



**OFFICE FOR STANDARDS  
IN EDUCATION**

**INSPECTION OF  
HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM  
LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY**

**June 2000**

**OFFICE OF HER MAJESTY'S CHIEF INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS  
in conjunction with the  
AUDIT COMMISSION**

## **CONTENTS**

## **PARAGRAPHS**

**INTRODUCTION** 1- 3

**COMMENTARY** 4-10

### **SECTION 1: THE LEA STRATEGY FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

Context 11 -13

Performance 14-21

Funding 22-28

Council Structure 29-30

The Education Development Plan 31-37

The Allocation of Resources to Priorities 38-39

Recommendations 40

### **SECTION 2: SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

Implications of other functions 41-42

Monitoring, challenge, support, intervention 43-47

Collection and Analysis of Data 48-50

Support for Literacy 51-55

Support for Numeracy 56-59

Support for ICT 60-64

Support for Schools Causing Concern 65-69

Support for School Management 70-74

Support for Governors 75

Support for Early Years 76-78

Other Curriculum Initiatives 79-81

Recommendations 82

### **SECTION 3: STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT**

Corporate Planning 83-91

Management Services 92-100

Recommendations 101

### **SECTION 4: SPECIAL EDUCATION PROVISION**

Strategy 102-104

Statutory Obligations 105-108

Improvement and Value for Money 109-111

Recommendations 112

## **SECTION 5: ACCESS**

Admissions and the Supply of School Places	113-118
The Asset Management Plan	119-120
Provision of Education Otherwise Than At School	121-126
Attendance	127-129
Behaviour Support	130-131
Health, Safety, Welfare, Child Protection	132-133
Looked-After Children	134-135
Ethnic Minority Children	136-140
Support for Travellers	141
Measures to combat social exclusion	142-144
Recommendations	145

## **APPENDIX: RECOMMENDATIONS**

## INTRODUCTION

1. This inspection 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*, which focuses on the effectiveness of local education authority (LEA) work to support school improvement.
2. The inspection was partly based on data, some of which was provided by the LEA, on school inspection information and audit reports, on documentation and discussions with LEA members, groups of headteachers, parents and governors, staff in the education department and in other Council departments and representatives of the LEA's partners. In addition, a questionnaire seeking views on aspects of the LEA's work was circulated to 55 schools. The response rate was 75 per cent.
3. The inspection also involved studies of the effectiveness of particular aspects of the LEA's work through visits to nine primary, five secondary, three special schools, a pupil referral unit and a study support unit. The visits tested the views of governors, headteachers and other staff on the key aspects of the LEA's strategy. The visits also considered whether the support that is provided by the LEA contributes, where appropriate, to the discharge of the LEA's statutory duties, is effective in contributing to improvements in the school, and provides value for money.

## COMMENTARY

4. Hammersmith and Fulham is one of the smallest and most densely populated London boroughs. It serves an ethnically diverse population in which there are extremes of poverty and affluence.

5. The borough has a confident and innovative Council that has benefited from stability and clarity of vision in its political leadership. Elected members give a strong lead and have consistently made education a high priority, and funded it accordingly. The education department benefits from the strong leadership of the director and her senior management team.

6. The LEA is very well run and enjoys the confidence of its schools. Consultation is good. The LEA has played a key part in helping to improve the management and quality of teaching in schools. Its impact on standards is, though, not as impressive. Standards have improved over time but are still below the national average by the time pupils leave primary school. GCSE results have risen faster than the national rate and are now in line with the national average. However, there is a wide variation between the results achieved by the eight secondary schools; three achieved results in 1999 that were well above average, whilst the remainder were below average. Attendance, although improving, is below the national average in primary and well below in secondary schools. Permanent and fixed term exclusions have dropped significantly over the past three years, but still remain unacceptably high.

7. The schools face what are often difficult circumstances. The pupil population is highly mobile, and includes increasing numbers of refugees who need additional support. The schools with available places, which are already working in demanding contexts, receive disproportionate numbers of refugees. In this context it is difficult to raise standards. The LEA and its schools share a determination to improve pupils' attainment, but recognise that what has been achieved to date is not enough.

8. As an organisation, the LEA has many strengths. It is meeting its statutory duties well. All functions are carried out effectively, apart from support for information and communication technology (ICT) in the curriculum, which is currently unsatisfactory, although improving. Services are generally of a good quality and highly valued by schools. The LEA carries out the following particularly well:

- Support for the use of performance data and target setting;
- Support for literacy and numeracy;
- Monitoring, supporting and challenging its schools;
- Support for school management and governance;
- Support for behaviour and attendance;
- Support for social inclusion;
- Support for curriculum initiatives;
- Collaboration with external agencies;
- Financial advice to schools; and
- Personnel services.

9. The LEA has no major weaknesses. However, in order to continue the process of improvement, the education service, including the schools where appropriate, need to address:

- The speed of progress towards validating schools' own self-reviews;
- The packaging of the service level agreements;
- The information given to schools to help them evaluate the cost effectiveness of central services;
- The responsiveness and cost of the buildings technical and construction services;
- The unacceptably high level of budget balances in schools; and
- The vacancies on governing bodies.

10. There is much to admire in Hammersmith and Fulham. The LEA is well led. It plans well, and has good systems for internal review and performance management. It is focused upon school improvement and the priority attached by the Council to education is reflected in generous funding. This report recognises the LEA's determination to improve standards in all of its schools and includes some suggestions for improvement. The recommendations entail a change in emphasis with the onus for improvement being shifted more to the schools.

## **SECTION 1: THE LEA STRATEGY FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

### **Context**

11. Hammersmith and Fulham is one of the smallest and most densely populated London boroughs. It serves an area of stark contrasts, with poverty and affluence side by side. Although the average income is above the national average, a third of households receive income support, and the borough is ranked as the eighteenth poorest in England according to the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions index of local deprivation. Over a third of pupils are from a diverse range of minority ethnic groups, including many Black African and Caribbean, and over 30 per cent of pupils have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is twice the national average. A higher than average proportion of pupils have statements of special educational needs.

12. Many of the borough's schools are faced with highly mobile pupil populations and increasing numbers of refugees, many of whom speak no English. Nearly two thirds of primary schools have mobility rates above 30 per cent, that is where pupils have not been at the school for the whole of Key Stage 2. Half of the secondary schools have mobility rates greater than 30 per cent. At present 1173 pupils (7.2 per cent of the school population) have refugee status. Those schools with surplus places, often already working in difficult contexts, have disproportionate numbers of refugees.

13. Hammersmith and Fulham maintains 56 schools, comprising three nursery schools, two early years centres, 36 primary, eight secondary, six special, two pupil referral units and one combined sixth form. A free nursery place is available for every three and four year old in the borough whose parents want one. There are two beacon schools, one secondary and one special, and a specialist arts school. Nearly a third of the schools are voluntary aided and two of the secondary schools take comparatively few pupils from Hammersmith and Fulham. Of the eight secondary schools, three are for girls only and two are for boys.

### **Performance**

14. Pupils' attainment on entry to education is just below average overall, but with wide variations between schools.

15. Schools perform close to or slightly better than those in similar LEAs, although below the national averages, in English and mathematics tests at the end of key stages 1 and 2. Results for the 1999 Key Stage 2 tests were an improvement on the previous year, but the increase over three years was much lower than that for similar LEAs and for schools nationally.

