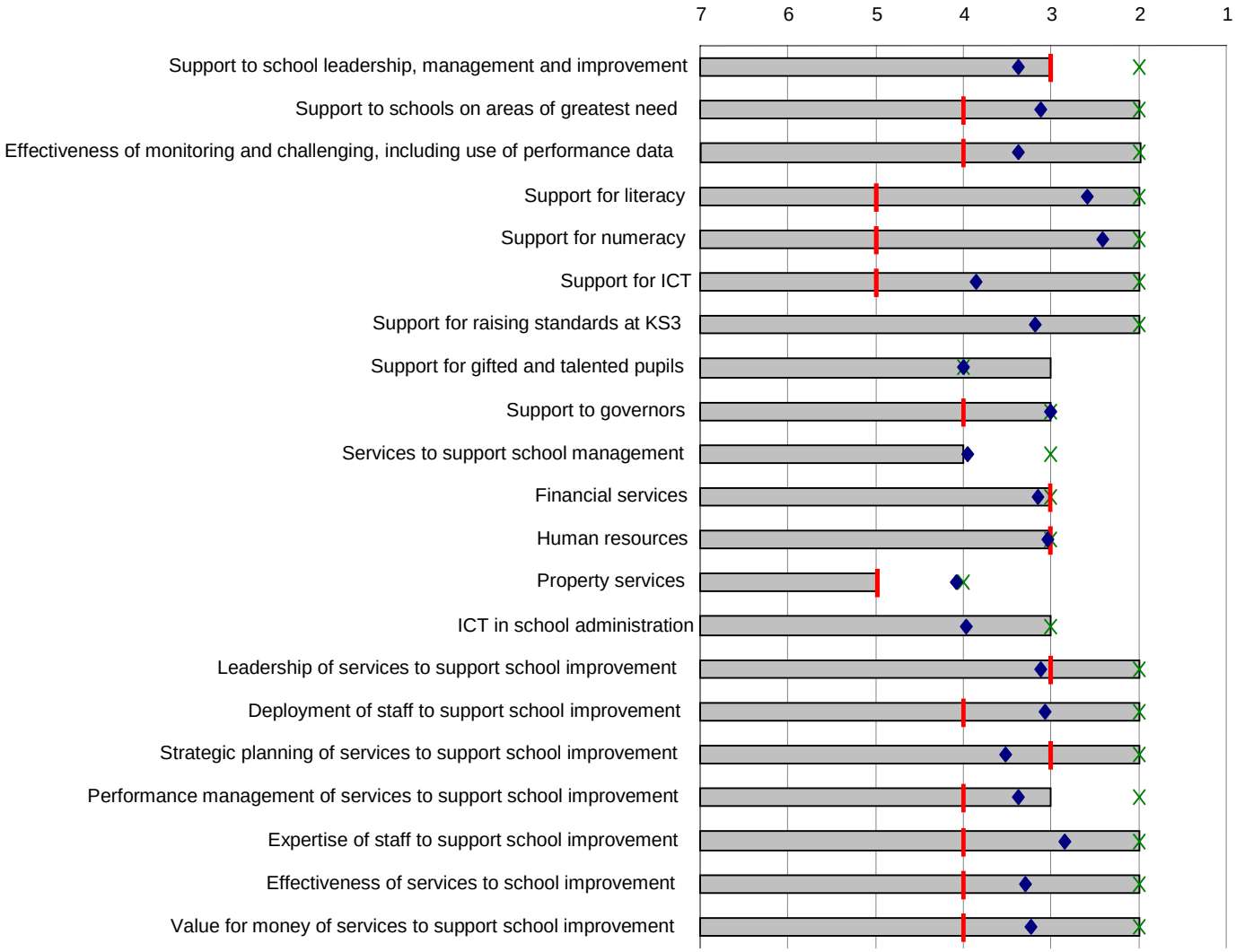
- *The professional development programme does not currently provide a sufficiently systematic approach to career progression and development. However, the LEA has recognised the need for further improvement.*
- *The LEA makes use of some external consultants for professional development, but numbers are few and published information lacks detail of the means by which their quality is assured.*

2.9 Support for raising standards of minority ethnic and Traveller children

- At the time of the previous inspection this area of the LEA's work was good. Evidence from this inspection of the effective use of data to target support to this

group of pupils indicated that this was still the case. Furthermore, the school survey showed that, though secondary schools were more critical, primary schools support this judgement. No detailed inspection work was carried out.

Section 3: Support for improving education in schools



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1 = Very Good, 2 = Good, 3 = Highly Satisfactory, 4 = Satisfactory, 5 = Unsatisfactory, 6 = Poor, 7 = Very Poor

Summary

3.1. The LEA provides good support to its schools in their efforts to improve. This is now a strength of the LEA. It has made good progress in most areas of support including a number of functions and services that were unsatisfactory at the time of the previous inspection. The LEA's plans for widening the support it can provide to schools through partnership arrangements indicate it has good capacity to sustain this improvement.

3.2. This improvement in the LEA's performance has been brought about principally through good leadership and strategic direction by senior officers and a professionally challenging partnership with schools. There is a clear strategy and a framework for supporting leadership and management in schools that are committed to developing school autonomy. The expertise of school improvement services has

improved and better information on school performance now enables them to be deployed most effectively.

3.3. There is a clear strategy for helping schools in their efforts to secure autonomy and continuous improvement, especially through supporting schools' self-evaluation and in the dissemination of good practice. Officers and schools use increasingly good quality data to monitor and evaluate progress and target precisely areas for intervention and improvement. The LEA now knows its schools well. Successful schools, although subject to challenge by the LEA, are given freedom to make decisions and deploy their own resources. Where the LEA has evidence of underperformance it has generally intervened effectively to support the headteacher and governing body to bring about improvement.

3.4. The outcomes of schools' self-evaluation are well used as the basis for good professional challenge. Strengths and weaknesses are analysed jointly by the LEA and schools to identify areas for improvement, particularly in raising attainment. Subsequent support to schools is linked well to the LEA's priorities and resources in the EDP. The LEA's success in improving the quality of its support for national strategies to improve literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology (ICT) and the performance of pupils at Key Stage 3 has contributed significantly to schools' capacity to improve, and is rated highly by schools. The LEA also provides good support to governing bodies in evaluating their own school's performance and in fulfilling their statutory obligations.

3.5. The LEA has been successful, therefore, in assisting schools in their efforts to improve standards and provide a good quality of education for pupils. It has also sought to maximise the delegation of funding so that schools are able to meet the needs of their pupils more effectively, for example in the very high proportion of funding and management responsibility given to schools for the education of pupils with special educational needs. The LEA has been less successful, however, in its role of commissioning good quality management services or in assisting schools in achieving Best Value when procuring goods and services. This has reduced the capacity of schools to develop autonomy and effective self-management in all aspects of their work.

3.6. Support to school leadership and management, including support to schools' efforts to achieve continuous improvement

- The LEA's overall support to school leadership and management is highly satisfactory and there are some areas of significant strength. Good progress has been made in supporting the leadership of schools and management by senior staff and governing bodies. The LEA's work is clearly focussed on helping to empower senior and middle managers in schools to sustain and manage continuing improvement for themselves.
- Schools' management needs are identified at several levels. There is a clear strategy for developing, and challenging, the capacity of schools to evaluate their performance and to identify the priorities for improvement. Where necessary, senior managers are supported in developing or consolidating the skills needed to bring about and maintain that improvement.

- Self-evaluation by schools is good and carried out in partnership with the LEA. A good range of performance and management data supports the process, including analysis of financial data and pupils' performance. There is good guidance on how senior managers in schools should use this data.
- The LEA's support to individual schools is well co-ordinated. The outcomes of the link inspector's visits to schools are communicated to the headteacher and the governing body. Where aspects of leadership and management in schools are unsatisfactory, the LEA has intervened effectively. The proportion of schools judged, in Ofsted inspections, to have good or very good leadership and management is above average and increasing.
- Good practice in the leadership and management of schools is disseminated in a number of ways, including the LEA's own development and support groups for senior and middle managers. An effective middle managers' training programme is targeted at staff specialisms and is generally well regarded by schools.

