



House of Commons

Education and Skills Committee

Secondary Education: Diversity of Provision

Fourth Report of Session 2002–03



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*Report and formal minutes together with oral
and written evidence*

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The Education and Skills Committee

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1 Summary

In this part of our secondary education inquiry we have examined the evidence underpinning the Government's diversity strategy. We have therefore focused our attention on the initiative at the centre of this strategy: the specialist schools programme. We have been particularly interested in assessing the extent to which the Government's policies are supported by evidence.

Recent administrations have placed particular attention on attaining diversity by creating or emphasising structural differences between schools. The present Government has explicitly linked this form of diversity with its efforts to raise standards. The specialist schools programme has been identified as a school improvement programme designed to raise pupil achievement. The scope for creating diversity through the curriculum is, however, heavily circumscribed by the requirement for all maintained schools to deliver the National Curriculum.

The 2001 White Paper *Schools Achieving Success* made much of the value of diversity and the necessary link between diversity and choice as a means of improving attainment. The emphasis on choice of this Government and its predecessors has resulted in a significant mismatch of expectations. The rhetoric on choice has, perhaps inevitably, not been matched by the reality of parental preference in the allocation of school places.

When the Government first expanded the specialist schools programme, the ability to select by aptitude was considered a key feature for improving standards of attainment. It is clear that the Government no longer considers selection by aptitude to be central to the purpose of specialist schools. We, however, are not satisfied that any meaningful distinction between aptitude and ability has been made and have found no justification for any reliance on the distinction between them.

We acknowledge the Department's renewed emphasis on the collaborative and community aspects of the specialist schools policy and of the initiatives being developed through the Diversity Pathfinder project. We believe, however, that the nature of this collaboration is at present insufficiently focussed on raising pupil achievement and therefore recommend that future funding for specialist schools and the basis of their evaluation should be explicitly linked to measurable success in raising pupil achievement in partner schools.

Key findings:

The key finding of our inquiry is the lack of sufficient research evidence to indicate whether the choices the Government is making in secondary education policy are based on secure foundations. There has been very little research on the impact of specialist schools on their neighbouring schools; the Government has placed too much emphasis on a narrow range of research on the comparative performance of specialist schools; and we have found the 5 A*-C GCSEs indicator for attainment at 16 to be an inadequate and misleading measure of pupil achievement.

Narrow and simplistic approaches to measuring school improvement cannot provide adequate evidence as to the efficacy of the Government's diversity policy across the ability range. This raises questions as to the planned expansion of the programme. Without further evaluation it is not possible to assess the extent to which the apparent benefits of specialisation might be extended across secondary education.

Schools which have achieved specialist school status can be exciting places with high levels of pupil attainment. The question we ask is whether this is due to the advantages that extra funding brings, or the management process that schools have to undertake, or something inherent in being a specialist school. We urge the Government to engage in a more rigorous evaluation of the current programme than has so far been attempted.

2 Introduction

Scope of the inquiry

1. The Committee announced its Secondary Education inquiry on 4 November 2002 and set out the four areas upon which it intended to focus. These were Diversity of Provision; Pupil Achievement; Teacher Retention and School Admissions.

2. The inquiry built upon the Committee's innovative visits to Birmingham and to Auckland in New Zealand in the autumn of 2002; it is appropriate to record our sincere appreciation for the contribution that colleagues in both cities made to our understanding of the issues facing secondary education and how they might be tackled. Our deliberations have also been informed by visits to Belfast and Dublin in March and April 2003, where we were also grateful for the open way in which people were willing to discuss educational issues. Secondary education in Birmingham and Auckland is the subject of the first of six reports on this theme. This report on diversity of provision is the second in the series. Subsequent reports will focus on pupil achievement, teacher retention and school admissions. The sixth and final report in the series will attempt a cross-cutting analysis and tie together the threads of the whole of the secondary education inquiry.

3. This stage of the secondary education inquiry has been limited to the examination of the evidence underpinning the Government's diversity strategy. We have therefore placed greatest emphasis on the initiative at the centre of this strategy: the specialist schools programme. For the purposes of this inquiry we have defined the diversity strategy as comprising the various initiatives outlined in the present Government's main policy statements; *Schools achieving success*, the 2001 White Paper and the 2003 strategy document *A new specialist system: Transforming secondary education*¹ including specialist schools, Beacon schools, widening the range of education providers and school collaboration.

4. Some of the important issues we have encountered during this first stage of our secondary education inquiry will be revisited in the later stages, as issues surrounding diversity are inextricably related to pupil achievement, school admissions, selection and the distribution and retention of subject specialist staff in the secondary sector.

5. During the course of our inquiry we took evidence from the Secretary of State and the Minister of State for School Standards. The initial stage of the inquiry greatly benefited from the evidence of Professors Stephen Gorard from Cardiff University, James Tooley from the University of Newcastle and Richard Pring from Oxford University. David Taylor, Kath Cross, Tim Key and Mike Raleigh from Ofsted, and Dr Ian Schagen and Dr Sandie Schagen from the National Foundation for Educational Research gave evidence on their findings from Ofsted inspections and recent NFER research projects. We took evidence on the Department's Diversity Pathfinder projects from Mr Ron Jacobs and Mrs Margaret-Anne Barnett, officials from the DfES, and Mr Ray Shostak, Director of

¹ *Schools Achieving Success*, Cm 5230 2001, *A New Specialist System: Transforming Secondary Education*, DfES, February 2003.