16. Achievement at the end of Key Stage 3 is in line with the national average in English and mathematics, but below it in science. Hammersmith and Fulham was ranked as the most improved LEA in terms of GCSE results, with an increase of 13.6% five A\* to C grades between 1996 and 1999. The average point score per pupil was above the national average in 1999, and attainment in terms of the percentage of pupils attaining one GCSE A\* to G and five A\* to C grades was in line with the national average. This good performance conceals a wide variation between

schools; three of the eight schools achieved results in 1999 that were well above average, whilst the remainder were below or well below average.

17. The inspection evidence shows that schools with high levels of pupil mobility generally perform less well than those with more stable populations. For example, the LEA's analysis of performance shows that 'mobile' Key Stage 2 pupils achieved an average of 0.5 levels below other pupils in reading and writing, and 0.4 below in the mathematics test in 1999. The situation is even more stark in the borough's secondary schools, where there appears to be a clear relationship between high mobility and poor GCSE results. In the school with the poorest GCSE results, 60% of the Year 11 cohort had not been present in Year 7.

18. Sixth form results are better than the national average. The average point score for two or more A levels rose from 16.5 in 1995 to 19.4 in 1999, above the national average and well above that for the LEA's statistical neighbours. The average point score for less than two A levels was in line with statistical neighbours and above the national average.

19. Evidence from school inspection reports reveals that Hammersmith and Fulham schools are improving. In the first cycle of inspections, there were fewer good primary or secondary schools than in similar LEAs or nationally. The borough's primary schools have made greater progress in their school climate and management. The secondary schools inspected twice have made good progress in improving the quality of education and school management. The quality of teaching in secondary schools has also improved significantly. There are, however, too few secondary schools for reliable comparisons to be made with the national picture.

20. The exclusion rate, although falling, is much higher than the national average. Attendance has risen steadily over the past few years but is still below the national average. The rate of unauthorised absences is particularly high.

21. Since 1993 the LEA has had three schools, all secondaries, in special measures. This represents a high proportion of its secondary schools. Of these three schools, one has since been closed and the other two have been removed from special measures, although they remain with serious weaknesses. Two primary schools, one special school and one PRU have been identified during inspections since 1997 as having serious weaknesses.

## **Funding**

22. Hammersmith and Fulham has consistently spent more on education than its education Standard Spending Assessment (SSA). In recent years the SSA has grown faster than actual expenditure. In 1996/97 the education budget was 18.4 per cent above SSA, in 1999/00, at £67 million, it is 5.9 per cent above. However, the Council has made significant budget reductions for other Council services in each of the past seven years. While the SSA, particularly that for education, has risen steadily in recent years, external funding to support the Authority's expenditure has fallen from 85.3 per cent to 77.0 per cent of its total SSA.

23. Features of schools' funding in Hammersmith and Fulham for 1999/00, compared with inner London boroughs and nationally, include:



- Overall, a net Local Schools Budget (LSB) of £3569 per pupil, which is above the inner London average of £3519;
- The Individual Schools Budget (ISB) for primary schools at £2330 per pupil, is slightly above the inner London average of £2282; the ISB for secondary pupils, at £3000 per pupil, is in line with the average of £3013;
- The LEA delegates 78.6 per cent of the LSB to schools, which is lower than the government's recommendation but above the inner London average of 77.0 per cent;
- Centrally retained expenditure on strategic management is modest compared with neighbours, at £113 per pupil, compared with the inner London average of £163;
- ? Central expenditure on SEN is a little below that for neighbours at £204 per pupil compared with £246, although this does not include the funding for statements of SEN, which is delegated to schools. The total spending on SEN, at 20 per cent of LSB, is in line with London boroughs but well above the England average of 15 per cent;
- The net budget for school improvement, at £39 per pupil, is lower than the inner London average of £51;
- The budget for access services is significantly higher than average, at £317 per pupil compared with £232; spending on school meals at £143 per pupil is well above average (£83) as is that for pupil support at £43 (average of £12); these last two reflect the LEA's strong commitment to combating poverty and disadvantage; and
- The LEA has a total standards fund revenue allocation of £252 per pupil of which £58 is for the Ethnic Minorities and Travellers Achievement Grant; this compares with inner London averages of £359 and £136 respectively.

24. Overall, the education service and its schools are funded well compared with similar LEAs.

25. Extensive consultation with schools took place as part of the process of setting the LEA budget for 1999/00. This consultation included revisions to the funding formula in the light of the fair funding legislation. The funding formula recognises the additional educational needs of refugee children and those living in temporary accommodation. It does not, however, include an element to meet the costs of high levels of pupil mobility and turnover during the school year.

26. Schools in the borough built up budget balances amounting to £3.7 million at the end of March 1999, of which £2.4 million was held by primary schools and £727k by a single secondary school. For primary schools this represents 12 per cent of their annual budget share and an increase of £0.6 million since March 1998. These balances are too high, well above the five per cent level recommended by the Audit Commission. The LEA monitors budget balances and challenges those schools with excessive balances. Most schools do have appropriate plans to use their balances. However, the level of these balances is unacceptable, particularly in view of the difficult contexts faced by many of the schools. The LEA and its schools must continue to take vigorous action to reduce these balances.

27. There are good systems in place to monitor central expenditure during the course of the year and to take remedial action if needed. The deputy for education,

supported by officers of the education and finance departments, presents regular budget monitoring reports to the mayor's board.

28. The LEA has successfully attracted additional funding for education from external sources. It has several projects funded by the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) and will receive nearly £0.5 million as part of the Excellence in Cities initiative. It has made good use of funds from a variety of sources, including asset sales, to increase capital funds to improve school buildings.

### **Council Structure**

29. The Council was quick to respond to the Government's modernising agenda and in June 1998 it replaced its committee-based structure with a cabinet, headed by a mayor. The cabinet comprises the mayor, six deputies and the chief whip. The mayor and deputies produce proposals on matters within their areas of responsibility, after appropriate consultation with officers, their fellow councillors, local residents and interest groups. An education and leisure scrutiny panel scrutinises educational proposals as well as discussing every school inspection report and reviewing progress made by schools with serious weaknesses. The panel includes representatives from parent governors as well as from teachers, Dioceses and the community.

30. The changes have been received with almost universal approval from the headteachers, governors, the opposition spokesperson and officers spoken to during the inspection. The scrutiny panel is seen as enabling much more rigorous and detailed discussions of educational matters than previously and with less political point scoring. Decisions are taken more quickly and lines of accountability are clearer. Although most people interviewed were enthusiastic, a few representatives considered that the changes have resulted in fewer opportunities for them to influence decisions.

### **The Education Development Plan (EDP)**

31. The EDP is well conceived and carefully constructed. It reflects the strong commitment of the LEA to school improvement and has a clear focus on teaching and learning. The approach and emphasis are entirely consistent with the LEA's statement that the 'learner is at the heart of the authority's mission'.

32. The EDP is based on a very thorough and impressive analysis of evidence. This is included in the chief inspector's annual performance review, which is presented to schools after being scrutinised by the education and leisure scrutiny panel. The review of 1998/99 is particularly thorough and includes detailed analyses of results, for example by ethnicity, stage of English fluency, free school meals and pupils' gender as well as evidence from OFSTED inspection reports and the inspectorate's own monitoring. The plan is a working document and is well used by the relevant services to inform their individual plans. Very good progress is being made with the implementation of the EDP.