Area for improvement

- *The current EDP includes activities to develop further schools' capacity to evaluate their efficiency and effectiveness. The training for schools on Best Value principles and their implementation has been rudimentary. Schools do not feel able to apply Best Value principles to all the services and support they receive or choose to purchase. This is reducing their capacity to develop autonomy and effective self-management in all areas of their work.*

3.7. **Support to governors**

- The LEA's support for governing bodies is highly satisfactory. It has a number of strengths, particularly in its support for governors to carry out their leadership and management responsibilities in conjunction with the headteacher and senior staff. There has been satisfactory progress since the last inspection and the LEA has plans in place that will ensure further improvement.
- Governing bodies are actively involved in monitoring the work of the school. They are involved in the joint annual review with the LEA and are provided with relevant benchmarked information about the schools' performance. They are very well supported in using this data and in evaluating their own performance, through the LEA's excellent documents on governor self-review.
- All governing bodies receive an annual progress report on the school from the LEA. Governors of schools causing concern receive a termly progress report from the LEA, in addition to a termly meeting to review progress with the director, the chair of governors and the headteacher. Where necessary, additional governors are appointed.
- Governors are properly consulted through termly partnership meetings, and adequately informed of developments by the director's termly report and other documentation.
- The number of vacancies on governing bodies is in line with the average nationally and the LEA has set a challenging target to reduce the number of unfilled vacancies.

Area for improvement:

- *The training for governors provided by the LEA is generally evaluated positively by participants. The LEA is now providing more training in schools, which caters specifically for the needs of individual governing bodies. It has recognised the need for more comprehensive auditing of governor training needs and for greater governor involvement in planning training programmes.*

3.8. **The effectiveness of the LEA's work in monitoring schools and challenging them to improve (including the use of performance data and targeting support on areas of greatest need)**

- The LEA has made good progress since the last inspection and now performs these functions well. When last inspected, the LEA's resources were only just sufficient to provide the necessary support and challenge to its schools to help them improve. Since that time it has, with the agreement of schools, built up a small but strong, centrally funded, school improvement service.
- Schools now rate the LEA's support highly and are very positive about the challenge it provides to help them to improve. This stems from the very good support to schools in using high quality performance data to evaluate their performance and in jointly identifying with schools the consequent areas for improvement and support they need.
- Levels of support and intervention are differentiated to reflect the school's needs and the agreed priorities for improvement that emerge from the joint annual review. These reviews are very comprehensive, challenging, and cover all key aspects of the school's performance, including leadership and management. The LEA's partnership with schools in this work is a strength, resulting in a level of mutually agreed challenge that underpins the LEA's overarching strategies for improvement and those of individual schools.
- The core entitlement for support to each school is highly focussed on monitoring the outcomes of the school's self-evaluation, consequent improvement planning, and procedures for target setting.
- Additional support and, where necessary, intervention, are agreed on the basis of the annual review. High performing schools may only receive the core support. Schools causing concern can receive up to 15 days additional support per year from the link inspector as well as reviews of financial control, SEN and inclusion. This additional support is well linked to the schools' core targets and priorities for improvement, and to the priorities and programmes funded through the EDP.
- A good range of performance and management data about each school is assembled from services across the directorate, together with relevant evidence from monitoring by schools' link inspectors. The LEA and schools now use this data, added value indicators and benchmark information to identify and target areas of weakness.
- The LEA's data is sufficiently detailed to enable it to carefully target improvement in the performance of individual pupils, of specific groups of pupils (including those from minority ethnic groups), of subject departments, and schools. It monitors progress regularly and rigorously.
- Data are provided to schools in good time to enable them to use them effectively. All primary schools are now tracking their pupils' performance using a common software system. The LEA successfully transfers performance data electronically

on the 80 per cent of pupils from its own primary schools when they transfer to secondary education.

- Obtaining and transferring similar data on the large number of pupils who transfer into secondary schools from neighbouring LEAs at the same stage has proved more difficult. The LEA has now agreed with schools and other LEAs that teachers' assessments of pupils will be used to provide secondary schools with the information they need in time for initial planning.

Area for improvement

- *The outcomes of inspectors' visits are systematically and consistently reported to the headteacher and governors. These reports helpfully summarise strengths and weaknesses and expected outcomes. Nonetheless, not all are clear enough on the specific improvements that will result from agreed actions, or timelines for those actions, in order to give the schools clear targets against which they can plan and monitor their progress.*

LEA support for the implementation of national strategies:

3.9. **Support for literacy and numeracy**

- The LEA's support to schools for raising standards in literacy and numeracy was unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection. The LEA has significantly increased its support to these national strategies since that time. It now provides good support to schools and has good capacity to sustain and further improve that support.
- Standards of literacy and numeracy in primary schools are above the national average and in line with the average in similar LEAs. Attainment at higher levels is well above the national average. Nevertheless, the LEA fell short of its Key Stage 2 targets in 2002 by eight percentage points. The Key Stage 1 and 2 targets for both 2003 and 2004 are very challenging.
- The LEA's analysis of the 2002 results has accurately identified the areas for improvement and carefully focussed support is being provided. Very good support is provided to guide schools in their own use of data and to help them evaluate their performance. Link inspectors and consultants provide robust challenge to schools when setting targets for improvement.
- The LEA's literacy and numeracy strategies are clearly identified in a range of action plans, including the EDP. The strategies are very effectively planned and well integrated with the Key Stage 3 strategy.
- The strategies, and the support teams, are well managed and their work is reviewed systematically. Data are used well to establish levels of support for schools and to target the work of the teams. Schools understand the means by which varying levels of support are identified and rate the LEA's support as good. Areas requiring improvement are rapidly translated into action and, overall, the attainment in targeted schools is beginning to improve at a greater rate than that seen across the borough as a whole.
- The LEA has adapted the national strategies to meet the identified needs of individual schools. A particular strength of both strategies has been the emphasis placed on building the capacity of schools to manage the intervention programmes and sustain improvement for themselves.

- There is high take up of training and school evaluations of activities are positive. The LEA has been effective in providing networks to share expertise, and in disseminating good practice. It has initiated a number of pilot initiatives in association with national projects, including the Cognitive Acceleration in Mathematics Education (CAME) project and the Interactive Whiteboard Project supported by the DfES.

3.10. Support for raising standards at Key Stage 3

- The implementation of the national strategy is being well managed. The LEA has sensibly adapted the national strategy and materials to meet the needs of its schools and has clear plans for future development.
- Standards in Key Stage 3 are well above national averages and generally above those in similar LEAs. The LEA's results have remained constant in the last two years whereas, nationally, there has been a slight decline. The LEA has set challenging targets for English, mathematics, science and ICT in 2004. Attendance rates in secondary schools are above national averages and in line with statistical neighbours[1].
- Support to schools is well differentiated and monitoring is based on good analysis of performance information and additional pupil and management data. The LEA's strategy has a suitable focus on improving teaching and learning across subjects and, in the core subjects, improvements in teaching and learning are already evident.
- Initial training for the strategy was welcomed by schools which rate the LEA's support as good. Planned developments reflect the priorities of the EDP, including the widening of the curriculum experienced by pupils. The procedures for the monitoring and review of actions are well developed.
- Appropriate opportunities are being introduced for secondary teachers to observe teaching in primary school classes in order to improve continuity between Key Stages 2 and 3.

