



OFFICE FOR STANDARDS
IN EDUCATION

**INSPECTION OF
BROMLEY
LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY**

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

CONTENTS

	Paragraph
INTRODUCTION	1-4
COMMENTARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS	5-18
I THE CONTEXT OF THE LEA	
The Socio-economic context	19
Characteristics of the pupil population	20
Organisation of schools	21-23
Education funding	24-26
The structure of the LEA	27-28
2. THE PERFORMANCE OF LEA SCHOOLS	29-45
3. LEA STRATEGY	
Roles and priorities	46-58
Statutory responsibilities	59-62
Budget planning and expenditure	63-73
School places and admissions	74-83
Liaison with other services and agencies	84-85
4. THE MANAGEMENT OF LEA SERVICES	
The Inspection, Advisory and Training Service	86-97
Other services supporting access and achievement	98-107
Management Support Services	108-125
5. LEA SUPPORT FOR IMPROVEMENT IN STANDARDS, QUALITY AND MANAGEMENT	126
Support for the use of performance data and target setting	127-131
Support for improvement in literacy	132-139
Support for improvement in numeracy	140-143
Support for schools requiring special measures or those with serious weaknesses or other difficulties	144-148
Support for improvement in the quality of teaching	149-153
Support for improving management	154-161
Support for governors	162-168
APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT OF THE LEA	
APPENDIX 2: FUNDING	

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 in two stages. An initial review established a picture of the LEA's context, the performance of schools, its strategy and the management of services. The initial review was based on data, some of which was provided by the LEA, OFSTED inspection information and audit reports. Discussions were held with elected members, officers in the Education and other Council departments and representatives of groups with which the LEA works in partnership. In addition, a questionnaire seeking views on aspects of the LEA's work was sent to 87 schools. The response rate was 82 per cent.

3. The second stage of the inspection involved visits to 18 schools, three of which were grant maintained, to gather the views of governors, headteachers and other staff of aspects of the LEA's strategy. The visits also considered whether the support provided by the LEA had contributed to the discharge of the LEA's statutory duties, was effective in contributing to improvements in the school and provided value for money.

4. This report draws on evidence from the initial review, the school survey, a cost analysis carried out by the Audit Commission and school visits. Additional evidence has been used from recent HMI visits to Bromley schools.

COMMENTARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5. Bromley is one of the most affluent London Boroughs. Unemployment and the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals are well below national averages. As in other London Boroughs, Bromley is also an area of sharp contrasts and there are pockets of quite severe social deprivation. The Borough attracts a considerable proportion of its secondary pupils from other areas. All but one of the secondary schools at the time of the inspection had grant maintained status and were about to become foundation schools. Just over seven per cent of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds.

6. The attainment of pupils throughout compulsory education is well above national averages and often above those of similar authorities. Recent rates of improvement, starting from a higher base, have been slightly below the national rate in English and mathematics at Key Stage 2. Performance at GCSE has increased at a rate above that found nationally. There is variation at all phases in the performance of schools with similar socio-characteristics and in performance across subjects in the same schools.

7. There is much that the LEA does competently but there is also scope for considerable improvement in the LEA's work, which has a balance of strengths and weaknesses. Schools in the survey rarely rated LEA services as good and the overall impact of LEA support was unsatisfactory in over one-third of the schools visited. At the same time, some individual aspects of support were effective and highly regarded by schools. The LEA faces considerable challenges in relation to tackling under-performing

support to governing bodies, particularly in the appointment of headteachers. Services supporting management are reasonably well regarded and personnel, in particular provides good support. There is good liaison between education, social services, the health authority and other agencies. The Education Welfare Service provided appropriately targeted and effective support.

11. The main and critical weakness is the LEA's lack of effectiveness in challenging under-performance and low expectations in some of its schools. These include schools which are performing below national expectations but also schools which are 'coasting' One of the reasons for this is a lack of detailed, comparative performance data. Steps have been taken to remedy this but there is still some way to go; the use of data to identify strengths and weaknesses and to set targets was unsatisfactory in half of the primary schools visited.

12. The LEA has self-evaluation as a key aspect of its school improvement strategy This is not always effective because not all schools have the skills to review themselves and the contact inspectors do not always provide schools with a rigorous, critical analysis of the reviews. In general, headteachers and chairs of governors were given too little written evaluation of their schools' progress by contact inspectors. In some schools, where there were concerns, contact inspectors had not intervened early enough to give guidance on action and development plans and to monitor their implementation.

13. Members take a keen interest in the performance of individual schools and each OFSTED inspection report is discussed by the Education Review Sub-committee. Despite this, members are not provided with any regular overall analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of its schools across the LEA. This makes it difficult for them to recognise the extent of under-performance and to assess improvement.

14. The proportion of the budget allocated to supporting special educational needs (SEN) is one of the highest of any local authority. The evidence from the survey and visits to schools shows it is not providing good value for money. Schools argued that they could make better use of the funds if they were delegated. The LEA recognised SEN as a priority area in October 1996 and put a one-year action plan in place. This was followed by a further review and a three-year development plan. The management of SEN has been strengthened and some steps have been taken to improve the quality the quality of service. The LEA still faces a formidable task and it is likely to be some time before the measures being taken have a significant impact on the level of expenditure. Resources are not sufficiently targeted on the schools and pupils with the greatest needs. Despite considerable consultation, several schools remained confused about the LEA's strategy for SEN and many were critical of the quality of support services. Current arrangements for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD), particularly at Key Stage 3, are unsatisfactory. Support for pupils educated other than at school is generally good.

15. Many of the grant maintained (GM) schools are highly successful and have benefitted from the independence of grant maintained status. They are sceptical about

returning to the LEA as foundation schools. Surprisingly, the LEA does not have a clear strategy for developing a partnership with the GM sector which defines responsibilities and accountabilities on both sides and identifies mutual benefits. The LEA has endeavoured to maintain reasonable working relationships with GM schools and most purchase services from the LEA. However, at the time of the inspection, relationships had deteriorated dramatically. GM schools considered that dialogue about the budget did not provide either adequate information or opportunities to debate the spending proposals eventually agreed by members.

16. There is little spare capacity in either primary or secondary schools and pressure on places is set to increase in the next few years. Class sizes in primary schools are already large. At the time of the inspection, the LEA was about to take back full responsibility for the planning of school places. These developments present a considerable challenge and the LEA is coping with it well. Schools generally thought there was adequate consultation on specific proposals on school places but would wish to have better consultation on the medium and longer term plans for their local areas.

17. There are a number of specific weaknesses related to the budget setting process and management services:

- Consultation with schools on the budget and about further delegation under the Fair Funding regime is unsatisfactory.
- The LEA does not base its funding formula on a detailed analysis of needs in schools and this gives rise to some anomalies.
- The cost to the LEA of services provided by other departments is high and there are inadequate arrangements for specifying the range and level of these services and for evaluating their performance.
- There is a lack of comparative data on spending in schools and the LEA is slow in exploiting the full potential of computer systems to collect and analyse a range of other data, including the contacts made with schools.
- Client advice for the various aspects of schools' facilities management is fragmented across different departments of the Council.
- The division of responsibilities for property maintenance between schools and the LEA is not clear and there is a lack of liaison over structural maintenance.

18. There is thus a considerable agenda for the LEA in improving its performance but it does have the professional skills and commitment to meet the challenge. The LEA has many advantages: it serves an affluent area; most of its schools do well and are popular; it is adequately funded; school buildings are in reasonable condition; members are supportive and there is general cross-party agreement on priorities. The LEA wants to achieve the best and is not satisfied with just aiming at being competent. This report and the plans of the LEA show how much more might be achieved.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. In order to improve strategic management, the following actions should be taken:

- i. devise, with schools and other stakeholders, a clear statement of its vision and overall direction;
- ii. improve consultation and communication on the budget, delegation under the Fair Funding regime, the overall planning of school places, the plans for special educational needs and other key decisions;
- iii. develop an effective partnership with grant maintained/foundation schools which defines responsibilities and accountabilities on both sides and identifies areas of mutual benefit;
- iv. develop a central data base of the contacts made with schools and accelerate the development of computer systems to collect, process, analyse, and share data on pupils, staffing and finance;
- v. provide members with an annual report on the overall performance of schools and a rigorous analysis of strengths and weaknesses;
- vi. review the funding formula taking account of needs in schools.

B. In order to challenge under-performance and low expectations in some schools, the following actions should be taken:

- i. develop better pupil and school level performance data to identify under-achievement;
- ii. help schools to make more effective use of data to set challenging targets and identify their strengths and weaknesses;
- iii. provide a more rigorous evaluation of schools' annual reviews;
- iv. provide more written evaluation to headteachers and chairs of governors on progress in schools, particularly where there are weaknesses;
- v. intervene earlier in all schools with weaknesses to ensure they always take appropriate actions to remedy deficiencies.

C. In order to provide better value for money for its support to special educational needs (SEN), the following actions should be taken:

- i. accelerate the implementation of plans for SEN;
- ii. target funds more precisely to schools and pupils most in need;
- iii. delegate as much funding as possible to schools;
- iv. monitor and improve the quality of services;
- v. implement as a matter of urgency the agreed arrangements for the education of EBD pupils.

D. In order to improve the quality of management services, the following actions should be taken:

- i. improve arrangements for specifying the range, level, cost and performance of services provided by departments other than education;
- ii. provide schools with comparative financial data on patterns of spending in schools;
- iii. clarify the division of responsibilities for property maintenance between schools and the LEA and improve liaison on the prioritisation of LEA work;
- iv. offer coherent and coordinated client advice to schools on facilities management.