33. The priorities in the EDP are:

- To raise standards of literacy and enhance the teaching of literacy across the

curriculum;

- To raise standards in mathematics and enhance the teaching of numeracy across the curriculum;
- To raise standards of achievement through developing the quality of the curriculum;
- To develop the use of assessment to raise standards;
- To raise standards through increasing opportunities for extended learning;
- To increase participation in schools;
- To improve the quality of leadership, management and quality assurance; and
- To implement the LEA's strategy for school improvement including identifying and supporting schools causing concern.

34. These priorities represent a good mix of national priorities as well as having a strong local flavour. The activities are well targeted on the whole and with relatively clear and measurable success criteria. There was insufficient focus in the original EDP on the achievement of boys and ethnic minorities, despite these being identified as areas of concern by the LEA. Additional activities in the revised EDP, particularly in the third and sixth priorities, go some way towards addressing these issues.

35. The LEA is justifiably concerned about the needs of schools with high pupil mobility and large influxes of refugees. The LEA has carried out a useful analysis of performance in relation to mobility (see paragraph 17). These issues are, however, relatively underdeveloped in the EDP.

36. The LEA has agreed some challenging targets with its schools. For example, rises of 17 per cent and 15 per cent are needed in Key Stage 2 English and mathematics respectively to meet the 2002 targets. The targets for GCSE, exclusions and attendance have all been amended to take account of improvements in these areas and are achievable. The LEA plans to revise its target for qualifications gained by looked-after children as data on these pupils improves.

37. Consultation over the EDP was extremely good. In addition to the formal mechanisms of consultation, small working groups of teachers, inspectors and representatives from other agencies, were set up to decide on the detail of each priority. In this way, practitioners were able to influence the activities. Steering groups meet to oversee progress with the plans. The LEA paid heed to suggestions from the consultation and made some significant changes as a result. It is not, therefore, surprising that headteachers and co-ordinators showed an unusually good familiarity with and knowledge about the EDP and its priorities during the inspection.

### **The Allocation of Resources to Priorities**

38. Education is the Council's top priority and it has consistently spent above SSA in support of this. It has a strong commitment to combating poverty and social exclusion, and has funded school meals and pupil support accordingly. The SEN funding mechanisms are designed to promote whole school provision and hence to support inclusive approaches. Within the EDP, resources are targeted appropriately.

39. The Council is well advanced in its preparations for Best Value. Pilot reviews have been undertaken of the play service and the library service, both of which are in the education department and contribute to the EDP. The school survey indicates that schools are satisfied with the effectiveness with which the LEA evaluates services to schools. However, although schools evaluate services that they buy back from the LEA, there is no mechanism for them to evaluate formally the effectiveness of the LEA's centrally funded support.

#### 40. **Recommendations**

- Consider how the funding formula can take better account of the needs of schools with high levels of pupil turnover;
- Work with schools to ensure that they make optimal use of their annual budgets in order to reduce balances;
- Establish a mechanism by which schools can be actively involved in the evaluation of the LEA's services, particularly those that are centrally funded.

## **SECTION 2: SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

### **Implications of other functions**

41. There are many strengths in the LEA's support for school improvement. The inspection judged the overall effectiveness of support to be good in fourteen of the schools visited and satisfactory in the other three.

42. The strategic management of the education department is effective and makes a significant contribution to school improvement. Good support is provided by the majority of services, but in particular the inspectorate and advisory service, the research and statistics team, the education social work officers, the behaviour support team and the Ethnic Minorities and Travellers Achievement Grant (EMTAG) team. The SEN support services are also well regarded, and are having a positive impact. Good work is undertaken by the personnel service in relation to general personnel matters, as well as on issues to do with teacher competency, recruitment and retention; these have a direct impact on the quality of education in schools. The service currently having the least impact on improvement is support for ICT in the curriculum. These services are considered in detail elsewhere in the report.

### **Monitoring, challenge, support, and intervention**

43. The LEA has developed an effective approach towards monitoring, supporting and challenging its schools. This is mainly carried out by the inspectorate and advisory service, which draws appropriately on other services as necessary. Schools are placed into three broad categories for support: basic, priority and serious weaknesses. Primary and special schools each get two days in-school monitoring and support per year, whilst secondaries receive three days. Extra days are given to monitor newly qualified teachers and to deal with appraisal, appointments and exclusions. Schools in the priority and serious weakness categories quite properly receive additional days according to their needs.

44. These school visits are used productively by inspectors to agree and monitor three targets for the year. These targets spring from the school's development plan, but the link inspector challenges the school when they are not the most important. All but one school buys back into a service level agreement for additional support and monitoring; this additional time is woven effectively into the plans for the inspectors' visits. Much of the inspectors' time in school is devoted to the joint monitoring of lessons and pupils' work. Headteachers and/or subject leaders are involved in this monitoring, so that they can learn from it. During the inspection, schools spoke very highly of this process and how it had improved the quality of teaching as well as their skills in evaluating lessons and giving feedback. Some headteachers spoke of the rigour that had been brought to their own practice and the added confidence given to the school.

45. Schools find the work of the LEA's inspectorate very challenging. It causes them to question and justify what they are doing and has made them much more conscious of target setting. The inspectors produce reports on the progress made by the schools and an annual review that is presented to the governing body. Details of these reports and review are negotiated with headteachers. The annual reviews are

very thorough. They provide useful information such as a progress report against the three targets and a range of performance indicators (for example, attainment, financial information, attendance data and absence rates of staff). The frequency of reporting, although welcomed by schools, will be increasingly unnecessary as schools become more confident and proficient at self-evaluation.

46. The deployment of inspectors to carry out this monitoring and support is very effective and well managed. The inspectors are of a high calibre and there is an unusually good level of consistency in the quality of service offered to schools. This is achieved through careful recruitment and effective induction and internal monitoring. Schools are confident that if they have complaints about the performance of an inspector or consultant then this will be dealt with rapidly. Most inspectors and consultants are accredited and practising OFSTED inspectors, and they make use of the rigorous analysis of evidence in their work with schools.

47. The LEA has stated its intention to reduce the amount of time spent in its schools, particularly the very good schools, as they become better at self-evaluating. This is an appropriate aim. The LEA has not, though, set out in detail how it intends to do this and the timescale for implementing school self-review is too slow.

### **Collection and Analysis of Data**

48. The provision of performance data and guidance on their use are strengths. The LEA's research and statistics team produces a comprehensive pack of data for each school. This data enables schools to set their performance (including attendance and exclusions) in the context of other schools locally and nationally and to analyse it by gender, fluency in English, ethnicity and eligibility for free school meals. The research and statistics team assists link inspectors in producing preliminary targets for negotiation with schools. Schools are able to assess, track and target individuals and sub-groups of pupils. There is clear guidance to inspectors and other LEA staff on the use of the data in schools and a range of training courses for headteachers and other senior staff.

49. The rapidly increasing impact of pupil mobility, including but not exclusively as a result of the arrival of refugees and asylum seekers, has highlighted the need to relate performance to continuity of attendance and acquisition of English. The LEA analyses mobility by the percentage of pupils who take statutory tests in the same school at the end of two successive key stages and then shows the value added for mobile and "non-mobile" pupils. This is very good practice and helps schools to see the need to adopt strategies for early intervention and support.

50. In the school survey, the provision of data and guidance on its use were rated as good in primary schools and very good in secondary. This was confirmed by the school visits. Schools were very complimentary about the input of the LEA and many were using the data extremely effectively.