Area for improvement

- *In line with the expectations of the Key Stage 3 strategy the development of the use of English across the curriculum has progressed satisfactorily, but similar developments in cross-curricular applications of mathematics have been slower.*

3.11. Support for raising standards in information and communication technology

- The LEA's support for raising standards in, and the use of, ICT across the curriculum was unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection. It has made very significant progress since then and its support for these aspects of ICT is now good.
- The LEA has a clear vision and strategy for ICT that is well understood by schools; they now highly value the support they receive. The strategy is based on a thorough audit of strengths and weaknesses of schools and the LEA. It is rightly focussed on raising attainment in ICT and the capability of teachers to use ICT in

[1] For Kingston Upon Thames LEA, the following statistical neighbours have been computed: Sutton, Richmond Upon Thames, Merton, Barnet, Harrow.

the curriculum, and on providing necessary support for the use of ICT for school management and administration.

- The LEA has made good progress in improving the collection, analysis and accuracy of data on pupils' attainment in ICT. All schools are required to assess and set targets for pupils' performance in ICT as part of the joint annual review and the LEA's monitoring indicates that levels of attainment are above average at Key Stages 2 and 3. Information and communication technology is effectively integrated into all relevant strands of the EDP, particularly in supporting literacy and numeracy and the Key Stage 3 strategy.
- The LEA's management of the national ICT strategy is good. Support for the National Grid for Learning has been effective. The LEA has taken a leading role in developing the London Grid for Learning in order to increase schools' access to a wider range of high quality materials to support teaching and curriculum development. The ratio of computers to pupils in both secondary and primary schools is now in line with the national average.
- The LEA has provided regular guidance to schools on New Opportunities Fund training. The take up has been high and the LEA has properly followed up any problems of attendance or the quality of training by outside providers.
- The curriculum support service has been restructured and is now an integral part of the LEA's school improvement services. Arrangements for the provision of technical support for ICT in schools have been sensible and pragmatic.

Area for improvement:

- *In 2002, the LEA's data on the performance of pupils at Key Stage 3 has, for the first time, been based on assessment from all secondary schools. The LEA is making very significant efforts to raise the confidence of primary teachers in assessing pupils' attainment, including cross-phase moderation in conjunction with Merton LEA. Nevertheless, the LEA's evidence of performance at Key Stages 1 and 2 is currently based on assessment by approximately half the schools.*

3.12. Support for gifted and talented pupils

- The LEA's support for gifted and talented pupils is highly satisfactory, but, as the LEA recognises, requires further development. It has appropriate plans in place to improve its provision.
- A policy and guidelines on good practice in supporting more able pupils have been in place for several years. However, there has been inconsistency in the way that individual schools have defined and identified these pupils. Consultation with schools on an agreed new policy incorporates national guidance and criteria for identifying gifted and talented pupils.
- All schools have policies for supporting more able pupils and the performance for higher attaining pupils is well above national averages. Implementation of the national strategies for literacy, numeracy and Key Stage 3 clearly focuses on supporting higher attaining pupils and all schools set targets for these pupils as part of the joint annual review.
- All schools have an able pupils' co-ordinator post, and the LEA provides termly training for these co-ordinators to share good practice. The LEA is taking steps to improve the networking of schools to share good practice in supporting gifted and talented pupils, including better use of specialist and Beacon schools and

projects such as CAME and Accelerated Learning. There are good links with Hampshire LEA's nationally recognised work in this area. Summer schools for gifted and talented pupils have been well attended.

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

- Kingston's work to support school management is satisfactory, but, as the LEA recognises, the procurement of services to schools is an area where improvement is required.
- The LEA secures the range of provision needed to support schools in managing the day-to-day tasks of running the school. However, whilst individual services provide clear details to schools, these are not presented in a comprehensive and well-integrated way.
- Service level agreements with schools are sound, but some offer too little choice about the level and range of service that are on offer. However, service standards are clear and are monitored, and prices reflect the real cost of the service.
- Although schools are not impeded from making their own arrangements with providers outside the council, a significant number of schools consider that the authority could do more to help. A contracts manager is now in post, part of whose job is to provide advice to schools on procuring services, but this role is in its early stages and is still developing.
- The inadequate monitoring of outsourced provision has led to poor service to schools from property and payroll services. Action has been taken to resolve this issue. Senior officers from the education and leisure directorate are now on the corporate procurement group so that they can take a more immediate and active role in ensuring all services to schools are of at least a satisfactory level. New outsourced providers are established and a much tighter monitoring and evaluation process has been set up within the directorate.

Areas for improvement

- *The LEA has not provided adequate quality assurance arrangements for all services provided to schools. Nor has it consistently provided all the information schools need in order to make fully informed decisions on the purchase of services.*
- *The 'Services for Schools in Kingston' booklet is not sufficiently comprehensive and ordering systems are fragmented. In addition, the late circulation of this booklet in March 2003 was unsatisfactory.*

Recommendation:

In order to assist schools with their purchasing decisions:

- review, in consultation with schools, the presentation, timing and information provided on services for schools so that they include:
  - details of all services that can be purchased by schools from the council;
  - information on centrally resourced services available to schools; and
  - guidance on appropriate service level agreements and service standards with external providers.

3.14 **Financial services**

- Financial services provided by the LEA are highly satisfactory and valued by schools. There have been initial problems with new financial reporting systems, but these are now resolved.
- The council's financial systems work reliably and link to schools' systems. Information is accurate and, where required, electronic reconciliation works smoothly. Errors are resolved within a few days.
- Schools are offered suitable training and support in budget management. They are provided with useful data on comparative expenditure and appropriate training is available for school bursars, headteachers and governors.
- Internal audit reports are comprehensive, clear, and helpful and they are used to help identify schools in need of specific support. Concerns over individual schools are reported at half-termly directorate meetings to inform decisions on the LEA's support or intervention.
- The LEA's service managers are also well supported. Accountants are attached to each service area and budgets are effectively managed and monitored.

3.15 **Property services**

- Property services in Kingston are unsatisfactory. The majority of schools are critical of the quality of building maintenance services. The service was rated as poor in the school survey.
- Until recently the council's services were provided by one contractor. Schools were not satisfied with this service and the LEA has changed the arrangements.
- There are signs of improvement. A different external contractor now provides technical support services, offering schools a differentiated package of technical support to meet their needs. A panel of four consultants provides design and project management services. Schools are able to access support for bidding and for joint funded schemes. Tighter monitoring is also in place. Nevertheless, it is too early to judge the result of these arrangements, which only started in April 2003.
- Prospects for further improvement are good. There is now more effective strategic management in this area of service, and improved corporate links. In addition, senior staff within the service are highly motivated and determined to achieve improvements.

3.16 **Information and communication technology in school administration**

- The quality of support for ICT used in administration is highly satisfactory. There are effective systems in place for storing and handling data on pupils, performance, staff, premises and financial information that are becoming more strategic. Although currently there are still several different pupil databases, the problem of having to duplicate the entry of data is being tackled.
- Reliable electronic communication between schools and the LEA is in place. Most school-LEA communication is carried out through e-mail and is managed effectively. The majority of schools rated this aspect as above satisfactory and in the top quartile in the school survey.

- There are common hardware and software systems across the LEA. Schools are well supported in purchasing equipment and technical support. The majority of schools rate this support as above satisfactory.
- The council's website gives a good range of information on education services for the public and is easy to use.
- Links with ICT used for curricular purposes, particularly over pupil attainment data and their use, are effective and productive. The LEA is part of the DfES' rapid implementation group and is working with the department to pilot the electronic registration of pupils for end of key stage tests, in order to help reduce the administrative burden on schools.

Areas for improvement

- *Currently the education intranet (KingsNet) is not totally compatible with the corporate network.*
- *At present, not all services within education or across the council have access to a single database on pupils, particularly those that are most vulnerable.*

3.17 **Human resources**

- The LEA's support for human resources was assessed as highly satisfactory in the previous inspection report. This continues to be the case and is corroborated by evidence from the LEA's evaluation, the school survey, and the headteachers' focus groups. No detailed inspection work was carried out.