SECTION 1: THE CONTEXT OF THE LEA

The Socio-Economic Context

19. Bromley is one of the most advantaged London Boroughs. Unemployment and the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals are well below national averages. The proportion of adults in higher social classes is well above the national average. Within this generally affluent area, there are pockets of quite severe social deprivation.

Characteristics of the Pupil Population

20. In November 1998, 43,431 pupils were in the Borough's maintained schools. The schools are popular: in 1997, seven per cent of primary pupils, 18 per cent of secondary pupils, and 8.5 per cent of special school pupils lived outside of the Borough. In January 1998, 2.9 per cent of primary pupils and 2.3 per cent of secondary pupils had statements of special educational need compared with 2.6 per cent and 3.9 per cent nationally (1997). Two-fifths of pupils with statements are in mainstream schools. Three per cent of all pupils have English as an additional language and 7.4 per cent of pupils are from ethnic minorities. On average, two-thirds of all pupils in Year 11 transfer to school sixth forms and overall four-fifths continue in full-time further education.

Organisation of Schools

21. There are 12 LEA maintained infant schools, nine junior and 50 primary schools. The parallel grant maintained (GM) provision is one infant, two junior and four primary. Eight maintained primary schools have nursery classes. There are 17 secondary schools for pupils aged 11-18, of which 16 are GM. Two secondary schools are fully selective and seven other schools provide single sex education. There are four special schools including one GM. All GM schools have opted for foundation status.

22. There are two units for younger pupils with emotional and behavioural disorders (EBD) attached to primary schools. Pupils at Key Stage 3 are taught at a unit currently registered as a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) which will be the basis of a proposed new EBD school with effect from September 1999. EBD pupils at Key Stage 4 are taught at a college of further education.

23. Forty-nine per cent of primary classes have more than 30 pupils, well in excess of the national average. The pupil-teacher ratio in 1997 was above the national average in primary schools and marginally below it in secondary schools.

Education Funding

24. Bromley's Standard Spending Assessment (SSA) for primary, secondary, and post 16 education per pupil is below the average for outer London Boroughs.

25. The funding of the Education Service provided through the SSA process is supplemented by government grants for a number of specific purposes. The total revenue grant for school-related work in the current financial year is £0.88m. Expressed

in terms of the sums received per pupil (excluding Section 11), the grants provided to the Council were at a similar level to those for other outer London Boroughs

26. The Council also has a substantial fund of capital receipts from which it has been possible to finance a significant proportion of the capital works in schools in recent years.

(Further details of funding are provided in appendix 2)

The Structure of the LEA

27. The Education Department is one of four 'service departments' within the Borough Council. There is also a 'Corporate Services Group' comprising the Chief Executive's, Borough Treasurer's, and Borough Secretary's Departments. Within education there are four main divisions: Quality Assurance, Resources, Training and Support, and Pupil and Student Services.

28. The Quality Assurance Division includes the inspectorate and its Research and Statistics Group. The latter's responsibilities include work on performance indicators and data generally. The Education Resources Division includes finance, administrative ICT, premises, equipment, caretaking, cleaning, school meals and personnel. The Training and Support Division comprises the Borough's team of advisory and training consultants. Pupil and Student Services includes staff responsible for planning school provision, admissions, and SEN assessments and placement. It also includes the specialist teaching services, the Educational Psychology Service (EPS), and the Education Welfare Service (EWS). At the time of the inspection the LEA was implementing a number of changes to its management structure which are referred to elsewhere in this report.

SECTION 2: THE PERFORMANCE OF LEA SCHOOLS

29. The following summary refers to all maintained schools, including grant maintained schools, in the London Borough of Bromley. (Further details of the performance of schools are given in appendix 1.)

30. ***Attainment on entry to infant and primary schools inspected in Bromley is in general average or above average but there is considerable variation between schools.***

31. Evidence from OFSTED inspections indicates that pupils enter four out of five infant and primary schools with average or above average attainment. One in two schools admit pupils who are predominantly above average in ability, almost twice as many as Bromley's statistical neighbours and the national percentage.

32. ***Attainment remains above or well above national averages throughout compulsory education and is often above that of statistical neighbours. Performance at GCE advanced level is in line with the national average but below it for GNVQ advanced. There is significant variation in the performance of schools with similar socio-economic characteristics and in performance across subjects in the same schools.***

33. The percentage of pupils attaining levels higher than the national expectation in English, mathematics and science at Key Stages 1 and 2 is consistently above or well above national averages and often higher than Bromley's statistical neighbours. There is a significant variation in the performance of primary schools with similar socio-economic characteristics. The average level achieved in each of the Key Stage 2 tests varies significantly between subjects in one in four schools.

34. In Key Stage 3 the percentage of pupils attaining levels higher than the national expectation is well above the national average in English and above it in mathematics and science. Attainment at the higher levels is frequently above that of Bromley's statistical neighbours for English and science but in line with it for mathematics.

35. In 1998, the proportions of pupils achieving five or more grades A*~C was 11.6 percentage points above the national average and 6.8 percentage points better than the average for statistical neighbours. Although the average point score of 39.8 for 1998 is above the national average of 35.6 (1997), four of the 17 secondary schools performed less well than the national average. All these schools had above the LEA average proportion of free school meals. There is also significant variation in the performance of secondary schools with similar socio-economic characteristics.

36. The average point score in 1998 for pupils entered for two or more GCE advanced courses was 17.1, close to the national figure. The pass rate in advanced vocational courses in 1997 was 66.7 per cent, below the national average of 75.4 per cent.

37. ***Although levels of attainment in 1998 remain above the national average at Key Stage 2, the rate of improvement, starting from a higher base, has been slower***

in English and mathematics than the rate nationally and that for statistical neighbours. Performance at GCSE has risen at a rate above the national rate of improvement.

38. The proportion of pupils achieving level 4 and above in the Key Stage 2 tests rose by 12.2 percentage points in English and by 8.8 percentage points in mathematics between 1995 and 1998. This compares to 16.2 and 13.6 percentage points nationally and 15.3 and 11.6 in statistical neighbours.

39. There has been a steady rise in the proportion of pupils achieving five or more A*-C grades in GCSE from 50.1 per cent in 1994 to 56.0 per cent in 1998, an increase of 5.9 percentage points, above the national rate of 4.4.

40. ***OFS TED inspections confirm that attainment in primary and secondary schools is in line with statistical neighbours and above national norms. The quality of teaching and learning in primary schools is slightly below the national average but above in secondary schools. The quality of management and efficiency is generally above that found nationally in both primary and secondary schools.***

41. The proportions of lessons judged to be sound, good or better and the average grade for lessons are close to national figures in both primary and secondary schools. However, teaching was judged as poor for pupils aged under five and at Key Stage 2 in a higher proportion of schools than that found nationally. There were also weaknesses in curriculum planning and assessment in a substantial proportion of primary schools. While management and efficiency in primary schools were generally better than that found nationally, aspects of leadership, development planning and evaluation were poor in one in five schools.

42. Three LEA maintained primary schools, one special school and one GM secondary school have required special measures since 1993. Five primary schools have received outstanding OFSTED reports: two GM and three LEA.

43. ***Attendance is slightly below the national average in primary schools and slightly above in secondary schools. Unauthorised absence is slightly below national figures in both primary and secondary schools. The level of permanent exclusions is similar to that found nationally in primary schools but above in secondary schools.***

44. Attendance is 0.6 percentage points below national figures in primary schools and 1.1 percentage points above in secondary schools. Unauthorised absence is 0.1 percentage points below the national average in primary schools and 0.3 percentage points below in secondary.

45. The rate of exclusions is 0.3 per 1000 pupils in primary schools and 5.4 in secondary schools which compares to national figures of 0.4 and 3.4.

SECTION 3: LEA STRATEGY

ROLES AND PRIORITIES

46. The LEA has a generally sound system of planning. The priorities and actions identified are appropriate but there is a lack of an ambitious vision and a clear statement of the overall direction for the LEA. The LEA has not been effective at communicating its overall strategy to schools and there are weaknesses in the consultation arrangements. The LEA has not developed an effective strategy for the integration of grant maintained schools as foundation schools. The education development plan is sound and several aspects of the school improvement strategy are already being successfully implemented. The lack of robust performance data has handicapped the LEA's ability to challenge the performance of schools and monitor progress. The LEA uses a range of methods to evaluate its effectiveness but elected members are not presented with a rigorous overall analysis of strengths and weaknesses in the performance of schools.

47. The strategic aims of the LEA are set out in the Department's three-year **Education Service Plan**, the most recent of which is for 1999/2002. Each aim is supported by a set of key tasks and progress is reviewed twice each year. All four education divisions have service or business plans which reflect the aims and priorities of department's three-year service plan and are used to steer section and individual staff objectives.

48. The strategic aims set out in the 1999/2002 service plan are:

- to ensure equal access by all to educational opportunities;
- to contribute to the raising of standards in self-managing schools; to provide leadership to the educational community;
- to ensure equal opportunities for pupils with special educational needs;
- to champion the value of education in the community, for those learning informally as well as pupils in school;

49. The aim of raising standards is developed in detail through **the Education Development Plan (EDP)**. The priorities are:

- to improve the attainment of selected groups of pupils;
- to improve the quality of teaching in schools;
- to ensure improvement in schools causing concern;
- to improve literacy;
- to improve numeracy;
- to improve leadership, management and governance.

50. The LEA has generally sound systems of planning. Statutory plans are in place and were submitted on time. Priorities identified in the service plan and the EDP take account of recent central government initiatives, corporate objectives and local needs and are supported by appropriate actions and adequate resources. Schools are aware of the LEA's main priorities as expressed in the EDP and are generally supportive of them. What is lacking is an ambitious statement of the LEA's vision and an explicit statement of its overall direction.