### **Support for Literacy**

51. Support for literacy and the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy (NLS) are good. Despite this, the overall performance of schools in the Key Stage 2

tests was lower than expected last year. The reasons for this lack of progress are not clear, as the LEA is doing all the right things. Two possibilities emerge. Firstly, results were lower than expected in some schools because of the mobility of their pupils. Secondly, the LEA has identified the need for schools to prepare more thoroughly for the tests. The target for 2002 is very demanding, but schools share the LEA's determination to reach this target and a range of appropriate strategies has been put in place to achieve it.

52. The support is well managed and staff have a high level of expertise. Literacy lessons are monitored effectively by link inspectors and the consultant. The NLS manager uses evidence from this monitoring to identify training needs and to adapt the content of training programmes. The training and support are good, as attested by the school survey, recent visits of HMI and interviews with headteachers and their staff. The consultant's time is tailored to the needs of each school and is flexibly and responsively deployed between demonstration lessons, observation and focused INSET. Six schools received intensive support in 1998/9. Four of the six met or exceeded their Key Stage 2 target. Of the two that did not, one is particularly affected by pupil mobility.

53. The NLS builds on the use of Reading Recovery in 20 primary schools. Reading Recovery, which is funded through the SRB, has been effective in raising the attainment of groups of targeted pupils in Key Stage 1.

54. Support for literacy in Key Stage 3 is pursued through the Building Bridges project. This project involves collaboration between clusters of primary and secondary teachers, in order to develop better continuity in the teaching of literacy. In addition all secondary schools have been offered INSET to help them develop whole school literacy policies.

55. Literacy is also addressed through priority five in the EDP, with study support, family literacy in two primary schools and the early years strategy. Visits during the inspection, including the study support centre and early years excellence centre, demonstrated the effectiveness of these initiatives.

### **Support for Numeracy**

56. Support for numeracy is very good. Results for the 1999 Key Stage 2 tests were lower than expected, but it is too early to assess the impact of the National Numeracy Strategy (NNS) on these standards. The reasons for the disappointing results are likely to be the same as for literacy (see paragraph 51 above).

57. The LEA has embraced the NNS vigorously. It has established expert, well managed support that is highly regarded by schools. The quality of training has been excellent and, in the view of some schools, inspiring. Recent visits by HMI to four primary schools, one of which is receiving intensive support, confirm the schools' view that the support has been a critical factor in developing staff confidence, knowledge and skill. All special schools attended the training and one of the leading mathematics teachers is being appointed from a special school. Accredited training is also provided for classroom assistants.

58. The mathematics inspector manages the NNS. The numeracy and literacy consultants are, however, managed by the head of the literacy support team. This arrangement works well and enables the two strategies to work in harness, especially in the seven schools that are receiving intensive support in both.

59. Numeracy also features in the Building Bridges project and has helped to achieve a significant improvement in one secondary school at Key Stage 3. All secondary schools are involved in the CAME project (see paragraph 79) with the Thinking Skills approach now embedded in schemes of work. The LEA has helped four secondary schools develop numeracy across the curriculum, offering practical help on such aspects as drawing graphs. The LEA's study support centres work with Year 6 and secondary pupils to improve their numeracy skills through ICT.

### **Support for information and communication technology (ICT)**

60. The LEA's support for ICT in the curriculum is unsatisfactory, although it is beginning to improve. There is good coherence in the overall planning of ICT developments in the borough, but progress has been slow.

61. Standards in ICT in Hammersmith and Fulham are generally below average in primary schools, but more in line in secondary schools. There are signs of improvements in primary schools in recent inspections, although the sample is too small to interpret with confidence. The LEA has recognised ICT as a weakness and targeted support for schools as part of the EDP. Activities are carefully planned, with clear success criteria. The ICT development plan includes an excellent overview of the relationship between all the various ICT plans and developments.

62. The strategy for ICT in the curriculum is clearly matched to the National Grid for Learning (NGfL) timetable. By 2001 all schools should have access to the Internet. There will be an LEA website and intranet, and wider community access to resources and training. Appropriate plans are therefore in place, albeit less quickly than in some LEAs. The LEA's target ratios of computers to pupils by 2002 are 1:5 in secondary and 1:10 in primary. The LEA is aware of the culture shift required in some schools if these targets are to be achieved. Investment needs to rise from an average of £5000 each year from the NGfL allocations to a total, including the school's own budget contribution, of nearly £15000.

63. The effectiveness of support for ICT in the curriculum and the perception of it in schools have been seriously affected by problems with the introduction of NGfL. The LEA and schools lay these mainly at the door of the main contractor, who provided poor service on the installation of cabling and software. Not surprisingly, therefore, only 40 per cent of schools visited rated support for ICT as good and many considered it unsatisfactory.

64. There was insufficient support for ICT in the curriculum. The LEA has responded by creating a part-time advisory teacher post to support the ICT inspector. From April 2000, this support will increase through the Excellence in Cities programme. Advice on training providers for the use of the New Opportunities Fund is regarded by schools as helpful.



## **Support for Schools Causing Concern**

65. The LEA's support for schools causing concern is good in many respects. All of the current five schools and one PRU with serious weaknesses are making at least satisfactory progress. The time taken for schools to improve has sometimes been too long, particularly in the case of the two secondary schools where, as yet, standards remain stubbornly low. The inspection evidence supports the LEA's view that progress has been impeded by factors such as: the high mobility of pupils; the significant numbers of refugees, often with little English; and difficulties in recruiting teachers for some subjects.

66. The LEA has identified a further 13 schools for extra support either because they cause concern or because they are working in 'vulnerable' contexts. The schools causing concern are rightly given extra support because of weaknesses in management, poor quality teaching and low attainment. The vulnerable schools are usually those with high levels of pupil mobility and staff turnover, and significant numbers of pupils with SEN. The number of schools identified for extra support is high, but reflects the level of need within the LEA. The evidence shows that the LEA's support is generally having a positive impact in these schools.

67. The LEA's approach towards schools causing concern has developed over the years. There is now a good sense of partnership with the schools and the amount of intervention varies directly with the needs of the schools. Nine of the seventeen schools visited during the inspection were in receipt of additional support. The headteachers were aware of the reasons for the extra support, although not always sure of how much they were entitled to. They valued the LEA's contribution, for example its advice on action planning and management, and support over personnel matters. Many of them noted how the intensity of the support had lessened over time, as their schools had improved and as their own skills as managers had increased. This positive picture was reflected in the school survey where support for schools with weaknesses was rated as good.

68. The LEA has been particularly effective in securing improvements in the management of its weakest schools. It has, for example, helped governing bodies recruit high quality senior managers. An advisory headteacher has been used to good effect by either working alongside an existing headteacher or standing in until a permanent appointment is made. This strong emphasis on improving management is beginning to pay off, as was evident in the schools visited during the inspection.

69. The director assumes overall responsibility for schools causing concern and plays an active part in overseeing and intervening in their support. This reflects the seriousness with which the LEA takes its responsibility towards improving its weak schools. The LEA revised its policy on schools causing concern in October 1999. It has since had cause to issue a formal warning to a school, after properly following procedures laid down in the Code of Practice for LEA-school relations. The policy does not set out clearly the criteria for identifying schools causing concern, although draft criteria have recently been produced.

## **Support for School Management**

70. The quality of LEA support for school management is good and beginning to have an impact. The EDP audit and consultation identified weaknesses in middle management in secondary schools and self-evaluation in primary schools. Difficulties in recruitment and retention of headteachers and governors were also highlighted. Priority 7 in the EDP sets out an appropriate range of activities to meet these needs. Validated self-review in primary schools is being piloted in six schools this year. Given the importance of helping all schools to become self-evaluating, the timetable for this activity is too slow.