3.18 **The effectiveness of services to support school improvement including their leadership, planning, expertise, deployment, performance management and value for money**

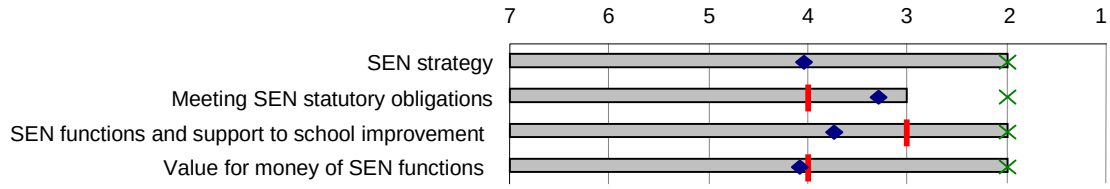
- The LEA's services to support school improvement are good. These services were satisfactory at the time of the last inspection and good progress has been made in securing a small central service with a clear focus on providing the necessary support and challenge to help schools in their efforts to improve. In particular, the inspection and advisory service is good.
- The LEA completed a rigorous Best Value review of the inspection and advisory service and the equality support service in 2002. The resulting integration of the equality support service into the social inclusion group has led to more effective support for social inclusion and the achievements of minority ethnic pupils and under-achieving groups of pupils.
- The review also concluded that Kingston's school improvement service needed to develop a wider partnership with other LEAs or the private sector in order to broaden the range of specialist support that it could broker to its schools. The LEA has now entered into a formal partnership with the London Borough of Merton. The two LEAs plan to offer a service level agreement to schools on a broader range of support services.
- The leadership of services supporting school improvement is good. Senior officers have a very clear vision of continuous improvement; their energy, commitment and enthusiasm are impressive. Staff deployment is very effective and well focussed on the needs of schools.

- The expertise of staff is good. Careful recruitment and professional development have built a team able to support schools as both phase and subject specialists and as link inspectors. The expertise of permanent staff is supplemented by a small group of associates and consultants who have experience in key education areas.
- Overall, the strategic planning of services supporting school improvement is very effective. There is consistency in the formats of divisional and team plans. Strategic objectives are defined at each level and are very well linked to the delivery of priorities in the EDP and the council's overarching objectives.
- However, the shortcomings in the EDP are also reflected in divisional planning where some success criteria are imprecise, and time scales for action unclear. They do not, therefore, provide a wholly efficient basis for performance management and evaluation.
- Procedures for tracking the work of school improvement services are comprehensive and rigorous. Monitoring of the delivery of activities and achievement of performance targets by teams and by individuals is regular and, given the weaknesses identified above, sufficiently thorough.
- The size and cost of the core school improvement services, including the inspection and advisory service, are lower than the national average and those of many of the LEA's statistical neighbours. Given their impact, they provide good value for money.

Area for improvement:

- *The generality of many success criteria and timeframes for activities in strategic and divisional plans does not provide an efficient framework for senior officers to monitor and evaluate the delivery of individual and service targets, or for individuals to plan and monitor their own performance.*

Section 4: Special educational needs



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1 = Very Good, 2 = Good, 3 = Highly Satisfactory, 4 = Satisfactory, 5 = Unsatisfactory, 6 = Poor, 7 = Very Poor

Summary

4.1. At the time of the last inspection the LEA's provision was satisfactory. It has improved significantly since then. It is now good, with some aspects that are very good. This improvement stems from the authority's clear vision, the high professional standards set by officers, and schools' willingness to work in collaboration with the authority. The LEA is very likely to improve further; it has a well thought-out strategy for development, and officers are aware of, and determined to tackle, the areas of relative weakness.

4.2. The authority has remedied the problems identified at the time of the last inspection and responded well to its own Best Value reviews. Service provision has largely been remodelled. Its planning of SEN services is very determinedly focussed on the needs of the young people and on helping schools to develop their capacity to meet them. Long-term strategy is based on the principle of intervening when pupils' needs are beginning to become apparent and thereby reducing the requirement for expensive resourcing later.

4.3. The number of pupils on schools' SEN registers is reducing, and slightly fewer pupils are being referred for assessment for SEN statements. There is some reallocation of resources away from pupils where SEN statements are no longer fully justified and towards pupils with lower levels of need. The proportion of pupils with SEN statements that are placed in special schools is above that of similar LEAs, but last year the proportion of new statements in special schools reduced slightly. There is scope for extending the outreach role of special schools so that more pupils can remain in mainstream schools. The criteria for identifying and monitoring pupils' needs are secure, and the authority is good at monitoring pupils' progress and evaluating schools' effectiveness. Although the speed with which the LEA itself produces SEN statements is excellent, there are some excessive delays when other agencies are involved.

4.4. **Strategy**

- The strategy for SEN was not inspected at the time of the 1998 inspection. A good strategy for SEN has been developed in recent years and the authority has the capacity to make further improvements.
- The LEA has produced a very clear statement of its policy, which is entirely in line with the national programme to increase the inclusion of pupils with special

educational needs. The policy represents a realisable vision for future developments. The authority has indicated what it intends to do to implement the policy, and the strategy is well understood by mainstream schools.

- The authority emphasises that schools have complete responsibility for all of their own pupils, and it has delegated significant levels of SEN funding to them in order to support this aim. It has consulted schools well about this and they largely appreciate this funding system.
- The strategy puts a high priority on intervening early to help children with SEN. There are good indications that, as a result, fewer statements of SEN are being sought. The review of existing statements is also leading to some reduction of funding for individual pupils, where their needs have lessened. The authority sensibly redistributes the money saved into other parts of the SEN budget.
- The education and leisure directorate has responded well to the findings of the council's Best Value reviews of SEN support and, as a result, has broadened its support to pupils and schools and introduced some new procedures for quality assurance.

Area for improvement

- *The LEA has not been so clear about its plans for the future role of special schools as it has been with all other aspects of the strategy, and it has not explained convincingly how they are to be supported in developing their existing outreach work.*

4.5. Statutory obligations

- At the time of the last inspection this function was satisfactory and it is now highly satisfactory. The LEA has improved its performance markedly in several crucial ways, although it has been hindered in one aspect by some stubborn problems.
- The authority has produced a strategy to improve access to its schools for pupils with disabilities, particularly physical disabilities, which is linked to asset management planning. It intends to audit provision and, in conjunction with schools' own improvement planning, make any necessary major adaptations itself, while schools make more incremental minor improvements. Existing networks of schools' special educational needs co-ordinators will be used to disseminate good practice. This is a sound strategy and demonstrates how well the LEA co-ordinates different aspects of its work.
- Consultation with parents of pupils with SEN has also improved as a result of the LEA's commitment to working with them as partners. A booklet for parents explains the LEA's policy fully, and they are given clear, straightforward information about procedures such as the production of SEN statements. Fewer parents appeal against the LEA's decisions than in similar LEAs.
- Inspection of a sample of SEN statements showed that they were detailed in their specification of how the pupils' needs must be met, and, as such, were of real value to pupils, schools and parents.
- Where the process of writing statements of SEN does not require significant involvement of other agencies, the LEA has an excellent record of efficiency; all are produced within the national timescale. Moreover, its procedure for attending reviews of pupils' statements is soundly based on pupils' and schools' needs. However, where another agency is involved in producing SEN statements, the completion rate is poor.