The new administration is clear about its overall strategy for school improvement but it has not been good at communicating this to schools. Very few of the schools visited thought that the LEA had a clear view about where it was trying to get to and many thought that it was not sufficiently proactive in coping with change.

51. The EDP has been given statutory approval for the full period of three years, subject to the LEA improving its strategy for challenging and supporting schools with low literacy targets. The plan provides a sound basis for supporting school improvement. The actions specified for each priority address the weaknesses identified in Section 2 above. For example, they include: improving the quality of teaching for under fives and at Key Stage 2; strategies to reduce exclusions; improving development planning and aspects of leadership.

52. The LEA has not had a strong tradition of providing schools with pupil performance data. This is starting to be addressed but there is still some way to go, making it difficult for the LEA to implement its improvement strategy, particularly in terms of identifying and challenging under-performance by schools and specific groups of pupils. This is discussed further in Sections 4 and 5 below.

53. The strategy for intervening in schools requiring special measures, and where there are serious weaknesses or other concerns, is clearly set out in the EDP. In the past, the LEA has not always intervened early enough in schools where there are concerns. The evidence presented in Section 5 shows that support for schools requiring special measures has been generally good but less effective in some of the other schools causing concern. The LEA is less clear in the EDP about its role in relation to the many successful schools in the Borough, particularly secondary schools. Insufficient consideration has been given to how the proposed time allocation to contact inspectors is to be used in these schools and what a 'light touch' really means.

54. A key issue for the LEA is the integration of GM schools into the LEA as foundation schools and what amounts to re-creating a secondary sector. There is a surprising lack of reference to this in the service plan. Many of these schools have been highly successful under GM status and are sceptical about the role the LEA will play in their future development. They also have much to offer the LEA through the sharing of their expertise. The LEA has not developed a formal partnership with the GM sector which defines accountabilities and responsibilities on both sides and identifies the mutual benefits of working together.

Consultation and communication

55. The LEA has a range of mechanisms for consulting with schools and governors. Most primary headteachers in the school survey and the schools visited felt there was a reasonable level of consultation but a substantial number questioned whether it was meaningful. Several made comments to the effect that 'the LEA talks but does not listen'. A frequent criticism was that there was insufficient reporting of outcomes of consultation. The LEA believes that some of these criticisms have resulted from representatives from school cluster groups and working parties not always communicating the outcomes of

meetings effectively to other headteachers. The LEA also accepts that it is its responsibility to put matters right. Governors were less well consulted than headteachers, although consultation on the EDP was generally considered to have been satisfactory. Several parents contacted the inspection team to express concerns about what they regarded as a lack of proper consultation on matters related to SEN.

56. Relationships with GM schools in the past were reasonable, but at the time of the inspection had deteriorated dramatically. This was mainly due to a perceived lack of consultation over the 1999/2000 budget proposals. The GM schools were aggrieved at not having been kept better informed of the proposals which had major implications for their funding. There was also poor communication of the budget decisions and the reasons underlying them. This breakdown in relationships is an illustration of the weakness of not having developed a formally agreed partnership with the GM sector.

Evaluating effectiveness

57. The LEA uses a variety of methods to monitor the effectiveness of its administration. These include: regular reports to elected members on progress on the success criteria identified in the service and division plans; customer satisfaction surveys; service reviews by external consultants and staff appraisal.

58. The LEA has less robust systems for monitoring its impact on school improvement. There are six meetings each year of the Education Review sub-committee at which every OFSTED school inspection report is discussed and where the headteacher and chair of governors are invited to comment on the findings and respond to members' questions. Councillors take a keen interest in the performance of individual schools in their wards but have not requested an annual report on the overall performance of schools in the LEA or a rigorous analysis of strengths and weaknesses. This makes it difficult for them to form views about the progress the LEA is making in tackling under-performance. Contact inspectors play a key role in monitoring progress and performance in schools. Their effectiveness in fulfilling this role varies and is discussed further in Sections 4 and 5 of this report.

STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES

59. The LEA is taking reasonable steps to meet most of its statutory responsibilities. The requirements for the appraisal of teachers and headteachers are not met in all schools and the authority's curriculum statement is out-of-date.

60. The LEA is taking reasonable steps to meet its statutory responsibilities in respect of financial and resource management, school governance, the employment of staff, health and safety, admissions, attendance and exclusions, the provision of special educational needs and support for schools in special measures.

61. The LEA does not currently meet its statutory requirements with respect to headteacher appraisal. The arrangements established in 1992 by the LEA were suspended in 1996 after completion of a second cycle. There are no formal procedures in place to monitor the arrangements in schools for the appraisal of teachers. The LEA is

awaiting guidance from the DfEE on proposals for the new appraisal arrangements for both headteachers and teachers.

62. A revision of the LEA curriculum statement originally published in 1992, is now overdue. The LEA does not have an explicit policy or guidance on the inappropriate pursuit of partisan political activities in schools.

BUDGET PLANNING AND EXPENDITURE

63. *The LEA's revenue expenditure is below SSA but capital spending is well above that of most other authorities. Expenditure on SEN as a proportion of the overall spending on schools is exceptionally high but this is not reflected in the quality of provision. Action planned to address this situation, and to bring the increase in SEN spending under control, is appropriate but seems likely to take some years to have a major impact. Consultation with schools on the budget is unsatisfactory, as has been discussion about further delegation under the Fair Funding regime.*

64. The LEA's expenditure on education in 1998/99 was below SSA for the first time for several years. The budget for the current year widens the gap but such comparisons are complicated by the LEA's approach to capital works (details are provided in appendix 2). Capital expenditure in the current year will be significantly higher than in most other authorities.

65. The Council has not passed on in full the increase in SSA for 1999/2000. However, its top priorities in making the budget have been education and social services. Only marginal reductions have been made in the education revenue budget and none has adversely affected school delegated budgets overall. More significant reductions have been made in other council services.

66. Within the education budget a number of changes have been made to reflect the move to foundation status of the Borough's grant maintained schools. Other changes reflect the priorities in the EDP and will have the broad effects of targeting a larger proportion of delegated funding to areas of social disadvantage, improving the funding of primary aged children, and strengthening management within the Education Department. There will also be a significant increase in the SEN budget for 1999/2000.

67. The key distinguishing feature of the LEA's budget is the very high proportion of funding spent on SEN provision. This represents 22.4 per cent of the general schools budget (GSB), compared to an average of 15.0 per cent in outer London Boroughs as a whole and 13.8 per cent in all English LEAs. The Bromley figure is one of the highest in the country. It is difficult to reconcile such a high proportion of overall spending being devoted to SEN provision with the academic profile of the pupil population. It might be justified, of course, if the quality of SEN support were exceptionally high but the evidence cited in Section 4 of this report suggests it is not.

68. Spending on SEN has also presented problems for budgetary control. A number of steps are now being taken to control the rise in spending but budget provision has had to be increased again for 1999/2000. The LEA is aware that action

is necessary across a broad front to ensure that resources are allocated in appropriate amounts, targeted accurately, and used appropriately at school and pupil level. The actions planned reflect this awareness. Financial projections indicate that the rate of growth in the budget should start to level out by 2000/01 but it is likely to take some years to reduce significantly the proportion of the budget spent on SEN.

69. Schools do not feel that they are able to have a significant influence on the decisions taken in the budget making process. Meetings are regarded as being essentially for 'information giving' by the LEA, rather than for genuine dialogue. GM schools feel particularly strongly that dialogue about the budget for the coming year did not provide either adequate information or opportunities to debate the spending proposals eventually agreed by members.

70. The LEA delegates a comparatively low proportion of the Potential Schools Budget (PSB). A key factor is the retention under central control of substantial budgets for SEN support. Total expenditure on management and administration is broadly comparable to the outer London Borough average. However, Bromley is unusual in the low proportion of expenditure within the Education Department compared to other council departments. It is not clear whether all elements of the spending by other departments provide good value for money (see Section 4).

71. Delegated funding per pupil in 1998/99 was lower than the outer London Borough average for both primary and secondary schools. Spending per pupil within the overall GSB was similarly below the average. However, the primary figure was in both cases significantly closer to the average than the secondary.

72. Reviewing the funding formula in the light of a detailed analysis of the needs of schools would mean that the Council is better placed to ensure that the formula distributes funds to schools in a way which reflects changing requirements, priorities and costs.

73. The Council consults widely about proposed variations to the LMS Scheme. However, as with discussions about the annual budget, this does not necessarily constitute effective consultation. For example, schools have reservations about the clarity and precision of information provided about further delegation in response to the requirements of Fair Funding. This seems likely to be linked to the relative absence of clear definitions of service type, level, and cost within the central budget for management and administration. It is difficult in such a context for schools to assess the pros and cons of further delegation and the funding formulae which might be used to distribute the funds involved.

SCHOOL PLACES AND ADMISSIONS

The planning of school places

74. *Plans to resume the full planning function for school places are proceeding smoothly. Assessments of future needs have been accurate. Schools are consulted on individual plans but want better consultation on the overall planning of places.*

75. Bromley is currently preparing to take over responsibility for the planning of secondary school provision from the Funding Agency for Schools (FAS). It has had no responsibility in this area for several years. Responsibility for planning primary school provision is currently shared with the FAS. Plans to assume full responsibility for the planning function are progressing smoothly. Assessments of need have been accurate and development is planned over an appropriate period.

76. The key issue for Bromley is meeting rising demand for places in both the primary and secondary phases. The projected increase in demand over the next few years, coupled with the need to keep infant classes to a minimum size of 30, will require significant additional provision.