71. Management training for middle managers and serving headteachers is good and highly valued by participants. Evidence from the school visits suggests that this training and the follow up work carried out by link inspectors are having a beneficial impact on the quality of management.

72. Strenuous efforts are being made by the personnel service to improve the recruitment and retention of teachers. The LEA has taken a lead in setting up a joint initiative with five other boroughs and a private employment agency to attract teachers to the area. This project has received money from the standards fund for two years. It is too early yet to evaluate the overall success of the project. Research on recruitment and retention has also been commissioned from the University of North London.

73. Induction of newly qualified teachers (NQTs) is good, with trained mentors and a flexible central programme. NQTs in school visits found the training relevant and welcomed the opportunity to meet other teachers in the LEA.

74. Support for new and acting headteachers is structured and effective, with mentoring and induction complemented by extra support from the link inspector. The LEA produces clear written guidance for schools on strategic planning, school development planning and monitoring school effectiveness. These are well regarded by schools and school visits found evidence of them being used effectively. Plans are in hand to introduce revised arrangements for appraisal, but formal headteacher appraisal has not taken place for four years.

## **Support for Governors**

75. Support for governors is effective and highly rated. School visits provided evidence of sensitive resolution by LEA officers and inspectors of problems faced by governors over admissions, premises, personnel and finance. Governors value the training available, although it is focused too much on the needs of new governors. They feel well supported in tackling issues of standards and school improvement. Many experienced governors contribute to the LEA's thinking through meetings of the governors' forum. Nevertheless, the recruitment and retention of governors remain a problem in some schools. There are too many vacancies for LEA representative governors. The Council's criteria for selection are too narrow and this limits the pool of potential LEA governors.

## **Support for Early Years**

76. Support for education in the early years is good. By the mid-1990s, nursery education was available for all three and four year olds in five nursery schools and thirty nursery classes. Recent developments have therefore focused on improving quality; links with voluntary and private providers through the Early Years Partnership; and, extending the choices available to parents and carers through the Early Years and Childcare Development Plan (EYCDP). In April 1999 an early excellence centre was established with DfEE support to bring a multi-disciplinary approach to provision for families in the White City neighbourhood.

77. Primary schools rate support for early years as good. The five nursery schools have until recently been concerned that the LEA might reduce provision. The creation of the early excellence centre has allayed these fears. The LEA is giving excellent support to the centre's management team to help cope with the task of bringing together thirty staff from different traditions and conditions of service.

78. The LEA has assembled a strong team of officers, inspector and advisory teacher to lead early years' developments. The links with social services and health are effective. The children's information service provides very good leaflets for parents and carers in nine languages. The Early Years Partnership works well with private and voluntary providers and has an excellent training programme available to all. This is particularly valued by the private sector where, due to a recruitment crisis, the development of existing staff is at a premium.

## **Other Curriculum Initiatives**

79. The LEA has shown an imaginative commitment to curriculum development through its support for the acquisition of Thinking Skills featured in EDP Priority 3. All secondary schools are involved in the Cognitive Acceleration through Science Education (CASE) and Mathematics Education (CAME) projects. These projects have been developed through good collaboration with King's College, London. Headteachers and the university report a beneficial impact on pupils' learning, with girls in particular becoming more active learners in science and mathematics lessons.

80. Last year the LEA extended CASE into Key Stage 1, using SRB funding for a large scale project in ten primary schools in the White City regeneration area. Teachers have been trained and are supported in school by an advisory teacher and university researcher. Headteachers are very enthusiastic about the project and class teachers appreciate the high quality professional development. More importantly, they find that the CASE approach to teaching and learning is having a beneficial effect on their teaching of literacy and numeracy. Both the Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 3 projects are too new for their impact on the national test results to be assessed, but all the signs are encouraging.

81. The arts are well supported, principally through the community leisure and learning and inspectorate divisions of the education department, and GCSE standards in arts subjects are often above the national average. There are

enterprising links with private sector organisations including the Lyric Hammersmith, Riverside Studios and a local independent school. The arts are also a distinctive feature of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme in the borough.

## **82. Recommendations**

- Set out clearly the plan to reduce the amount of in-school monitoring and support for the most successful schools, and move more quickly towards validated self-review;
- Continue to improve support for ICT in the curriculum through advice and training for teachers, and encourage schools to make more computers available to pupils;
- Make more explicit the criteria for schools causing concern;
- Widen the pool of potential LEA governors so as to reduce the vacancies on governing bodies.

## **SECTION 3: STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT**

### **Corporate Planning**

83. Hammersmith and Fulham's corporate planning is very effective. Well-established systems are in place for service planning and these have been adapted this year to focus more clearly on standards, performance indicators and performance targets. The service plans feed appropriately into the recently produced performance plan, required under Best Value legislation. The Council's priorities are: guaranteeing quality services; tackling social exclusion; and improving the organisation. These priorities permeate all the corporate plans.

84. The education department produces five-yearly strategic plans. The latest of these subsumes all the statutory and non-statutory plans as well as areas not covered by these for the next five years. It makes appropriate reference to other relevant plans, such as the EDP. Individual service plans are of a high quality and are consistent with the overall strategic plan. They include performance indicators, targets, and activities and are suitably costed. The various statutory plans, such as the EDP, the EYCDP and Quality Protects, are coherent, consistent and generally very well prepared. Proposals for Excellence in Cities are integrated into the EDP, including appropriate arrangements to improve provision for gifted and talented pupils.

85. The Council is working towards achieving Investors in People status, already achieved by two of the three divisions within the education department. Its internal procedures for monitoring the performance of services and individuals are rigorous and systematic.

86. Hammersmith and Fulham is a confident and innovative Council that has benefited from stability and clarity of vision in its political leadership. Elected members give a strong lead and have consistently made education a high priority. They are knowledgeable and kept well informed by officers. They have a good understanding of the issues facing education in the borough and are frequent visitors to schools. The advice and information provided by the education department through, for example, its annual performance reviews, are detailed, challenging and informative.

87. There has also been stability in the senior management within the education department. This has helped in the development of a very strong and coherent management team. The director has been in post since the inception of the LEA in 1990 and she and her management team have a clear vision for education in the borough, and a strong determination to succeed.

88. Relationships with schools are very good. There is an effective partnership and shared commitment to school improvement. Consultation is a strength. Schools are generally positive about the extent to which they feel that they can influence policies and procedures.

89. Education is a key part of the borough's regeneration strategy and communication with other departments, for example social services, is good. The

LEA has developed strong links with a number of partners and agencies. It has made the most of the organisations on its doorstep, such as the BBC, the Lyric Theatre, and High Street banks for projects with schools. The LEA's education business section has established very effective links with the careers service, local colleges and employers for work experience and mentoring of underachieving pupils. Links with independent schools in the borough are extremely good and used for mutual benefit. The LEA has very good links with higher education, for example through the Thinking Skills projects.

90. Links with the police are very good at a school level. The police have made a significant commitment to their work with schools, through for example four full time equivalent liaison officers. Communication is less effective at a strategic level and the LEA is not seen as being sufficiently forthcoming in providing information or promoting links.

91. The LEA has shown a strong commitment to improving the health of its pupils. Several initiatives have been set up to achieve this, overseen by a multi-agency steering group. Links with the local health authority are sound.