Area for improvement

- *Last year only 32 per cent of statements involving outside agencies, usually the community paediatrician's team, were completed by the 18-week deadline, and more than a third were over two months late. The LEA has put pressure on the health trust to improve its performance, and some improvement is promised.*

4.6. Special educational needs functions to support school improvement

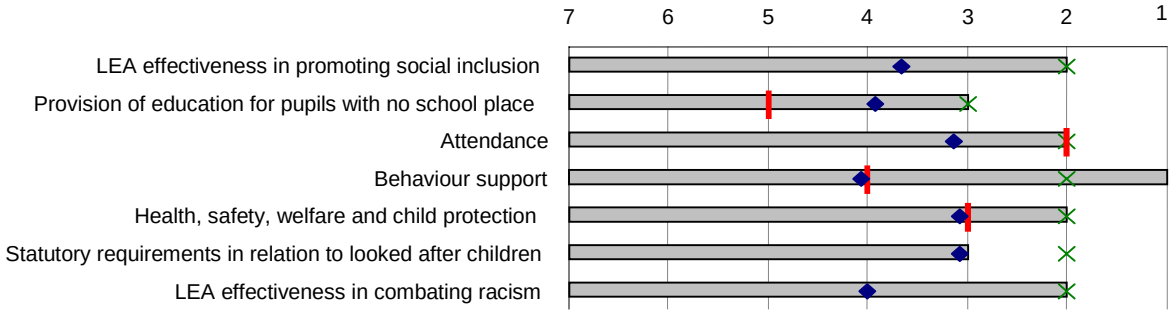
- At the time of the last inspection this aspect was highly satisfactory. It has improved and is now good. Schools are very appreciative of the LEA's support, rating it very highly and in the top 25 per cent of LEAs surveyed. The number of pupils on schools' SEN registers is falling and the proportion with statements is below that in similar LEAs.
- The LEA responded well to the recommendation of the last inspection and has established new systems for identifying and meeting the needs of early years children with speech and language difficulties. There is now a range of provision for these children, provided jointly by the LEA and the Primary Care Trust, designed to ensure that the children are included in mainstream school provision. There are indications that this is achieving some success.
- The authority gives good support to schools' special educational needs co-ordinators through an induction pack, regular meetings, and a programme of professional development. This provision is well regarded by co-ordinators.
- The education psychology service gives a broad range of support to schools, including particular projects to improve vulnerable pupils' self-esteem or behaviour. This, too, is valued highly by schools.
- There is a transparent system for allocating general SEN resources to mainstream schools. An advisory group reviews cases where a school's circumstances have changed unexpectedly, and provides more funding when necessary. Additional resources to meet the needs of pupils with SEN statements are provided on the basis of a reasonably precise costing of the provision required for each individual.

4.7. Value for money

- The LEA's performance in achieving value for money in its support for SEN was satisfactory at the time of the last inspection. It has improved and is now good.
- The education and leisure directorate has instituted good quality assurance procedures. Services have responded well to issues raised; for example, the educational psychology service analyses the effects of its projects, and challenges itself to improve further.
- All mainstream schools are provided with useful self-evaluation materials and benchmarking data that enables them to plan and evaluate their provision. The SEN inspector evaluates all schools' strategies for using their SEN resources, and audits the progress made by pupils with SEN. Additional support is provided to schools whose strategy or performance is weak.
- The overall SEN budget was slightly over-spent last year. This year, analysis is being made of all SEN transport costs in a sensible attempt at economy. The authority has recognised that it is spending slightly more than the average on

placing pupils in special schools outside the borough. It is developing alternatives in collaboration with neighbouring authorities.

Section 5: Social inclusion



The bar represents the grade awarded to the LEA, the cross 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 overall effectiveness of the LEA in promoting social inclusion was not judged at the time of the last inspection. However, where individual functions were inspected only one was good and the general level of quality in this area was only satisfactory, with some weakness. There has been marked improvement since then: several of the functions inspected are good or very good, and there are no significant weaknesses. The LEA's overall approach to social inclusion is now good. This is the result of a clear framework of policy established by elected members and senior officers, the high quality of the work of heads of service, and strong collaboration with other agencies. The LEA's capacity to improve further is good because secure structures are in place for future developments, considerable attention is given to quality assurance, and social inclusion is effectively embedded in school improvement initiatives.

5.2. The council has made clear its commitment to improving the educational achievements of particular vulnerable groups within the community, and has, for instance, made a successful bid for external support from the Children's Fund to develop this work. Much beneficial work has been undertaken within the aegis of the local Children and Young People's Strategic Plan. Officers have a good knowledge of the ways in which disadvantage affects the performance of certain schools, and have directed funding and expertise to support them. A general principle of such support is, rightly, that the schools themselves will develop and will become more capable of managing improvement initiatives. Good use has been made of multi-agency working in some cases, and collaboration with the health service on the mental health needs of young people is leading to promising developments. Involvement in the South London Partnership is beginning to bring benefits to schools and pupils. The LEA is thorough in its implementation of policies, and monitors a range of outcomes well.

5.3. Ofsted's inspections of schools in Kingston upon Thames show their ethos and climate to be generally good. Unauthorised absence from school is below the national rate. Exclusions are reducing and the rate for reintegrating pupils placed in the pupil referral units who are excluded or at risk of exclusion into school or college is good. Reported racist incidents in schools are few in number. Good support is

given to children who are at risk, and there are secure procedures for supporting children who are looked after by the council. All of these indicators are generally positive. However, when compared with similar schools elsewhere, some of the most disadvantaged schools in the authority are not yet performing well with regard to pupils' attainment and this underlines the need for the LEA to continue its present strategy of focusing its efforts where support is most needed.

5.4. **Provision of education for pupils who have no school place**

- The provision for pupils with no school place is highly satisfactory, and has improved from an unsatisfactory situation at the time of the previous inspection. The services with responsibility for these pupils have been restructured and brought together to form the social inclusion group. The LEA's strategy has been to support and encourage schools to meet the needs of children in school, rather than resorting to exclusion. This has been successful and currently only two pupils are without a school place because they have been excluded.
- Excluded pupils are provided for in the two pupil referral units and by the tuition service. The pupil referral units both provide very good quality education. Pupils who have severe difficulties are encouraged by the tuition service to gain access to as much education as possible. Reintegration into mainstream schools or college is supported by the pupil referral unit and the reintegration rate is good.
- The LEA monitors the quality of college provision, where this is used. It also undertakes some monitoring of placements with voluntary providers, although it does not evaluate their quality.
- Partnership working with the youth offending team and with the council's children's and family services has improved and is strong. Kingston has also led on the production of a protocol for exclusion with other south London LEAs.
- The provision for sick children in one of the pupil referral units is of good quality. Other sick children receive some tuition, and the LEA is seeking to increase the quantity that they receive.
- The LEA provides guidance to parents who choose to educate their children at home. The education welfare service and the inspection service monitor the education given.
- The LEA has good procedures for ensuring that schools do not remove pupils from a school roll with the result that they become lost to education. It is strengthening its procedures to identify pupils who enter the borough without having previously been on a school roll.

5.5. **Behaviour support**

- The LEA's support to schools and pupils in improving behaviour was satisfactory at the time of the last inspection. It has improved significantly and is now very good. This improvement is the result of the commitment to social inclusion found throughout the LEA, very effective management, and close partnership working between the relevant heads of service, and between them and other agencies and the schools.
- The incidence of permanent exclusions has significantly reduced. Although the number of fixed-term exclusions rose in 2001, they reduced by 40 per cent in 2002.

- The LEA's Behaviour Support Plan makes clear the respective roles of the authority and of schools. It establishes a clear set of actions for improving support for behaviour, and these are reviewed regularly.
- The LEA and schools work very well together to support pupils at risk of exclusion. Schools make good use of the secondary planning and placement panel to agree provision for pupils at risk of exclusion. The pupil referral unit provides effectively for some of these pupils by giving them temporary placements, and it also provides support in schools. The behaviour support team, highly rated by schools, works with individual pupils and groups of pupils, and gives clear guidance and support to schools on behaviour management.
- The LEA has provided particular support to individual schools. Two secondary schools received funding through the standards fund to support the setting up of learning support units for a limited period of time. These helped to reduce exclusion and improve attendance.