77. The Borough has six small primary schools. Most of these serve relatively isolated communities and members concluded after reviewing the position that they should be retained. There is one relatively small secondary school, which is a fully subscribed selective school.

78. There is adequate consultation with schools on projections of pupil numbers and these have proven to be very accurate in recent years. There is a five-year development plan for primary provision which is overseen by a member/officer working group and updated annually. It is intended to adopt the same approach for secondary provision.

79. Whilst schools are consulted about proposals involving them, they have some reservations about consultation on the LEA's longer term assessments of need and its development plans.

School admissions

80. The LEA faces a complex task in seeking to ensure coordinated admissions arrangements for secondary schools in the Borough, although existing collaborative arrangements offer a sound starting point. Primary school admissions arrangements work smoothly. Explanatory literature for parents is good.

81. The existence of so many GM schools in the Borough, and the fact that schools in one or more neighbouring authorities are a realistic option for many children, means that Bromley parents are potentially faced with having to deal with a large number of separate admission authorities at the secondary level. The existence of grammar schools and partial selection by other schools in the Borough has complicated the position further.

82. The LEA is now beginning to discuss these issues with schools. Schools operating a partial selection policy have recently agreed to end the practice. Progress has also been made in developing a common application form and admissions timetable. Secondary schools have for some time been operating a clearing system for 11+ transfer applications. At primary level, applications are dealt with by schools initially but the LEA takes the lead in ensuring that there is appropriate action to place pupils turned down at their first preference school.

83. The Council's explanatory information for parents meets all the relevant good practice criteria suggested by the Audit Commission with the exception of help for non-English speakers. GM secondary schools have recently agreed to information about them being included in the LEA's literature. Feedback from parents and schools on the admissions booklet has been positive.

LIAISON WITH OTHER SERVICES AND AGENCIES

84. *There is good liaison between education, social services, the health authority and other agencies. There is effective collaboration on attendance, parental involvement in education, out-borough placements and early years education.*

85. The Director of Education has a corporate role in Bromley as a member of the Chief Officers' Executive. The Education Department plays its part in securing cooperation between services supporting children and young people. Regular meetings take place between senior offices from education, social services and the health authority and operational managers meet formally at least monthly. There is good collaboration between education, social services and the local health authority on initiatives aimed at improving attendance and raising parental interest in education. There is also joint work to reduce out-borough placements of pupils with medical conditions. There is good cooperation between the Diocesan Authorities, the LEA and the FAS in the planning of school places. The Early Years Development Plan of February 1998 is also an example of good inter-service and inter-department co-operation. A number of useful joint initiatives have been developed with the police.

SECTION 4: THE MANAGEMENT OF LEA SERVICES

THE INSPECTION, ADVISORY AND TRAINING SERVICE

86. *The inspection and advisory services are generally soundly managed and are well regarded by schools. Contact inspectors are sometimes insufficiently rigorous in their evaluation of the performance and progress of schools and there is too little written reporting to headteachers and chairs of governors. There is no central data base of contacts made with schools across services. There is no formal evaluation of the impact of training on standards and quality in schools. Plans to restructure the two services are sensible.*

87. Inspection is currently within the Quality Assurance Division and advice is within the Education, Training and Support Division (ETSD). These divisions will be replaced in autumn 1999 by a Standards and Effectiveness Unit which will bring advice and inspection together under a new assistant director. This restructuring is sensible in that it addresses recognised weaknesses in the coordination of the inspection and advisory services.

Inspection

88. There is an agreed establishment of a Principal Inspector, four primary inspectors and one SEN Inspector. All schools have a contact inspector and the principles and aims of their work are set out clearly and known to schools. There is an appropriate allocation of time to each school, which is differentiated according to need.

89. Management of the inspection service is generally sound. Responsibilities are defined, there are regular line management meetings and resources are appropriately deployed. The service analyses a range of information to identify needs and inform priorities. Weaknesses in the quality of school performance data have resulted in an insufficiently detailed analysis of standards and progress across the LEA and at the level of the individual school.

90. There is a sound system in place for contact inspectors to monitor the performance of schools through an annual self-review which is used as a basis for discussion with the headteacher and chair of governors. However, the system does not always operate effectively because some contact inspectors do not provide a sufficiently rigorous written evaluation of the progress schools are making. The report by the contact inspector following the annual discussion is not structured tightly enough to ensure consistent quality. In general, too little in the way of written comment is shared with headteachers and chairs of governors and there is an over-reliance on memory and informal notes of visit. While there is generally good cooperation with other services, there is no central data base of the contacts made with each school to enable inspectors to obtain an overall view of the issues facing each school.

91. In the school survey (appendix 3), the overall rating for elements relating to the work of inspectors was satisfactory. Written comments from schools indicated that the work of contact inspectors was often well regarded. Visits to schools found that their effectiveness varied and this is discussed further in Section 5 below.

Advice

92. The ETSD has nine advisory teachers, three group managers and four other professional staff, including the governor trainer. At the time of the inspection, pending reorganisation, there was a lead officer but no head of service. This temporary arrangement is not ideal but the service has remained soundly managed and the situation will change when the Standards and Effectiveness Unit is established.

93. ETSD has advisers for all National Curriculum subjects except music and modern foreign languages, which are purchased from elsewhere, along with other services which supplement the LEA provision. These bought-in services are effectively managed and monitored by ETSD. Advisory teachers for SEN and Early Years are located in the Pupil and Student Services Division, although ETSD advisers have remits for these areas.

94. Schools can purchase support on an individual basis or can negotiate packages of support. Take up of courses is generally high. Apart from curriculum advice, ETSD provides support for senior management and is a registered provider of training for headteachers. ETSD also provides support for newly qualified teachers (NQTs), governors, assessment coordinators and the education business partnership.

95. The ETSD has three levels of planning: an annual service development plan, a business plan and individual staff planning and objectives. The service development plan reflects the aims and priorities of the Department's three-year service plan. Priorities are also identified through: course evaluation; feedback from meetings with headteachers and governors; OFSTED inspection reports; individually negotiated needs of schools and through contact inspectors. However, it is only recently that schools' annual review statements have been made available to ETSD.

96. The work of ETSD is monitored and evaluated through a variety of methods depending upon the client groups. Work specified by schools is evaluated by the senior management team and monitored by the relevant lead officer. Courses and school-based support are evaluated through questionnaires and informal feedback but there is no formal system in place for evaluating the impact of the training provided.

97. The school survey and visits to schools indicate that the work of ETSD is generally well regarded. The effectiveness of particular aspects of the work of ETSD is discussed in Section 5 of this report.

OTHER SERVICES SUPPORTING ACCESS AND ACHIEVEMENT

98. Recent improvements have been made to the management structure for SEN. Despite considerable consultation, schools' understanding of the SEN policy remains patchy. The high level of expenditure is not providing similarly high levels of support for pupils with SEN. Resources are spread too widely for them to be sufficiently targeted on pupils most in need. Individual aspects of support are well received but lack coordination. Specialist provision for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties at Key Stage 3 is unsatisfactory. Support from the Education Welfare Service is targeted effectively and generally well received.

Services supporting Special Needs

99. SEN services are managed by the Head of Pupil and Student Services. There are three sections which carry responsibility for different aspects of SEN functions; the Central Section, the Tuition Support Services (TSS) and the Educational Psychology Service (EPS). Interim arrangements were put in place in autumn 1998 to create a more unified and strengthened management structure for planning, provision and budget management. The proposals for the reorganisation of the Education Department will make these arrangements permanent.

100. The LEA identified SEN as a priority area in October 1996 and a review of SEN identified a range of priorities which were set into a one-year plan of action for 1997/1998. This was followed by a further review and a three-year programme of development. The effect of the plan will be to redistribute resources to enable schools to do more preventative work at Stages 1-3 of the SEN Code of Practice. These and other measures are sensible but are likely to take some time to reduce the very high level of expenditure on SEN noted earlier in this report. Expenditure is currently spread too widely over too many pupils so that it is insufficiently targeted at those most in need. The proposed audit based model for distributing funds will go some way to resolving this if it is applied rigorously.

101. The LEA's SEN Strategy Group reviews and monitors progress with the implementation of the service priorities in the SEN Development Plan. Members of Education Committee receive progress reports on SEN developments at each meeting through the Council cycle. Joint officer/headteacher working groups have been established to research, develop and consult on key priorities.

102. The school survey revealed a high level of dissatisfaction with the LEA's support for SEN and over half the schools visited felt it did not provide value for money. Schools did not always have a clear understanding of the LEA's SEN strategy. Furthermore, the application of the strategy across the Borough was variable, resulting in several schools feeling that the LEA's SEN policies were not being effectively monitored. It was also apparent that some schools were very generously funded for SEN while others needed more support. The work of the TSS came in for particular criticism. A lack of effective central co-ordination was reducing the drive to raise standards and frequent staff changes affected the progress of some pupils. For these reasons, schools argued that they could target support more effectively if funding was

devolved to them. The LEA has already identified TSS as a source of criticism and commissioned a fundamental review of this service in order to try and approve value for money.

103. Some other aspects of the LEA's SEN provision were regarded as effective but not always to the same extent in all of the schools. For example, the EPS was praised in some schools with individual educational psychologists (EPs) providing quite exceptional levels of support and advice. In others, changes of EP personnel or a lack of clarity in the role of the EPs prevented good working relationships becoming established.

104. Standards in the two special schools visited were good and the LEA provided good support. There are two units attached to primary schools for younger pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD). Both these schools face considerable difficulties and require high levels of support. The LEA closed its specialist provision for older pupils with EBD. Key Stage 4 pupils are taught at a college of further education. Key Stage 3 pupils are currently provided for at a PRU. The LEA recognises that this arrangement is unsatisfactory and is awaiting approval from the Secretary of State for a new school. There is satisfactory provision for excluded pupils and pupils not in school.