### **Management Services**

92. The LEA offers a full range of support services to schools. It produces an attractive portfolio which clearly outlines the services on offer and the terms on which they can be 'bought back'. Each year the LEA conducts a survey to gather feedback on service quality. Adverse comments are followed up and information gathered is used to improve service quality. Most services are well rated. Exceptions are building services and grounds maintenance.

93. The school management support (SMS) team offers financial support and advice, ICT support for administrative purposes and governors' services, including clerking of governing body meetings. The quality of these services is generally good and sometimes excellent. However, the service level agreements (SLAs) are offered to all schools for a single flat rate fee and then tailored according to schools' needs. If one aspect of the SLA is not needed then an enhanced level of another part of the package is offered *in lieu*. This packaging of services limits the schools' opportunity to exercise choice.

94. SMS also does much of the work on the funding formula, the preparation of school budgets and strategic monitoring of school budgets for the LEA. These joint responsibilities dovetail well and ensure that schools are supported by officers who have an understanding of the 'bigger picture'. The central finance department provides a satisfactory internal audit service. However, schools which start the year with a provisional budget can experience delays of up to six weeks in getting their budgets loaded onto the computer system. This makes budget monitoring difficult during this period.

95. Good support for school administrative ICT is included in the subscription to the SMS service. This service provides a telephone helpline and site visits as needed. It has recently installed remote support software to enhance the capability of the service.

96. Limited cable networks were available in the borough. So, wisely, it was decided to base the communications framework on the Internet, rather than construct a hard-wired infrastructure for schools and the education department. In the school survey all aspects of support for administrative ICT were rated at least satisfactory. Some schools described the substantial help that they had been given by LEA officers to re-configure their school administration systems.

97. The personnel unit provides good quality payroll, employee relations and general personnel services. All of these services are well regarded by schools. Several schools visited reported good support in dealing with competency and early retirement issues. While the payroll service is reliable, it is relatively expensive and will be subject to a full Best Value review early in the 2000/01 financial year.

98. Building technical services (BTS) provides a comprehensive range of professional building related services. Schools regard these services as expensive and not always responsive. BTS is facing a challenge as schools seek better value in light of their increased autonomy following the implementation of fair funding.

99. The LEA has a long standing commitment to providing high quality school meals. This is consistent with its social inclusion policies. The service is relatively costly for the following reasons. The borough has a high proportion of pupils eligible for free meals. The price of paid meals is kept low to encourage take up. Nutritional standards are high, slightly exceeding those likely to be adopted by the DfEE in the near future. Staff in the service benefit from the LEA's minimum earnings guarantee, another anti-poverty measure.

100. The borough's direct services organisation has won the contracts for cleaning and grounds maintenance across the borough. A few schools have saved money by making their own arrangements or contracting with alternative providers. The LEA does, though, provide a useful and well-regarded relief school-keeping service.

#### **101. Recommendations**

- Disaggregate the service level agreements so that schools have greater opportunity to exercise choice in the services they purchase;
- Review the arrangements for setting up schools' financial systems at the start of the financial year.

## **SECTION 4: SPECIAL EDUCATION PROVISION**

### **Strategy**

102. The LEA has a clear strategy for SEN. The LEA's policy for SEN, published in 1995, sets out an approach that has driven its work over the last five years. At the heart of the policy is inclusion. This policy is now due to be reviewed, which will provide an opportunity for the LEA to bring its strategy together in one document. Priorities are based on a detailed analysis of need. An extensive audit of SEN is carried out each year, by phase, stage of the Code of Practice and ethnicity. A helpful correlation is made between special education need and performance in GCSE, English and mathematics.

103. A review of specialist SEN provision took place in the early 1990s. The borough now has a wide range of provision, including four specialist units attached to mainstream schools. The borough's special schools cater for a significant number of pupils from other London authorities. There has been a reduction in the target number of three of the special schools, and a reduction in funded places overall.

104. There are a number of mechanisms through which policy is being developed and shared with schools. A policy group reviews policy and initiates projects designed to improve early intervention. An annual conference for headteachers, SEN co-ordinators (SENCOs) and SEN governors provides a useful forum for sharing information and good practice. Schools and other agencies are clear about the LEA's strategy for inclusion. Primary schools in particular have a positive view of the LEA's strategy. In general consultation on the LEAs strategy has been extensive. A number of the schools visited, while clear about the LEAs approach, were not sure how it was to be developed in the future.

### **Statutory Obligations**

105. The LEA meets its statutory obligations for SEN. For example, in 1998 the LEA ensured that all draft statements were completed within 18 weeks. In 1999 the figure was 97 percent (amounting to one statement that did not meet the target).

106. There are helpful structures in place to identify pupils for whom a statement of Special Educational Needs is appropriate, to have their needs discussed and for recommendations to be made. Referrals are well handled by the special needs assessment and provision team. This team meets regularly and is well briefed to ensure that statutory duties are met, and that pupils are appropriately and fairly placed. Guidance on the identification of pupils within the Code of Practice is sound and schools make good use of it to identify pupils at different stages.

107. The number of statements, while above average, has stabilised. A higher proportion of pupils is being educated in mainstream schools than previously. The emphasis given to inclusion is reflected in the borough's expenditure on SEN. Funding has been targeted at preventative work. New draft proposals appropriately extend the LEA's preference for funding through a whole school approach rather than statutory assessment.



108. The Parent's Guide to the statutory assessment processes for children with SEN is clear. Named persons who are available to offer independent support to parents are provided with appropriate training. Advice to parents on services to individual pupils has recently been re-designed and improved.

### **Improvement and Value for Money**

109. The LEA, to its credit, has delegated resources for SEN statements to schools since 1993. Mainstream schools are generally clear about the allocation of funds for SEN, but special schools are less clear. This is partly due to the fact that pupils in special schools come from different boroughs and schools are not sure how much of the recoupment cost is passed on to them. It is also due to the LEA's apparent reluctance to break down the budget in detail for these schools. Further, the special schools complain that the criteria against which pupils are allocated to a band for funding are not sufficiently transparent.

110. The support provided to SENCOs is generally well regarded by schools. All spoke highly of the training opportunities available within the borough. In particular, attendance on the link course with Kingston University had a significant impact on the schools involved. There was evidence of effective training tailored to the needs of schools, for example on writing individual education plans. Training opportunities for special school staff are, though, less extensive. The link inspector generally provides good support to the special schools, but they would welcome access to a wider range of specialist expertise. Opportunities are, though, provided to share good practice through membership of the policy review group and through participation in other projects.

111. Service planning is consistently good and is well linked to the priorities within the LEA's major plans. Services are appropriately deployed through referral or through service agreements with schools. The psychology in education service carries out its statutory responsibilities well, and offers additional support to schools through an SLA. The schools literacy support team provides well-regarded support to individual pupils and advice to schools. The sensory and language impairment team provides good support and is highly valued by the schools in which it works. The support provided is generally meeting the needs of pupils with SEN and gives sound value for money.

### **112. Recommendations**

- Establish a clear plan of action to implement the proposals that arise out of the review of the SEN policy;
- Clarify the budget for special schools and provide them with a detailed breakdown of funding.

## **SECTION 5: ACCESS**

### **Admissions and the Supply of School Places**

113. The LEA has made satisfactory arrangements for admission to its primary schools. The LEA produces a clear and succinct booklet 'Starting School in Hammersmith and Fulham', which outlines admissions procedures for parents and carers. The voluntary aided primary schools admit children either once (September) or twice (September and January) in the year, whilst community schools admit at the start of each term. This leads to differences in funding allocations and in school organisation when classes have to be adjusted to accommodate new pupils. The LEA is introducing a single application date for September 2000 onwards in order to ease admissions arrangements; this will be reviewed after a year. The LEA efficiently administers the small number of admissions appeals.