5.6. **Child protection**

- The LEA plays an active role in protecting children from harm and gives good support for child protection. This is largely as a result of the good co-operation between the education and leisure service and the children's and family service. The LEA contributes well to the area child protection committee; it is represented on the main committee and on all the working groups.
- All schools have designated teachers for child protection. Over the last two years there has been a concerted effort to provide every school with multi-agency training. A programme of visits to every school, to provide training for all the school staff including classroom assistants, caretakers and governors, is almost complete. The training provided has been very thorough, regularly evaluated, and well received by the schools. As a result, many of the schools have updated their policies. This programme is partly a result of a survey of schools' views, which indicated that they wanted training to respond to their individual needs. It was also in response to a wider review, which concluded that all staff within schools needed to be made more aware of child protection procedures.
- Relationships between individual schools and social workers are satisfactory.

5.7. **Looked after children**

- Support for children looked after by the local authority was not inspected at the time of the last inspection. It is now highly satisfactory, as a result of clear strategic planning.
- The LEA has set challenging targets for the attainment of these children, who number about 100. It has a clear strategy for their support, and this is covered in the local public service agreement. Elected members receive regular reports on the care and attainment of the children.
- Every school has a named and trained co-ordinator for looked after children and all the pupils have personal education plans.
- The authority appointed an education adviser for looked after children last year, who is based with the looked after children team in children's and family services. The adviser's work has included improving the co-ordination of support between

schools and the council services. She has also worked to improve support to individual children, prioritising those in Year 11. This work has started well.
- There are few looked after pupils in each cohort, and attainment data therefore fluctuate. Pupils often have special educational needs or are recently arrived children of asylum seekers, which helps to explain the generally low results.

Area for improvement
- *The reports to elected members on the attainment of the pupils are too general; they lack sufficient detail of attainment at the different key stages.*

5.8. **Measures to combat racism**

- This aspect was not inspected at the time of the last inspection. However, there is evidence of initiatives and developments having taken place in recent years and the LEA's work is now good. This has been brought about by the high quality work by officers and the commitment given by elected members. For these reasons, it has the capacity to improve further.
- The LEA has responded positively in addressing the recommendations of the inquiry into the death of Stephen Lawrence. It has recently updated its policies and elected members attach considerable weight to promoting race equality, and expect schools to see this as a fundamental aspect of their work. Good guidelines have been given to schools, including reference to the need for them to monitor their curriculum for suitability for a diverse society.
- The LEA has instituted firm procedures for monitoring any racist incidents that occur in schools or are related to schools. It gives unequivocal advice to schools about identifying such incidents, and ensures that every school provides a record to the LEA on a regular basis. There are, in fact, few such incidents recorded by schools, and the LEA does not observe a pattern that might necessitate a strategic response.
- The education and leisure directorate has good links with other agencies and this has enabled some effective joint working with schools.
- The authority is currently working on an impressively detailed analysis of the achievement of minority ethnic pupils. A draft document indicates that some groups might benefit from further support, but, as the authority states, the low numbers in some groups militate against simple conclusions.
- A project has been established to support refugees and children of asylum seekers by promoting their involvement in 16-19 education. There are early indications that this is achieving some success.

Area for improvement
- *The ethnic composition of the schools' and LEA's workforce does not represent the diversity of the local population. The LEA is aware of this, but has only recently begun to develop a strategy for encouraging broader recruitment. The main policy strands under consideration suggest a sensible way forward.*

5.9. **Other aspects of social inclusion**

- The LEA's support for **school attendance** was good at the time of the last inspection and on the basis of key performance indicators and evidence gathered

remains so. Pupils' attendance has improved since then and schools value the LEA's support highly.

- At the time of he last inspection judged that the LEA was taking reasonable steps to meet its duties in relation to **health and safety**. On the basis of the views of schools, provision remains satisfactory.

APPENDIX A

JUDGEMENT RECORDING STATEMENTS for Kingston-upon-Thames

No	Required Inspection Judgement	Grade	Fieldwork
CONTEXT AND PERFORMANCE			
1	The socio-economic context of the LEA	2	
3	Funding, including the co-ordination of external funding	3	
OVERALL JUDGEMENTS			
50	The progress made by the LEA overall	1	
51	The LEA's capacity for further improvement and to address the recommendations of the inspection	2	
52	Overall effectiveness of the LEA	2	
SECTION 1 - Corporate Strategy and LEA Leadership			
43	The clarity, consistency, coherence and feasibility of corporate plans	2	
44	The implementation of corporate plans	2	
6	The extent to which the LEA targets resources on priorities	3	
7	The extent to which the LEA has in place strategies to promote continuous improvement, including Best Value	3	
34	The effectiveness of the LEA in relation to the provision of school places	3	NF
35	The effectiveness of the LEA in discharging asset management planning	4	
36	The effectiveness of the LEA in relation to admissions to schools	2	NF
45	The speed, transparency and effectiveness of decision-making (particularly financial decision-making)	2	
46	The leadership provided by elected members	2	
47	The quality of leadership provided by senior officers	1	
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	
SECTION 2 - Strategy for Education and its implementation			
4	The LEA's strategy for school improvement including the EDP and EiC.	2	
5	The progress on implementing the LEA's strategy for school improvement including the EDP and EiC.	3	
2	The performance of schools	2	
8	The extent to which the LEA has defined monitoring, challenge, and intervention, and shared those understandings with schools.	2	
11	The effectiveness of the LEA's 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 ethnic minority and traveller achievement grants	2	NF
21	The extent to which the LEA is successful in assuring the supply and quality of teachers	3	

SECTION 3 – Support for improving education in schools			
18	Support to school leadership and management, including support to schools' efforts to achieve continuous improvement	3	
9	The extent to which the LEA's support to schools is focussed on areas of greatest need	2	
10	The effectiveness of the LEA's work in monitoring schools and challenging them to improve, including the use made of performance data	2	
12	Support for raising standards in Literacy	2	
13	Support for raising standards in Numeracy	2	
14	Support to schools for raising standards in and the curriculum use of information and communications technology	2	
15	Support for raising standards at Key Stage 3	2	
17	Support to schools for gifted and talented pupils	3	
19	Support to school governors	3	
20	The effectiveness of the LEA's services to support school management	4	
20a	Financial services	3	
20b	Human Resources	3	NF
20c	Property Services	5	
20d	Services for ICT in school administration	3	
22	The effectiveness of the leadership of services to support school improvement	2	
23	The effectiveness of the deployment of staff to support school improvement	2	
24	The effectiveness of strategic planning of services to support school improvement	2	
25	The effectiveness of the performance management of services to support school improvement	3	
26	The standard of expertise of staff to support school improvement;	2	
27	The effectiveness of services to school improvement	2	
28	Value for money of services to support school improvement	2	
SECTION 4 - Special Educational Needs			
29	The effectiveness of the LEA's strategy for SEN	2	
30	The effectiveness of the LEA in taking steps to meet its statutory obligations in respect of SEN	3	
31	The effectiveness of the LEA in exercising its SEN functions to support school improvement	2	
32	The extent to which the LEA exercises its SEN functions in a way which provides value for money	2	
SECTION 5 - Social Inclusion			
33	The overall effectiveness of the LEA in promoting social inclusion	2	
37	The extent to which the LEA meets its statutory requirements in relation to provision for pupils who have no school place.	3	
38	The extent to which the LEA meets its statutory requirements in relation to school attendance.	2	NF
39	The extent to which the LEA meets its statutory requirements in relation to behaviour at school.	1	
40	The extent to which the LEA meets its statutory requirements in relation to child protection.	2	
41	The extent to which the LEA meets its statutory requirements in relation to provision for looked after children	3	
42	The effectiveness of the LEA in combating racism.	2	

Note: NF indicates that this function was not subject to field work.

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 Royal Borough of Kingston Upon Thames is situated in the south west of London and is the smallest of the 33 London boroughs (except for the City of London). Since the last inspection, it continues to be the second most affluent borough and, although there remains small pockets of deprivation, unemployment is well below the national average. The population of the borough, approaching 150,000, is rising by about two per cent per annum. The school-age population, however, at 20,697 has increased by four per cent in the last five years. This growth is predicted to continue in the secondary sector, but is levelling off in the primary sector. The school-age population from minority ethnic groups, at 14 per cent, has not grown since the last inspection. It is higher than the national average, but lower than the average for statistical neighbours.