105. Support for pupils with English as an additional language, pupils with moderate learning difficulties and the sensory impaired were often regarded as being effective by schools.

Educational Welfare Service (EWS)

106. The main responsibility of the EWS is the promotion of attendance but it also acts as a referral agency for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties; works with disaffected pupils under threat of exclusion; and seeks to ensure that schools meet their responsibilities for Child Protection. Years 6 and 7 have been targeted to ensure good attendance at secondary transfer. Good links have been established with local tertiary colleges to monitor attendance of all statutory school age pupils.

107. A complete review of all EWS practices and procedures was undertaken in 1997 and this has enabled problems to be identified and priorities established. The service maintains accurate records of children out of school and there is a comprehensive scheme for the evaluation of the work of the service. Evidence from the school survey and visits to schools indicates that the work of the EWS is generally well regarded and effective.

MANAGEMENT SUPPORT SERVICES

General

108. *Services provided by the Education Department staff are reasonably well regarded by schools, although there are shortcomings in consultation on the performance of services and their development. There is a lack of comparative financial data available to schools and some duplication of financial services provided by Education and the Treasurer's Department. There are weaknesses in the arrangements for evaluating services provided by other departments and the cost of some of these services is high. Considerable investment is being made in improving the information and communications infrastructure but the timescale for developing the potential use of computer systems for data exchange, collection and analysis is too slow. Buildings are generally of reasonable quality but schools are critical of aspects of the building maintenance programme and service. The division of responsibilities for property maintenance between schools and the LEA is not sufficiently clear.*

109. As reported in Section 3, central expenditure on management and administrative tasks relating to schools is largely located in council departments other than Education. Existing arrangements for determining the service specification and related costs and for reviewing performance of these services are unsatisfactory. The charges for some of the services are high, relative to the functions carried out (see finance section below).

110. Where services are sold to schools, details are provided in a single, well-presented document. Reasonable choice in terms of service type and level of provision is offered for most services. Education Department services are beginning to develop indicators to assist in monitoring and reviewing their performance. Steps are being taken to involve schools more closely in the evaluation and review of services but not all schools are aware of this. Nonetheless, services overall are reasonably well regarded. Opinions about some of the services provided by departments other than Education suggest that they have more work to do to win schools' confidence.

111. Support officers provide information about difficulties in schools to their section heads who are members of the Priority Schools Action Group. This is a positive step and indicates a recognition that all parts of the LEA's central services have a part to play in supporting school improvement.

Finance

112. The charge for the services of the Borough Treasurer's Department is a substantial part of centrally controlled expenditure on management and administration. The principal elements are the charges for accountancy, audit, the central financial information system, and oversight of the contract with a private company for payroll services.

113. The charge for accountancy services appears to be high. A major part relates to budget preparation and expenditure monitoring, which duplicates work by staff within

the Education Department. The charge for audit work is similarly high and reflects a planned programme of annual audits of school accounts. The need for audits of this frequency for all schools is questionable. Schools reported widespread variation in the quality of payroll services, suggesting that there is a quality control issue in the management of the contract.

114. Every school subscribes to the financial advice and support service offered by the Education Finance Section. Schools report positively on the responsiveness of staff and the quality of support provided. Data which allows schools to make comparisons in their patterns of spending is not provided, although there are plans to do so from October 1999.

ICT support

115. The Council is currently in the first year of a two-year programme to modernise ICT support for primary school administration which will provide a computer link to the LEA and access to the internet. An extensive survey of schools' views informed this development and a working group involving headteachers is advising on its implementation. Schools with the new systems feel very positive about them. The associated training and written guidance has similarly been well received.

116. Maintenance and user support services for schools with the new systems are provided by a commercial company through a contract negotiated and monitored centrally with input from the headteacher working group. The company providing the support has recently been changed following extensive tendering. Once fully implemented, the new arrangements should resolve the difficulties.

117. The new systems offer major opportunities for data exchange, collection and analysis. Work on developing their use is principally planned for the year following the completion of the two-year re-equipment programme. This is too leisurely a timescale and an early development of the intranet is needed to improve the exchange, collection and analysis of pupil, staff, and financial data.

Property management

118. Education Department staff are responsible for the school expansion and improvement programme. Capital spending has been comparatively high in recent years in order to provide significant numbers of additional school places. Schools generally think relatively highly of the quality of premises. There are reservations, however, about the supervision of building projects.

119. The maintenance programme is the responsibility of the Leisure and Community Department. Decisions are taken by the Property and Finance Committee. The criteria used to decide what work is carried out are not explained to schools, nor are they consulted on the five-year plans produced for their buildings. This is unsatisfactory, particularly bearing in mind the substantial charge made to the education budget for the management of the maintenance programme.

120. Schools express reasonable confidence in the identification of need through the annual building inspections but are much less satisfied with the prioritisation of tasks. The LMS scheme defines all work not included in the planned maintenance programme as a school responsibility but does not explain the criteria for inclusion in that programme. This makes it particularly difficult for schools to plan the use of their own resources.

121. The Bromley maintenance budget will be supplemented in 1999/2000 to ensure that all work graded as "critical" can be carried out. There is a considerable backlog of repair work deemed "necessary" or "desirable". However, maintenance problems have not resulted in any school closures in recent years.

122. Advice to schools on their own property management responsibilities is fragmented. There is no collated guidance manual. Written guidance of any kind is relatively limited. Client advice on other aspects of facilities management is fragmented across different departments of the Council. The absence of a coordinated advice and support service is a weakness of the LEA. The use of private sector property services, in preference to the LEA's, by many schools is an indication of the level of dissatisfaction. Thorough consultation with schools needs to take place before any decision is made by the LEA to develop its role in this area.

123. The LEA is on schedule to produce an Asset Management Plan which meets statutory requirements.

Personnel

124. Model policies and procedures provided for schools are well regarded. A comprehensive manual of guidance has recently been issued. Some benchmarking data is also provided. Every maintained school and a majority of the GM schools subscribe to both the advice and administrative support packages offered. Schools are generally appreciative of the support provided.

125. A central computerised database of personnel is planned and will include a broad range of information. This should considerably improve the range of data available and, in particular, the ease and speed of analysis.

SECTION 5: LEA SUPPORT FOR IMPROVEMENT IN STANDARDS QUALITY AND MANAGEMENT

OVERALL IMPROVEMENT IN THE SCHOOLS VISITED

126. The inspection team made judgements about the improvements since the last OFSTED inspection and the effectiveness of the LEA's contribution in 11 primary schools, three secondary schools and two special schools. Thirteen schools had made sound progress in addressing the issues identified in the OFSTED inspection. Three schools had made unsatisfactory progress. The LEA's overall contribution to improvement, was good in two schools, satisfactory in eight schools and unsatisfactory in six schools, including two schools needing to make substantial improvement.

SUPPORT FOR THE USE OF PERFORMANCE DATA AND TARGET SETTING

127. The LEA was effective in supporting the use of performance data and setting targets in about half of the primary and special schools visited. There was wide variation in the quality of analysis by schools of the performance data provided. In only half of schools visited had the data available been used to set realistic and challenging targets for literacy and numeracy. Support for the introduction of baseline assessment and Year 4 tests has generally been effective. Secondary schools are well advanced in the use of performance data and target setting but the LEA is not well placed to support this work further.

128. The LEA has only recently begun to provide schools with a set of performance data. The collection and use of data to analyse performance and set targets for improvement is an important part of the LEA's strategy to facilitate schools' self-evaluation. A research and statistics unit has been recently established to coordinate the range of analysis work previously carried out by various parts of the LEA and to focus upon the use of performance data on school improvement. The LEA has begun to implement a programme of training for headteachers, governors and staff in the interpretation and use of data. The performance data coupled with inspection evidence has been used to support the identification of schools as part of the national literacy and numeracy strategies and to identify primary schools which are under-achieving or may become "priority schools". Baseline assessment and Year 4 tests have been effectively introduced in primary schools and coupled with Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 SATs have formed the basis of the 'Bromley School Profile' since 1997.

129. The school profile is generally welcomed by schools but only provides them with a limited range of benchmark information to allow comparison with national and local performance data over time and to take account of free school meals as the major socio-economic indicator. The profile includes analysis by gender but not ethnicity, although there are plans to address this. Nearly all schools visited felt that the data was potentially valuable and the training in its use was helpful but many schools

130. The setting of agreed targets in primary schools forms part of the “annual summary discussion” between the contact inspector, headteacher and chair of governors. In only half of the primary schools visited was the quality of analysis and effectiveness of the LEA’s contribution through the use of performance data for target setting and support of self-evaluation judged to have made significant impact. In these schools the contact inspector had played an important role in supporting headteachers and governors in their analysis of the data and, coupled with their knowledge of the school, ensured the required targets set were challenging yet realistic. Only in a small minority of schools visited had the data been used to help plan improvements in teaching and learning to raise standards. In a significant minority of the primary schools the use of performance data, target setting and assessment practice was weak and these schools are not well placed for self-evaluation. The setting of targets in these schools was not sufficiently rigorous to ensure adequate challenge. The DfEE has identified this as a condition for the three-year approval of the EDP.