114. As in the rest of London, the process of transfer to secondary school is complex. Admissions to community schools are administered centrally by the LEA. The voluntary aided schools administer their own admissions, which enables them to respond more rapidly to applications. Appeals relating to admissions to the voluntary aided schools are administered efficiently by the relevant authorities. Unsuccessful applicants are given enough time to obtain a place at an alternative school. Sixty four per cent of the Hammersmith and Fulham children who transferred to secondary school in 1999 went to places in schools maintained by the LEA.

115. Three of the voluntary aided secondary schools are heavily oversubscribed and two of them draw their pupils from a very wide catchment area. By contrast, two of the borough's community secondary schools, both with serious weaknesses, have significant numbers of surplus places. So it is the two most vulnerable schools that have to make provision for new arrivals and others that have no school place.

116. In recent years a growing number of refugees and asylum seekers have been found accommodation in the borough. The number of children in the LEA's schools with refugee status has grown from 591 in 1996 to 1173 in January 2000, with the sharpest rise taking place in the last 12 months. Many of these children join a school during the academic year and need additional support both with language and to fit in to their new surroundings. In one secondary school the number of pupils in Year 10 grew from 50 to 90 between September 1999 and March 2000. This resulted in the school having to re-organise its timetable and is likely to have an impact on the school's GCSE results next year. The LEA and these schools have a clear commitment to meeting the needs of all children. They need to find a way to do this by recognising the resource implications as well as minimising disruption to other vulnerable learners.

117. The LEA successfully implemented a class size plan and has prepared a school organisation plan, which has been agreed by the school organisation committee. The plan considers the need for places and capacity of schools at an aggregate level for the borough. The District Audit's reviews of school places in 1997 and 1999 notes that progress has been made, but surplus places remain in both primary and secondary sectors. Over the past decade the LEA has initiated several schemes to remove surplus primary school places while at the same time

rationalising and improving accommodation. In 1999 there were six primary schools, all in the south of the borough, with more than 25 per cent unfilled places. An application has just been approved to build some 1600 homes on a large site at Imperial Wharf, close to the area of the borough that has the greatest population turnover and houses the majority of refugees. The LEA is wisely waiting for the effects of this development to become clear before taking further action to remove more places.

118. The true number of secondary surplus places is masked by the joint sixth form provision at William Morris Academy. The Academy is an imaginative and successful institution that was established to provide viable post-sixteen provision for five of the secondary schools with very small sixth forms. It enrolls some 350 students per year of whom 30 per cent come from these secondary schools. All of the students are formally enrolled at one of these schools, although the Academy has its own premises and operates to all intents and purposes as a separate institution. So while the students on roll are counted in the surplus place calculations, the premises occupied by the Academy are not included in the capacity assessments. Forthcoming legislation will clarify the position of the Academy. When this happens, capacity and places at all the schools involved should be reviewed.

### **The Asset Management Plan**

119. The LEA has installed a computerised property management system and is now making rapid progress with the school condition surveys. As a result it will soon catch up with the DfEE's timetable for the preparation of this part of the asset management plan. The LEA is currently consulting schools on its approach to suitability and sufficiency assessments.

120. Schools in the borough are generally well maintained and have benefited from recent government schemes such as the New Deal for schools. The LEA has used income from asset sales to fund improvements to school buildings, including major extensions and refurbishment. Good systems are in place to manage major building works and much effort is made, usually successfully, to minimise disruption.

### **Provision of Education Otherwise Than At School**

121. Provision for pupils out of school is satisfactory and showing signs of improving. Schools are positive about the advice the LEA gives on exclusions. Secondary schools rated provision for excluded pupils higher than did schools in any of the other LEAs being inspected. However, permanent exclusions remain well above the average for similar LEAs and nationally. Permanent and fixed term exclusions have, though, dropped by 25 percent and 22 percent respectively over the last three years.

122. In February 2000 there were 97 pupils on the roll of the secondary aged Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) and two pupils in the primary PRU. Pupils of black Caribbean heritage are proportionately the largest excluded group, although the proportion is lower than that found nationally. Almost a third of the pupils are from out-of-borough schools. Pupils receive a minimum of 15 hours tuition, with just over a half receiving

22 hours or more each week. The LEA is appropriately working towards full time provision for all its pupils.

123. Clear procedures are in place for re-integration, although they have been applied with limited success. The majority of pupils in the secondary PRU are in Years 10 and 11, which makes reintegration less easy.

124. The LEA has worked hard to develop intervention to prevent pupils being excluded from school, and is having a good measure of success. A number of projects have begun to focus on black Caribbean pupils. For example: mentoring; additional teacher support; and encouragement to join school councils. A survey has been conducted on the attitudes of these pupils to school.

125. Full time short term provision, involving multi-agency re-integration packages, has recently been developed for Key Stage 3 pupils in the secondary PRU. A similar approach is being explored by the primary PRU. Intervention of this kind has had a positive impact on the motivation of Key Stage 3 pupils, according to staff in one of the schools visited during the inspection. This scheme has been successful, with 30 out of 33 pupils involved subsequently avoiding being excluded.

126. Appropriate provision is arranged for the forty five pupils who receive alternative tuition at home and for pupils who are hospitalised. The education social work (ESW) service takes the lead on co-ordinating this whilst inspectors monitor provision.

## **Attendance**

127. Support for attendance is good and attendance in schools is improving. It is, however, still below the national average in primary schools and well below in secondaries. In the school survey primary schools rated support to improve attendance between good and very good, the highest of all LEAs surveyed to date. Secondary schools rated support as better than satisfactory and above average.

128. Priorities for improving attendance within the EDP and the behaviour support plan are appropriate. They demonstrate a move towards a multi-agency approach and the specific targeting of individual schools where there are weaknesses. The ESW service plan is detailed, responsibilities are clear and activities are well linked to the priorities within the EDP. Targets for raising attendance overall are challenging but realistic. Resources are well targeted at those schools with difficulties.

129. The ESW provides a good service, and works effectively in partnership with the schools to raise standards. There are regular register checks, poor attendance is rigorously followed up, and where necessary parents are prosecuted. In those schools where punctuality is a problem, the education social workers patrol the school gates and challenge parents who arrive late with their children. In one of the secondary schools, the use of a recently appointed learning mentor as part of the Excellence in Cities initiative is already beginning to have a positive impact. The attachment of an education social worker to another school is having a marked

effect. The funding provided for first-day contact has allowed schools to establish an attendance hotline to contact parents immediately.

### **Behaviour Support**

130. Support for improving pupils' behaviour is good. A significant number of pupils in Hammersmith and Fulham schools exhibit challenging behaviour. The LEA's strategies for improving behaviour and reducing exclusions are beginning to have a real impact, particularly in primary schools. Schools are very positive about this support.

131. The LEA's plans to improve behaviour are appropriate and are based on a sound audit of need. The primary behaviour support team (BST) is well deployed. It responds to school referrals and appropriately prioritises schools causing concern. The BST has provided support and guidance that has helped schools to successfully establish policies, and identify and manage the behaviour of the most difficult pupils. For example, one primary school has established regular multi-agency meetings where pupils with difficulties are discussed and solutions explored. This had led to an improvement in teachers' strategies for managing behaviour within the school. In two secondary schools the use of mentoring is having a positive impact on the behaviour of the pupils involved. The secondary behaviour support team (the positive support team) has also provided good support to individual secondary pupils.