The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals in primary schools (9.3 per cent) and secondary schools (9.7 per cent) is below the national and similar LEAs average, but is increasing.

The percentage of pupils below school age who are on the roll of primary schools is 80.8 per cent. Places are available for all four year-olds in the borough in nursery or reception classes or in voluntary or private provision.

The percentage of pupils in primary schools with a statement of special educational needs is 2.3 per cent, just below the national average of 2.6 per cent. In secondary schools, the percentage of pupils with a statement is 3.2 per cent, also lower than the national average of 4.1 per cent.

There are 51 schools and two pupil referral units maintained by the LEA. There are currently one nursery school, eight infant, eight junior, 21 primary schools and three special schools. There are ten schools for secondary age pupils; of these, eight are single sex schools. All provide post-16 education, although two schools share a combined sixth form. Three secondary and two primary schools have Beacon status.

Funding data for the LEA

Gross individual school budget per pupil:	LEA	Statistical Neighbours	Outer London	England
Primary	2,410	2,429	2,395	2,223
Secondary	3,020	3,162	3,183	2,940
Special	10,692	11,777	14,522	12,055

Source: CIPFA Section 52 data 2002/03

Centrally retained funding (£ per pupil)	LEA	Statistical Neighbours	Outer London	National
Strategic management	100	99	99	101
School improvement	27	30	37	31
Access	115	116	125	131
Special education	211	201	196	160

Source: CIPFA Section 52 data 2002/03

Performance data for the LEA

SCHOOLS CAUSING CONCERN

Special measures

- There are currently NO schools in special measures.
- Only one primary school has required special measures for more than 18 months since 1999. It was in special measures for 26 months, from May 2000 to July 2002.
- NO secondary schools have required special measures for more than 18 months since 1999.

Serious weaknesses

- There is currently one primary school with serious weaknesses.

Under-achieving

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

Schools facing challenging circumstances

- There is currently one school facing challenging circumstances.

No of schools moved from special measures to serious weaknesses

- One primary school was moved into special measures in May 2000.

PUPIL ATTAINMENT

Age 7 – KS1 Level 2 and above

	Writing			Reading			Mathematics		
Year	**LEA**	**SN**	**Nat**	**LEA**	**SN**	**Nat**	**LEA**	**SN**	**Nat**
2002	87.7	87.3	86.3	87.5	85.8	84.5	92.5	91.7	90.8
2001	89.6	88.1	86.1	86.3	86.2	84.4	92.0	92.8	91.2
2000	86.9	87.2	84.9	85.3	86.1	83.8	89.9	92.2	90.2

- 2002 Attainment in **writing** is **IN LINE** with its statistical neighbours and **ABOVE** the national average;
- 2002 Attainment in **reading** is **IN LINE** with its statistical neighbours and **ABOVE** the national average;
- 2002 Attainment in **mathematics** is **IN LINE** with its statistical neighbours and **ABOVE** the national average.

Age 7 – KS1 Level 3 and above

	Writing			Reading			Mathematics		
Year	**LEA**	**SN**	**Nat**	**LEA**	**SN**	**Nat**	**LEA**	**SN**	**Nat**
2002	8.0	11.0	9.3	33.8	33.7	29.9	39.1	35.7	31.1
2001	7.8	11.5	9.4	31.2	32.6	28.8	29.6	31.4	27.6
2000	6.3	11.4	8.7	32.0	32.7	27.7	25.4	30.1	25.1

- 2002 Attainment in **writing** is **BELOW** its statistical neighbours and **IN LINE** with the national average;
- 2002 Attainment in **reading** is **IN LINE** its statistical neighbours and **ABOVE** the national average;
- 2002 Attainment in **mathematics** is **ABOVE** its statistical neighbours and **WELL ABOVE** the national average.

Age 11 – KS2 Level 4 and above

	English			Mathematics			Science		
Year	**LEA**	**SN**	**Nat**	**LEA**	**SN**	**Nat**	**LEA**	**SN**	**Nat**
2002	80.8	80.4	74.6	77.2	78.2	73.4	89.0	90.2	86.9
2001	81.3	80.3	75.1	77.1	74.9	70.7	90.2	90.8	87.9
2000	81.3	80.7	75.0	77.3	76.5	71.7	87.7	88.8	85.1

- 2002 Attainment in **English** is **IN LINE** with its statistical neighbours and **ABOVE** the national average;
- 2002 Attainment in **mathematics** is **IN LINE** with its statistical neighbours and **ABOVE** the national average;
- 2002 Attainment in **science** is **IN LINE** with its statistical neighbours and **ABOVE** the national average.

Age 11 – KS2 Level 5 and above

	English			Mathematics			Science		
Year	**LEA**	**SN**	**Nat**	**LEA**	**SN**	**Nat**	**LEA**	**SN**	**Nat**
2002	41.3	35.5	28.0	36.3	34.4	27.1	44.0	44.6	37.4
2001	33.7	34.6	28.0	33.0	30.9	24.6	40.5	38.3	33.7
2000	35.8	35.0	28.1	33.8	30.1	24.3	44.4	41.7	34.2

- 2002 Attainment in **English** is **ABOVE** its statistical neighbours and **WELL ABOVE** the national average;
- 2002 Attainment in **mathematics** is **IN LINE** with its statistical neighbours and **WELL ABOVE** the national average:
- 2002 Attainment in **science** is **IN LINE** with its statistical neighbours and **ABOVE** the national average:

Age 14 – KS3 Level 5 and above

	English			Mathematics			Science		
Year	**LEA**	**SN**	**Nat**	**LEA**	**SN**	**Nat**	**LEA**	**SN**	**Nat**
2002	75.4	73.9	67.1	79.9	72.5	68.0	77.9	71.4	67.5
2001	75.5	71.3	65.1	78.9	71.5	67.1	76.1	69.0	66.6
2000	71.0	70.1	64.1	74.5	69.2	65.5	71.9	62.1	60.0

- 2002 Attainment in **English** is **IN LINE** with its statistical neighbours and **ABOVE** the national average;
- 2002 Attainment in **mathematics** is **ABOVE** its statistical neighbours and **WELL ABOVE** the national average;
- 2002 Attainment in **science** is **ABOVE** its statistical neighbours and the national average.

Age 14 – KS3 Level 6 and above

	English			Mathematics			Science		
Year	**LEA**	**SN**	**Nat**	**LEA**	**SN**	**Nat**	**LEA**	**SN**	**Nat**
2002	44.9	39.0	32.5	58.9	52.3	45.7	47.8	39.1	33.4
2001	46.6	40.3	32.0	61.1	48.8	42.9	49.6	38.4	34.1
2000	38.2	34.4	28.2	57.6	46.8	41.2	45.3	32.9	29.5

- 2002 Attainment in **English** is **ABOVE** its statistical neighbours and **WELL ABOVE** the national average;
- 2002 Attainment in **mathematics** is **ABOVE** its statistical neighbours and **WELL ABOVE** the national average;
- 2002 Attainment in **science** is **ABOVE** its statistical neighbours and **WELL ABOVE** the national average.

Age 14 – KS3 Level 7 and above

	English			Mathematics			Science		
Year	**LEA**	**SN**	**Nat**	**LEA**	**SN**	**Nat**	**LEA**	**SN**	**Nat**
2002	20.8	15.6	10.8	35.0	27.5	20.4	21.9	15.8	10.7
2001	15.3	15.1	9.3	37.3	26.3	19.5	19.3	12.5	8.2
2000	13.2	10.4	6.8	34.7	24.0	18.1	17.9	9.9	6.5

- 2002 Attainment in **English** is **ABOVE** its statistical neighbours and **WELL ABOVE** the national average;
- 2002 Attainment in **mathematics** is **ABOVE** its statistical neighbours and **WELL ABOVE** the national average;
- 2002 Attainment in **science** is **WELL ABOVE** its statistical neighbours and the national average.