131. In all the secondary schools visited, a culture of rigorous analysis of performance data and reliable target setting processes, based upon individual pupil performance, had been established through their own initiatives. In most respects the secondary schools in Bromley are well in advance of the LEA in the use of performance data. The collation and analysis of performance data for secondary schools by the LEA is undertaken using individual school prospectuses and nationally produced data as sources. A report on the performance of Bromley schools is presented to the Education Review ~3ub-Committee on an annual basis. The data is limited in its potential to support school self-evaluation. Although sound procedures are in place for the setting of agreed targets in individual secondary schools through a meeting between the headteacher and head of the Quality Assurance Division, the LEA’s limited experience of the use of performance data and target setting in secondary schools limits its effectiveness to support or challenge them further.

SUPPORT FOR IMPROVEMENT IN LITERACY

132. The LEA has effectively supported the introduction of the national literacy strategy in its primary schools. Early indications show that the quality of the training provided is good and that this is contributing to improved attainment.

133. National Curriculum test and GCSE examination results in English in the Borough’s schools remain above national averages and the averages for pupils in statistical neighbours. The rate of improvement between 1995 and 1998 for pupils achieving Level 4 and above in Key Stage 2 tests has been less than the national rate, albeit starting from a higher base. Performance at GCSE has risen at a rate above the national rate of improvement.

134. A Key Stage 2 literacy target of 90 per cent of pupils achieving Level 4 and above by 2002 has been set and an intermediate target has now been agreed. These targets represent a considerable challenge for the LEA. Strategies designed to support improvement in the lowest performing 25 per cent of the LEA’s primary schools are in place. All of the authorities’ primary schools are following the NLS. The LEA is

committed to a strategy of early intervention to target non-statemented SEN pupils at Key Stage 2 and to provide intensive support to schools in special measures and with serious weaknesses or where performance is poor.

135. A literacy team has been established and is led by a strategy manager who is a member of the LEA senior management team; a literacy steering group, involving headteachers and officers, has also been formed. The Bromley Literacy Training and Support Plan provides a comprehensive development programme for the NLS.

136. Eight of the fifteen schools visited have been successful in raising attainment in English and/or literacy since their most recent OFSTED inspection and there was evidence that the literacy hour was starting to have an impact on the quality of teaching in nearly all of the primary schools. There were also significant improvements in assessing progress in literacy but sometimes too little analysis of the reasons for the lower performance of boys compared to girls.

137. Literacy targets adopted for the primary schools visited were generally appropriate although there was evidence of confusion in a significant number of these between predictions of outcomes and the setting of targets. Insufficient encouragement has been given to higher performing schools, whose results are already close to their Level 4 targets, to set non-statutory targets for pupils achieving Level 5 and above.

138. The training and support provided to primary schools by the LEA's literacy team is highly regarded and is proving effective. Advice following classroom visits by the literacy consultant has been well received. The intensive support provided to particular schools is proving very effective. Contact inspectors have also played a part in monitoring standards but it is not always sufficiently coordinated with that of the literacy consultants. Cluster group meetings and opportunities for literacy co-ordinators to network have been particularly valued.

139. In the three secondary schools visited achievement in English was high and English literature standards in one school were exceptionally good. Where LEA training sessions on literacy had been attended, the emphasis had been mainly on primary practice and little benefit had been derived. In contrast, heads of English departments in all three schools considered the termly meetings organised by the LEA's English adviser to be very useful.

SUPPORT FOR IMPROVEMENT IN NUMERACY

140. The LEA'S support for improving numeracy was effective in approximately three-quarters of the schools visited. A few schools with important areas of weakness did not seek guidance to prevent a further decline in standards and the LEA did not intervene and offer support. The LEA has not been a pilot for the National Numeracy Strategy (NNS) but is well placed to introduce it.

141. The attainment of pupils in mathematics tests is above national averages and those of statistical neighbours but the difference declined at each key stage between

1995 and 1998. A numeracy target of 83 per cent of pupils achieving Level 4 and above at the end of Key Stage 2 has been set for 2002, with an intermediate target for the year 2000 of 74 per cent. These targets represent a considerable challenge for the

142. Bromley LEA has not been a pilot for the NNS but plans for its introduction in September 1999 are well advanced. A numeracy steering group has been established involving headteacher representatives and officers. A document outlining the arrangements for the introduction of NNS has been distributed to schools and the primary schools visited were generally well informed about the LEA's proposals. Inspection and performance data information have been used to identify schools to be included in the first year of the project and steps taken to ensure those schools who are also involved in the NLS are not overburdened.

143. The LEA's support for numeracy was satisfactory or better in three-quarters of the schools visited. The support provided through courses, coordinators' meetings and advisory visits was highly valued by the teachers involved and this made an effective contribution to improvement in the quality of teaching and standards. The LEA is generally proactive and effective in providing support to assist schools to address shortcomings identified through Section 10 inspections of mathematics. However, in a small minority of schools there was a lack of support for numeracy, even though the need was clearly evident from performance data. In some instances, the contact inspector and the headteacher were aware of the poor performance in mathematics but had not taken adequate action to prevent a further decline in standards.

SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS REQUIRING SPECIAL MEASURES OR THOSE WITH SERIOUS WEAKNESSES OR OTHER DIFFICULTIES

144. *The LEA has a clear strategy for Supporting schools in difficulties and has provided generally effective support to schools requiring special measures. Support for schools with serious weaknesses or other difficulties varies in its effectiveness.*

145. Three LEA maintained primary schools, one special school and one GM secondary school have required special measures since 1993. The special school was subsequently closed and the secondary school has been removed from special measures. At the time of the inspection, the three primary schools were still subject to special measures, representing 3.8 per cent of all primary schools. This is slightly above the national average of about three per cent. None of the three primary schools had been subject to special measures for more than 18 months. In addition, two LEA maintained primary schools have been identified as having serious weaknesses.

146. In the past, the LEA was not always good at identifying schools in difficulty and providing adequate support. The LEA now has a clear strategy for supporting schools requiring special measures, schools with serious weaknesses and other schools where there are concerns. Evidence from monitoring visits by HMI to the schools requiring special measures indicates that the LEA is generally providing appropriate and effective support. This has included the secondment of experienced senior managers, staff development, in-class support, intensive support to introduce the national literacy

strategy and support to the headteacher and governing body. There has also been coordinated support across a range of services, including finance and personnel, to improve the management and efficiency of these schools.

147. In one school requiring special measures insufficient effort has been made to improve the overall consistency of teaching throughout the school. The training provided has been useful but piecemeal, with inadequate evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses. The school was not always able to obtain the support from the advisory services when it was most needed.

148. Schools with serious weaknesses and other schools with difficulties were visited as part of this inspection. The effectiveness of the support in these schools varied considerably. Much depended upon the quality of analysis and advice provided by the contact inspector. For example, in one school too little written evaluation was provided to the headteacher and governors about the lack of progress the school was making in tackling the weaknesses identified in the OFSTED inspection. The governors and headteacher needed more direct help in formulating strategies to raise standards and in dealing with difficult personnel issues. In contrast, there were also examples of good support being given to schools by the contact inspector and others. In several schools this included the appointment and support of a new headteacher.

SUPPORT FOR IMPROVEMENT IN THE QUALITY OF TEACHING

149. Support for improving the quality of teaching provided by the ETSD is often effective. There is good support for NQTs. Contact inspectors have been effective in helping schools to address general weaknesses in the quality of teaching but this is not always the case. Teacher appraisal has lapsed in a number of schools. There is little evaluation of the long-term impact of training and there is scope for the better identification and sharing of good practice.

150. In half the schools visited, teaching was good or better at the time of their OFSTED inspection. All but one of these schools had either improved teaching further or had maintained its good quality. A further three schools, including two where teaching had been unsatisfactory, showed some improvement. The quality of teaching remained satisfactory in three schools and unsatisfactory in two schools. The LEA made a substantial contribution to raising or sustaining the quality of teaching in two schools and made a satisfactory contribution in a further 11 schools. Its inputs had little or no impact in three schools, including one where teaching was unsatisfactory.

151. Support for teaching had a number of notable strengths. Courses and school-based support provided by the ETSD were generally well regarded and effective, particularly in literacy, numeracy, science and design and technology. The regular meetings organised for subject coordinators were often highly valued as a way of keeping up to date with developments and sharing good practice. NQTs were well supported by their schools and, for primary teachers, through staff development courses provided by the ETSD, although there was variation in how these courses were perceived, dependent to some extent upon the type of training previously undertaken. Contact inspectors were particularly effective in improving the quality of

teaching in three schools through a programme of lesson observations, sometimes undertaken jointly with the headteacher or other senior managers. Teachers in these schools were provided with a detailed evaluation of their teaching, which was used to identify staff development needs.

152. There were also some weaknesses in the LEA's support for improving the quality of teaching. As in many other authorities, the LEA has not been involved recently in monitoring the quality of teacher appraisal and this was only operating effectively in about half of the schools visited. Contact inspectors were not effective in helping three of the schools visited to address general weaknesses in teaching. There was a failure in some schools to provide sufficiently detailed feedback to teachers and senior managers on the quality of teaching following classroom observations.

153. The split between the advisory and inspection services caused difficulties in a minority of schools in providing a coherent and timely package of support. Advisory support was not always available when it was most needed and schools felt that contact inspectors were not always aware of what staff development had taken place. The restructuring of the department to bring together inspection and advice under a standards and effectiveness unit should help to resolve these difficulties. The ETSD carries out end of course evaluation but there is no formal mechanism for evaluating the long-term impact of training. While there are opportunities for sharing good practice through the coordinators' meetings, schools thought the LEA could be more pro-active in this area.

SUPPORT FOR IMPROVING MANAGEMENT

154. There were weaknesses in the support for strategic planning and school self-review in almost half of the primary schools visited. The LEA provides good support for new headteachers. Training courses for headteachers, senior managers and middle managers are generally well regarded.