### **Health, Safety, Welfare, Child Protection**

132. In the school survey schools rated guidance and training on child protection procedures as good. The schools visited confirm these views. Guidance and training are good. The area child protection committee is in place and education is represented by the ESW service.

133. The LEA is meeting its duties well with regard to health and safety in schools. There is clear guidance on health and safety issues, including risk analysis and self-assessment by schools. Responsibilities with regard to work experience are appropriately covered. A good range of central and school-based training is available for LEA staff and governors. Policies on health promotion in school and guidance on medication are well documented.

### **Looked-After Children**

134. The LEA has recently reviewed and re-focused its priorities in order to bring this aspect of its work into line with emerging Government policy. Considerable progress has been made with the implementation of the Quality Protects framework. Links with the social services department are good. Schools welcome the appointment of a teacher with responsibility for looked-after children.

135. At present 360 young people are looked after by the local authority. The Quality Protects management action plan lists appropriate targets for these young people, including targets for exclusion and attainment. The LEA recognises that data needs to improve and a database and system for the exchange of information with social services have been established. The revised EDP appropriately defines the

strategy to improve the educational opportunities for, and standards achieved, by these pupils. A multi-agency steering group regularly reviews the work undertaken with looked-after children.

### **Ethnic Minority Children**

136. Aspects of the LEA's support for ethnic minority pupils are good. Its analysis of data is comprehensive. Schools receive funding to help them analyse trends and to target specific groups of underachieving pupils. The support teachers are well regarded by schools and the majority of ethnic minority pupils make good progress.

137. The LEA carries out a detailed analysis of attainment by minority ethnic group and key stage, with targets for each of the groups. This analysis indicates that the performance of pupils from black Caribbean and black African groups falls away through the key stages. By the time these pupils leave school at 16 they achieve around half as well as other groups in terms of the percentage with five good GCSEs.

138. Provision for ethnic minority pupils features appropriately throughout the LEA's priorities. Activities include raising standards in literacy and numeracy, targeting the achievement of black Caribbean pupils, Traveller children, improving assessment and increasing participation in schools. Plans to train support teachers and to deploy them within the literacy and numeracy hours are appropriate. Targets in the EMTAG for ethnic minority pupils and Travellers are generally clear. However, action in the EDP, which is designed to raise the achievement of black pupils, is not sufficiently specific. This has been recognised by the LEA and is a focus in the EMTAG bid for 2000-2001.

139. EMTAG funds are devolved to schools according to a formula based on the number of pupils at stages one and two of language acquisition. There is no targeting in the formula of underachieving monolingual ethnic groups. The vast majority of the borough's schools buy back support from the LEA. A small and experienced central team oversees the work of the EMTAG team and provides a range of support including professional development. During the inspection a number of schools were unclear about the funding available from EMTAG or how they might best deploy the support in their schools.

140. The LEA has appointed a secondary support teacher, and has bid for a primary teacher, to support schools with sudden increases in non-English speaking pupils. This is eminently sensible, although is likely to be insufficient to meet the rising demand.

### **Support for Travellers**

141. At the time of the inspection there was a total of 149 pupils from Traveller families in the borough. This group was mainly of Irish and Roma heritage, along with some asylum seekers from Lithuania, Romania and Kosova. Numbers have increased on average by 47 percent each year. Support for Travellers is provided jointly with Kensington and Chelsea LEA by a small but well regarded team. The support is well planned and appropriately incorporated into the EMTAG and EDP.

Performance indicators suggest that it is having a positive impact in, for example, improving attendance and reducing exclusions, although there is still some way to go.

### **Measures to combat social exclusion, including racism**

142. The education department has in place a wide range of initiatives that make a substantial contribution to the Council's strategy for social inclusion, anti-poverty and equality. Initiatives such as early intervention, improving attendance, support for looked after children, SEN, behaviour and exclusions have been discussed in more detail in other parts of this report. In all cases the LEA is providing effective support.

143. There are clear Council and education department policies and procedures for supporting racial equality and disability. A policy for racial harassment recently circulated to schools contains clear guidance and recommendations. It clarifies the need for schools to monitor, record and inform the LEA, and where necessary the police, of incidents of harassment. The life long learning strategy for the borough is well linked to the EDP. The LEA has a well-developed arts programme that extends the opportunities for young people in the borough, both inside and outside the classroom.

144. For the last three years the LEA, in conjunction with partners from industry, has successfully run a summer school focused on the transitions from primary to secondary school and from education to work. In addition, a study support centre has been established at Queens Park Rangers Football Club under the "Playing for Success" initiative. Children enjoy attending the Centre, and schools report positively on its benefits. The LEA maintains a substantial play service that organises crèches to support adult learning, holiday schemes and after school care in 15 locations.

### **145. Recommendations**

- Work with schools and the DfEE to improve arrangements for the education of refugees and new arrivals without further disadvantaging other vulnerable schools and pupils;
- Review the number of surplus places in schools once the situations regarding Imperial Wharf and William Morris Academy are clarified;
- Work with schools to find ways to re-integrate excluded pupils more quickly back into school;
- Improve the support for minority ethnic pupils by;

addressing with more urgency the underachievement of black Caribbean pupils in key stages 3 and 4; and

reconsidering the allocation of EMTAG funds to give greater recognition to the underachievement of monolingual ethnic minority pupils.

## **APPENDIX: RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Strategy for school improvement**

- Consider how the funding formula can take better account of the needs of schools with high levels of pupil turnover;
- Work with schools to ensure that they make optimal use of their annual budgets in order to reduce balances;
- Establish a mechanism by which schools can be actively involved in the evaluation of the LEA's services, particularly those that are centrally funded.

### **School improvement**

- Set out clearly the plan to reduce the amount of in-school monitoring and support for the most successful schools, and move more quickly towards validated self-review;
- Continue to improve support for ICT in the curriculum through advice and training for teachers, and encourage schools to make more computers available to pupils;
- Make more explicit the criteria for schools causing concern;
- Widen the pool of potential LEA governors so as to reduce the vacancies on governing bodies.

### **Strategic Management**

- Disaggregate the service level agreements so that schools have greater opportunity to exercise choice in the services they purchase;
- Review the arrangements for setting up schools' financial systems at the start of the financial year.

### **Special education provision**

- Establish a clear plan of action to implement the proposals that arise out of the review of the SEN policy;
- Clarify the budget for special schools and provide them with a detailed breakdown of funding.

### **Access**

- Work with schools and the DfEE to improve arrangements for the education of refugees and new arrivals without further disadvantaging other vulnerable schools and pupils;



- Review the number of surplus places in schools once the situations regarding Imperial Wharf and William Morris Academy are clarified;
- work with schools to find ways to re-integrate excluded pupils more quickly back into school;
- improve the support for minority ethnic pupils by;
  - addressing with more urgency the underachievement of black Caribbean pupils in key stages 3 and 4; and
  - reconsidering the allocation of EMTAG funds to give greater recognition to the underachievement of monolingual ethnic minority pupils.

© Crown copyright 2000

**Office for Standards in Education  
33 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE**

**Tel: 0207 421 6800**

This report may be produced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are produced verbatim and without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

**A further copy of this report can be obtained from the Local Education Authority concerned:**

Hammersmith and Fulham LEA  
Cambridge House  
Cambridge Grove  
London W6 0LE

It may also be downloaded from the OFSTED website - [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)