Age 16 – GCSE/GNVQ 5+ A*-C

	Overall			Boys			Girls		
Year	**LEA**	**SN**	**Nat**	**LEA**	**SN**	**Nat**	**LEA**	**SN**	**Nat**
2002	61.0	56.4	49.9	55.9	51.1	44.8	65.4	61.9	55.2
2001	62.0	54.8	48.8	56.0	49.9	43.6	67.4	60.0	54.1
2000	62.3	55.6	47.8	55.3	49.5	42.5	68.1	62.0	53.2

- 2002 Attainment of LEA overall at **5+ A*-C** is **ABOVE** its statistical neighbours, and **WELL ABOVE** the national average;
- For **boys**, performance is **ABOVE** its statistical neighbours and **WELL ABOVE** the national average;
- For **girls**, performance is **IN LINE** with its statistical neighbours and **WELL ABOVE** the national average.

Age 16 – GCSE/GNVQ 1+ A*-G

	Overall			Boys			Girls		
Year	**LEA**	**SN**	**Nat**	**LEA**	**SN**	**Nat**	**LEA**	**SN**	**Nat**
2002	93.4	95.6	96.1	91.8	94.9	95.6	94.8	96.3	96.6
2001	94.9	95.8	96.0	94.4	95.2	95.5	95.4	96.3	96.5
2000	94.2	95.7	95.8	93.2	94.5	95.2	95.0	97.0	96.4

- 2002 Attainment of LEA at **1+ A*-G** is **BELOW** its statistical neighbours and **WELL BELOW** the national average;
- For **boys**, performance is **BELOW** its statistical neighbours and **WELL BELOW** the national average;
- For **girls**, performance is **BELOW** its statistical neighbours and **BELOW** the national average.

Age 16 – GCSE/GNVQ Average Point Score (APS)

	Overall			Boys			Girls		
Year	**LEA**	**SN**	**Nat**	**LEA**	**SN**	**Nat**	**LEA**	**SN**	**Nat**
2002	45.5	43.2	39.8	43.9	40.5	37.2	46.8	46.1	42.4
2001	45.9	42.2	39.1	43.5	39.3	36.6	48.1	45.2	41.8
2000	45.3	42.4	38.6	43.5	39.3	36.0	46.8	45.8	41.3

- 2002 Attainment of LEA for **APS** is **ABOVE** its statistical neighbours and **WELL ABOVE** the national average;
- For **boys**, performance is **ABOVE** its statistical neighbours and **WELL ABOVE** the national average;
- For **girls**, performance is **IN LINE** with its statistical neighbours and **WELL ABOVE** the national average.

Age 18 – A-Level APS

Year	LEA	SN	National
2001	18.9	18.7	17.4
2000	18.4	19.5	18.2
1999	17.4	19	17.9

- 2001 Attainment of LEA for **APS** is **IN LINE** with its statistical neighbours and **ABOVE** the national average. (This only takes into account GCE A/AS results, whereas previous years also included Advanced GNVQ results.)

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Primary schools

36 primary schools have been inspected in this LEA:

%	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
LEA	29.7	59.5	8.1	2.7
SN	19.8	58.4	21	0.8
Nat	17.7	57.5	23.1	1.7

Secondary schools

10 secondary schools have been inspected in this LEA:

%	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
LEA	30.0	50.0	20.0	0.0
SN	16.9	50.8	30.5	1.7
Nat	14.5	53.6	28.7	3.2

QUALITY OF TEACHING IN 2001

Primary schools

71% of teaching was graded good or better for this LEA (63% for SN, 64% for Nat)
97% of teaching was graded satisfactory or better for this LEA (95% for SN, 96% for Nat)

Secondary schools

97% of teaching was graded 1-3 for this LEA (66% for SN, 66% for Nat)
100% of teaching was graded 1-4 for this LEA (94% for SN, 85% for Nat)

ATTENDANCE

	Primary			Secondary		
Year	**LEA**	**SN**	**Nat**	**LEA**	**SN**	**Nat**
2002	94.5	94.1	94.2	92.2	91.7	91.1
2001	93.0	93.8	93.9	91.9	91.1	90.8
2000	94.7	94.2	94.4	92.2	91.7	91.4

- 2001 primary school attendance is **ABOVE** its statistical neighbours, and **IN LINE** with the national average;

- 2001 secondary school attendance is **IN LINE** with its statistical neighbours, and **ABOVE** the national average.

EXCLUSIONS

	Primary			Secondary		
Year	**LEA**	**SN**	**Nat**	**LEA**	**SN**	**Nat**
2001	0.1	0.2	0.3	1.7	2.4	2.1
2000	0.1	0.3	0.3	2.9	2.7	2.7
1999	0	0.3	0.3	3.4	4.2	3.2

- 2001 primary school exclusions are **BELOW** its statistical neighbours, and **BELOW** the national average;

- 2001 secondary school exclusions are **BELOW** its statistical neighbours, and **IN LINE** with the national average.

EDP TARGETS

	Actual 2001	Actual 2002	LEA Targets				Schools' aggregated targets	
			2001	2002	2003	2004	2002	2003
Level 4+ English	81	81	84	88	88	88	87	86
Level 4+ Maths	77	77	80	85	86	87	87	87
GCSE % 5+ A-C	62	61	63	66	67	68	61	67
GCSE % 1+ A-G	95	93	98	98	98	98	94	96
GCSE APS	46	46	46	47	48	48.5	47	48
KS3 Level 5+ English	75	75		76	78	79		81
Maths	79	80		78	80	82		80
Science	76	78		75	76	77		78
ICT	83	76	74	75	76	77		
Primary % Unauthorised absence	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.25	0.2		
Secondary % Unauthorised absence	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.5		
Exclusions	8	2		14	14	14		

APPENDIX C

Context of the inspection

- This inspection of Kingston upon Thames LEA was carried out by Ofsted in conjunction with the Audit Commission under section 38 of the Education Act 1997. The inspection used the *Framework for the Inspection of Local Education Authorities (December 2001*). The inspection focussed on the effectiveness of the LEA's work to support school improvement. The inspection also took account of the Local Government Act 1999, insofar as it relates to work undertaken by the LEA on Best Value.

- The inspection was based on a range of material, which included self-evaluation undertaken by the LEA and data, some of which was provided by the LEA. That material also included school inspection information; HMI monitoring reports; audit reports; documentation from, and discussions with, the LEA's officers and elected members; focus groups of headteachers and governors; staff in other departments at the local authority; diocesan representatives; and other agencies and the LEA's partners.*)* In addition, the inspection team considered the earlier Ofsted/Audit Commission report on this LEA published in 1998. A questionnaire, seeking views on aspects of the work of the LEA, was available to all schools, and the inspection team considered its results. The response rate to the questionnaire was 88 per cent.

- For each inspected function of the LEA, an inspection team agrees a numerical grade. An inspection team may make up to 54 key inspection judgements. An inspection judgement is made against criteria for each inspected function of the LEA. These criteria, (and the guidance notes on functions of an LEA that may be inspected by Ofsted), can be found on the Ofsted website. The numerical grades awarded for the judgements made in this inspection are to be found in Appendix A, along with short explanations of what each numerical grade represents. Judgements on inspected functions of an LEA are made during the inspection of the LEA and indicate the effectiveness of the LEA's performance of individual functions at the time of the inspection. The numerical grades awarded by the inspection team complement the areas of the report, which comment on the individual functions scrutinised on this inspection, and, as such, must be considered in the light of those comments.

- Some of the grades are used in the Comprehensive Performance Assessment profile for the education service. It is intended that the CPA for education will be updated frequently so the grades from this inspection will contribute to the next annual assessment.