155. The LEA provides support for the appointment and induction of headteachers, for the professional development of headteachers and deputy headteachers and for school self-evaluation and strategic planning.

156. Seven of the schools visited were well managed at the time of their OFSTED inspection. Six of these schools had made further improvements or maintained high levels of effectiveness. Four of the less well managed schools had improved, including three where management had been unsatisfactory. Four schools had made little progress in addressing the management issues raised in the inspection report.

157. The LEA support for management made a significant impact in three schools, including two where management was unsatisfactory at the time of their OFSTED inspection. The LEA had some impact on improvement in a further four schools. The LEA made little or no impact in five schools, including two which had significant weaknesses in management.

158. Support for new headteachers, through induction programmes and the contact inspector, was generally well regarded and effective. The exception to this was where there had been several changes of contact inspector around the time of the new appointment. The mentoring arrangements of new headteachers by experienced headteachers also worked well. Two schools, one with a relatively new headteacher, had benefitted from the support of an advisory headteacher. Professional development for headteachers and deputies was highly valued. The annual headteachers' conference was welcomed by most headteachers as a way of keeping up to date with national and local developments and sharing good practice. Support for coordinators and middle managers in primary schools was well regarded.

159. Support before and during OFSTED inspections was generally well thought of. Schools were also given helpful advice on how to structure their action plans. In five of the primary schools there were weaknesses, either in the support for strategic planning or in monitoring the implementation of action plans. In these schools, the contact inspector had not been sufficiently critical of the content of the action plans or rigorous enough in the evaluation of progress towards their implementation. In some cases, managers needed to be given greater direction or more help with making difficult personnel decisions. Too little in the way of written evaluation and comment was provided to headteachers and governors in these schools.

160. A key element in the LEA's support for management is through the development of school self-evaluation. Each LEA maintained school undertakes an annual review of performance and progress, written to a common structure. This is discussed at a meeting in the autumn term between the contact inspector, the headteacher and chair of governors. Following this meeting, the contact inspector submits a report to the headteacher and chair of governors on the self-evaluation, the progress made over the past year and points for action.

161. The system of school self-evaluation is a sound one but it was not working effectively in almost half of the primary schools visited. This was because there were weaknesses in the schools' ability to analyse their performance and to devise strategies for overcoming the shortcomings. At the same time, the contact inspectors' reports were not sufficiently rigorous in challenging the schools' self-evaluation and strategies. In several cases, the reports did little more than provide an account of the meeting and describe the content of the review. Schools were not told what actions were needed and who was going to be responsible for them. In contrast, there was high quality self-review in just over half the primary schools and in all the secondary schools. There were also examples in the primary schools of contact inspectors using performance data and their detailed knowledge of the schools to provide incisive evaluations and clear agendas for action. Subsequent meetings often provided an effective check on progress and a refinement of the strategies for improvement.

SUPPORT FOR GOVERNORS

162. *The work of the LEA's Governor Training Organiser is highly regarded. The quality of advice and general information to governors is good; induction and other training opportunities are considered value for money; a high level of support is*

provided to Governing Bodies when appointing a new headteacher. Insufficient encouragement has been provided to Governing Bodies to review their own practice and to monitor classroom activity.

163. Governor support and development as well as the training of school based support staff are managed by a Training Organiser in ETSD. The service attracts a financial commitment for governor support from 97 per cent of maintained schools and a high proportion of GM schools. A well organised provision, this service is too dependent upon one person for all new developments to be introduced satisfactorily.

164. A set of development priorities has been established in which the statutory requirement to provide a revised set of Instruments of Government to all governing bodies before September is a major feature. There is an Association of Bromley Governors and it is represented on the Education Committee by its chairperson. Two parent governors have been elected to take up co-opted places on the Education Committee as an interim measure prior to the introduction of regulations to make this a requirement.

165. Nearly all schools have a full complement of governors. At the end of 1998, there were vacancies representing just three per cent of the total. Minutes of governing body meetings are monitored by the LEA. A comprehensive range of training opportunities for clerks and governors is provided. Specific training has been provided to the governing bodies of special measures and serious weakness schools. A comprehensive and very effective package of assistance is an entitlement to governing bodies when appointing a new headteacher.

166. The quality of the LEA's induction and other training courses was universally praised. The flow of general information and the good advice is appreciated. Statutory requirements of governing bodies are met and there was an acknowledgement of the effectiveness of the LEA's monitoring role.

167. Consultation procedures are sometimes compromised by the limited time allowed for responses or by a lack of clarity of the issues. Whilst some governing bodies play a key role in the annual review of their school, others do not. Information provided by contact inspectors to headteachers is not always copied to chairpersons. The quality of the clerking support in several schools has been affected by staff changes.

168. The degree of support for governors provided by the LEA was suitably related to need in all but one of the schools visited and in only three schools was the LEA's contribution less than satisfactory. There was evidence of improvement since the last inspection in eight of the 16 schools visited. However, as in many LEAs, very few governing bodies regularly monitored teaching and learning and fewer still reviewed their own practice.

APPENDIX I CONTEXT OF THE LEA

(a) Characteristics of the pupil population

Indicator	Date	Source	LEA	National
1. Number of pupils in LEA area of 1997 compulsory school age	Nov 98	LEA	43,431	
2. Percentage of pupils entitled to 1997 DEE free school meals				
i. primary	1997	DfEE	18.1	22.8
ii. secondary	1997	DfEE	14.6	18.2
3. Percentage of pupils living in households with parents/carers				
(i) with Higher Educational qualifications	1991	Census	17.1	13.5
(ii) in Social Class 1 and 2	1991	Census	45.8	31.0
4. Ethnic Minorities in population aged 5-15. Percentage of ethnic group:				
Asian	1991	Census	0.8	0.5
Bangladesh	1991	Census	0.3	0.8
Black African	1991	Census	0.6	0.6
Black Caribbean	1991	Census	1.1	1.1
Black Other	1991	Census	0.7	0.8
Chinese	1991	Census	0.4	0.4
Indian	1991	Census	1.4	2.7
Other	1991	Census	1.6	1.1
Pakistani	1991	Census	0.2	2.1
5. Percentage of pupils:				
(i) with a statement of SEN				
primary	1997	DfEE		2.6
secondary	1997	DfEE		3.9
(ii) attending special school				
primary	1997	DfEE	0.6	1.1
secondary	1997	DfEE	1.3	1.6
6. Participation in education:	1998	LEA	80	70 (1996)

(b) Organisation of schools

Number of:	Number
Nursery schools	0
First and Infant schools	13
Junior schools	11
Primary schools	54
Secondary schools 11-18	17
Special schools	4
Pupil Referral Units	1

Class size

Rate per 1000 classes

Size of class	Year	LEA	National
31 or more KS1	1997	579.1	289.6
KS2	1997	540.4	379.0
36 or more KS1	1997	6.9	22.9
KS2	1997	16.9	35.0

Surplus places

% Surplus	Year	LEA	National
Primary	1997	2.1	10.0
Secondary	1997	0.0	12.0

APPENDIX 2: THE PERFORMANCE OF MAINTAINED SCHOOLS

PUPILS' ATTAINMENT

Attainment at age 7 (Key Stage I)

	Year	% of pupils achieving Level 2 or above					
		Teacher Assessment			Tasks/tests		
		LEA	National	Difference	LEA	National	Difference
English	1996	84.2	79.3	4.9			
	1997	85.5	80.4	5.0			
	1998	86.3	81.4	4.9			
English (reading)	1996	84.6	78.6	6.0	84.3	78.0	6.3
	1997	85.3	80.1	5.2	84.3	80.1	4.2
	1998	85.9	80.8	5.1	82.9	77.4	5.5
English (writing)	1996	80.9	76.6	4.2	84.1	79.7	4.4
	1997	81.9	77.5	4.4	84.2	80.4	3.7
	1998	84.3	78.9	5.3	84.9	81.4	3.4
Mathematics	1996	85.4	82.2	3.3	85.7	82.1	3.6
	1997	87.3	84.2	3.1	87.2	83.7	3.4
	1998	87.8	85.5	2.4	86.4	84.8	1.5
Science	1996	89.7	84.1	5.6			
	1997	90.3	85.5	4.7			
	1998	91.9	86.5	5.2			

Source: DfEE

2. Attainment at age 11 (KEY STAGE 2)

	Year	% Pupils achieving Level 4 or above					
		Teacher assessment			Task/tests		
		LEA	National	Difference	LEA	National	Difference
English	1996	71.2	60.1	11.2	67.1	57.1	10.0
	1997	74.8	63.4	11.4	74.2	63.2	11.0
	1998				73.6	64.7	8.9
Mathematics	1996	70.4	59.9	10.5	64.2	53.9	10.3
	1997	75.3	64.1	11.2	72.7	62.0	10.7
	1998				65.9	58.5	7.4
Science	1996	75.0	65.1	9.9	70.2	62.0	8.2
	1997	80.2	69.5	10.7	78.2	68.8	9.4
	1998				73.9	69.3	4.6

Source: DfEE

Attainment at age 14 (KEY STAGE 3)

	Year	% Pupils achieving Level 5 or above					
		Teacher assessment			Task/tests		
		LEA	National	Difference	LEA	National	Difference
English	1996	69.7	60.3	9.4	67.2	56.6	10.6
	1997	65.5	60.2	5.3	72.2	56.6	15.6
	1998				76.8	65.1	11.7
Mathematics	1996	70.0	61.5	8.5	65.6	56.7	8.9
	1997	73.7	64.0	9.6	70.0	60.7	9.2
	1998				67.7	59.9	7.8
Science	1996	64.0	59.7	4.4	64.8	56.4	8.4
	1997	72.2	62.2	10.0	70.6	60.8	9.8
	1998				64.5	56.5	8.0

Source: DfEE

Attainment at age 16 GCSE results in maintained schools

Level achieved	Year	Percentage of pupils		
		LEA	National	Difference
1 A*-G	1996	95.7	93.9	1.7
	1997	96.6	94.0	2.6
	1998	97.6	95.2	2.7
5 A*-C	1996	51.3	42.6	8.8
	1997	53.7	43.3	10.5
	1998	56.0	44.4	11.6
5 A*-G	1996	92.4	88.1	4.3
	1997	93.6	88.5	5.1
	1998	94.7	89.6	5.1
Average points score	1996	38.3	34.6	3.7
	1997	38.7	35.0	3.6
	1998	39.7	35.6	4.2

Pupils aged 15 at the beginning of the school year and on the roll in January of that year

Source: DfEE

Attainment at age 18 A level results Average point score per pupil

Number entered	Year	LEA	National	Difference
2 or more	1996	17.6	16.8	0.8
	1997	16.7	17.1	-0.4
	1998	17.1	17.5	-0.4
Less than 2	1996	2.4	2.7	-0.3
	1997	3.2	2.7	0.5
	1998	2.5	2.8	-0.3

Source: DfEE

Vocational qualifications of 16 to 18 year olds in maintained schools

Level achieved	Year	LEA	National	Difference
Pass entries (Advanced)	1996	91.9	79.3	12.5
	1997	66.7	75.4	-8.7
Pass entries (Intermediate)	1996	79.0	69.1	9.9
	1997	53.8	68.9	-15.2

Source: DfEE

Attendance

	Year	LEA	National	Difference
Attendance in Primary schools	1996	93.7	93.4	0.3
	1997	93.3	93.9	-0.6
Attendance in Secondary schools	1996	91.9	90.5	1.5
	1997	91.9	90.9	1.1

Source: DfEE

FUNDING

Comparison of spending with SSA

A distinguishing feature of the LEA's spending is the degree to which capital works are financed from its fund of capital receipts. Such expenditure is not included in the comparison of spending with SSA. In some other LEAs such works are funded, in part at least, from revenue sources. To the degree Bromley had chosen to adopt such an approach, the 'gap' between revenue spending and SSA would have been closed or eliminated altogether. The wider gap for 1999/2000 is due in part to a further shift towards the use of capital receipts.

Year	SSA for Education [£000]	Net Revenue Expenditure on Education [£000]	Expenditure as a % of Education SSA
1997/98	108,900	109,400	100.5%
1998/99	118,700	117,100	98.7%
1999/2000	125,800	121,300	96.4%

[source: LEA]

Expenditure within the General Schools Budget [GSB]

The statistical neighbours grouping is the same as that used for comparisons of pupil performance. (Note: secondary figures in the tables below refer to one LEA school).

	Bromley	Statistical neighbours	Outer London Boroughs	All English LEAs
Primary GSB per pupil	2386	2167	2433	2172
Secondary GSB per pupil	2900	2985	3361	2903
Primary:secondary ratio	1:1.22	1:1.38	1:1.38	1:1.34
Special GSB per pupil	25483*	13296	16601	12961

[source CIPFA 1998/199 estimates]

[*Size of figure affected by unusually high capital expenditure]

Expenditure within the Aggregated Schools Budget [ASB] - funding delegated to schools

	Bromley	Statistical neighbours	Outer London Boroughs	All English LEAs
Primary ASB per pupil	1720	1598	1797	1593
Secondary ASB per pupil	2263*	2264	2453	2224
Primary:secondary ratio	1:1.32	1:1.42	1:1.37	1:1.40
SpecialASBperpupil	11411	7867	10297	8161

(source CIPFA 1998/99 estimates)

(*Refers to one school only)

Age Weighted Pupil Unit values

AVERAGE VALUES	AWPU	Bromley	Statistical neighbours	Outer London Boroughs	All English LEAs
Key Stage 1		1355	1322	1435	1333
Key Stage 2		1257	1239	1301	1249
Key Stage 3		1696	1738	1738	1690
Key Stage 4		2071	2027	2048	2055
Sixth form		2814	2304	2645	2563

(source CIPFA 1998/99 estimates)

Centrally controlled expenditure

Figures for the individual spending items are in pounds per pupil [to the nearest pound].

	Bromley	Statistical neighbours	Outer London Boroughs	All English LEAs
ASB as % PSB	88.44%	90.55%	90.28%	90.66%
ASB as % GSB	69.97%	73.59%	72.74%	73.98%
Management & administration	49	44	50	40
Advisory & inspection services	25	18	24	16
Provision for pupils with statements of SEN in mainstream schools	95	51	63	56
Other SEN provision in mainstream schools	31	12	16	13
Instrumental music	0	4	2	5
Other peripatetic staff	0	4	5	2
Library & museum services	0	3	1	3
Operational units (excl. SEN)	0	2	2	3
Staff costs — supply	16	11	12	9
Staff costs — salary safeguarding	1	1	1	2
Staff costs—training	0	4	2	1
Insurance	16	15	11	14
Structural repairs & maintenance	0	26	35	31
Other items	8	6	7	7
Home to school transport	50	36	46	62
Meals & milk (inc. Expend covered by income)	37	104	85	96
Expenditure met by OFSTED income	0	1	1	2
Pupil support	8	5	5	5
LEA initiatives	10	5	9	5
School specific contingencies	1	5	11	8
Provision for ethnic minority pupils	8	4	7	3
Capital expenditure	307	153	221	126
Capital charges	0	34	22	24
Education welfare	7	10	11	10
Education psychology	23	12	16	11
Statementing costs	18	7	9	8
Premature retirement costs	9	23	21	26
Section 11 posts	2	13	46	20
Other grant related expenditure	70	66	73	73

(source CIPFA 1998/99 estimates)

Overall funding for special educational needs

The following table provides details of funding for special educational needs in Bromley and other authorities nationally. SEN funding is a difficult area in which to construct exact 'like with like' comparisons and it is important to read the notes on the table before drawing conclusions from the figures. The purpose of the table is less to provide an absolutely comprehensive account of expenditure on SEN [the figures available do not allow for this] but to include the major items and to provide comparisons on as reasonable a like with like basis as possible.

All figures are in terms of expenditure as a percentage of the GSB.

	Bromley	Statistical neighbours	Outer London Boroughs	All English LEAs
Special schools ASB [net of recoupment -see NOTE 2]	3.19%	3.55%	3.22%	3.72%
Annual maintenance grant for special schools — see NOTE 3	1.92%	0.2%	0.42%	0.11%
Special school placements outside the LEA — see NOTE 4	3.58%	268%	2.68%	1.92%
Excepted expenditure—provision for children with statements in mainstream schools	3.59%	2.0%	2.16%	2.16%
Excepted expenditure — other SEN provision	1.18%	0.45%	0.54%	0.5%
Educational psychology	0.88%	0.48%	0.55%	0.41%
Statementing costs	0.67%	0.26%	0.32%	0.28%
“Additional funds — special needs related” within the ASB	0%	1.68%	1.1%	1.32%
“Other pupil led funding — special needs” within the ASB	5.44%	2.17%	2.51%	1.73%
Education otherwise than at school —see NOTE 4	1.14%	0.47%	0.45%	0.47%
SEN transport	0.85%	1.01%	1.06%	1.15%
Total net expenditure on special needs	22.43%	14.96%	15.0%	13.78%

(source CIPFA 1998/99 estimates)

NOTES

1. Some authorities regard the AWPU element of the ASB to include some funding for SEN [i.e. the additional sums allocated to certain schools are intended only to reflect needs above the level expected to be encountered in all schools]. The extent of such funding is often not specified and hence cannot be included in inter authority comparisons.

2. To show expenditure by LEAs on their own pupils in local special schools it is necessary to remove from the Special ASB the sums paid by other authorities in recoupment charges. The total recoupment paid has been deducted from the Special ASB, even though some of this money may relate to tuition in hospital units and other provision outside special schools. This distinction may slightly affect comparisons of the Special ASB but not of total net expenditure.

3. Some LEAs place pupils in GM special schools. Each LEA's 'share' of the costs involved will have been removed from its budget through the annual maintenance grant mechanism on the basis of pupil placements. Neither its Special ASB nor its GSB will include the sums involved. Had the pupils in question been placed within an LEA maintained school, however, they would have done and the "Special ASB as a % of GSB" and/or "special school placements outside the LEA" calculations would have risen accordingly. It seems appropriate, therefore, to include the sums involved in the inter authority comparison.

4. Where the figures in the table relate to centrally controlled expenditure, LEAs have been asked to remove any costs relating to services provided to GM school pupils. For special school placements outside the LEA and education otherwise than at school, however, such a distinction is difficult to apply. The assumption has been made that LEAs have returned their gross expenditure under these headings. To express such expenditure as a % of the GSB would hence tend to 'over-represent' the true picture for LEAs with GM schools. The figures in the table have accordingly been scaled down by the percentage of maintained school pupils within the total number of pupils in schools in the area.

School balances

The overall sums held in school balances at the end of the year, expressed as a percentage of the original delegated budget for that year, are shown in the table below:

	1995/6 balance as % of delegated budget	1996/7 balance as % of delegated budget	1997/8 balance as % of delegated budget
Primary schools	7%	5%	6%
Secondary school	1%	0%	-2%
Special schools	8%	5%	6%

[source LEA]

Five primary schools and one secondary school were in deficit at the end of 1997/8. No school had a deficit greater than 5% of its delegated budget. 14 schools had surpluses greater than 10% of their delegated budget.

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33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE**

Tel. 0171 421 6800

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