Children, Schools and Families for Hertfordshire Local Education Authority. The projects' academic evaluation team, Professor Ron Glatter and Dr Philip Woods from The Open University and Jennifer Evans from the Institute of Education, University of London also gave evidence. Sir Cyril Taylor, Chairman of the Specialist Schools Trust and Professor David Jesson from the University of York gave evidence on the performance of schools in the specialist schools programme. We also took evidence from Dr John Dunford, General Secretary of the Secondary Heads Association (SHA) and Mrs Kate Griffin, President of SHA. In addition we received 60 written memoranda, some of which are published with this report. We are grateful to our specialist advisers for this inquiry, Sir Peter Newsam and Professor Alan Smithers of the Department of Education, University of Liverpool.

Why does it matter?

6. In March 2002, following the publication of the OECD PISA report,² the Committee travelled to Paris to take evidence from OECD on the results of the PISA study.³ We were struck, first by the comparative success of the young people from the UK who participated in the study, but also by the range of achievements recorded. The students who participated in the study demonstrated knowledge and skills in reading, mathematics and science significantly above the OECD average, ahead of France, Germany and the USA. Although the scores of the lowest performing English students compared well with those in other countries, the study showed England to have a wide variation in the performance of the most and least able students.⁴ Perhaps contrary to expectations, this variation was shown to be greater *within* schools⁵ rather than *between* schools and showed a clear correlation between pupil achievement and social class.

7. The PISA study also identified links between the structure and organisation of education and performance within schools, suggesting that models of education provision with high levels of selection and differentiation between schools, deliver wider differences between the most and the least able, and suggested that selective practices, including streaming, can have the effect of depressing levels of pupil attainment.⁶

“The best performing countries secure high average performance consistently across schools. Conversely, countries with larger disparities among schools tend to achieve lower overall performance. Securing similar performance standards among schools, perhaps most importantly through identifying and reforming poorly performing schools, is not just an important policy goal in itself, but it may also contribute to high overall performance.

2 *Knowledge and Skills for Life, first results from the OECD Programme for Student Assessment (PISA) 2000*, OECD, Paris, 2001.

3 Minutes of Evidence taken before the Education and Skills Committee, Session 2001–02, *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development*, HC 711–i, Q 13.

4 Other studies, including the 1999 Third International Maths and Science Study (TIMSS) and the more recent Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (Pirls) have produced differing results. Both studies indicate a particularly wide range in the performance of English participants. The Committee's emphasis on PISA arises from its evidence taking in March 2002.

5 *Knowledge and Skills for Life, first results from the OECD Programme for Student Assessment (PISA) 2000*, OECD, Paris, 2001, p 61 Fig 2.6.

6 Minutes of Evidence taken before the Education and Skills Committee, Session 2001–02, *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development*, HC 711–i, Q 13.

Where there is a high degree of variation between schools, students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds tend to do worse. This, in turn, means that some of the inequality of outcomes is associated with inequality of opportunity. In such circumstances, talent remains unused and human resources are wasted.

The more stratified an education system is, the larger are the typical performance differences between students from more and less advantaged family backgrounds. Both overall variation in student performance and performance differences between schools tend to be greater in those countries with institutional differentiation at an early age between types of programme and schools. PISA also suggests that the effects of social clustering are larger in school systems with differentiated types of school than in systems in which the curriculum does not vary significantly between schools and programmes.”⁷

8. International comparisons, while popular with the media, are problematic for policy makers and we recognise the limitations of relying too heavily on findings from a single source, or indeed a multiplicity of international projects. Nevertheless, the results of the first PISA study have provided a valuable backdrop to this inquiry, offering a helpful basis for formulating questions about the performance of schools and pupil achievement, scrutinising policy assertions and research findings.

9. It was with these findings in mind that we developed our terms of reference for this inquiry into secondary education and determined to pay particular attention to the impact of policy on the least, as well as the most, able; the disadvantaged as well as the privileged.⁸

10. The benefits of education and learning are widely acknowledged and the subject of extensive research.⁹ Higher levels of educational achievement are known to bring access to employment and economic independence, but they also contribute to physical wellbeing and to mental health. It is these reasons, as well as for reasons of social justice, that we support the Government’s declared aim that education policy should serve all people, whatever their background.

11. The Committee is mindful of the Government’s target to increase the participation of 18–30 year olds in higher education towards 50%. In 2002 just 51% of 16 year olds achieved 5 A*–C GCSEs, the first step on the road to higher education while 5.4%¹⁰ of 15 year olds did not achieve a single GCSE. While the proportion of pupils obtaining 5 A*–C GCSEs is increasing and the proportion failing to obtain any GCSE qualifications is decreasing, the profile of pupil achievement remains a matter of considerable concern. This Committee has previously demonstrated its commitment to widening access to higher education and to second chance opportunities for adult learners, but we believe that more needs to be done in secondary education to increase the proportion of young people who have the

7 *Improving both quality and equity, Issues for session 3*, OECD Symposium on Assessing Policy Lessons from PISA 2000, 18–20 November 2002, Berlin. Ev 184, para 16.

8 Speech by David Miliband MP, Minister Of State for School Standards *Specialist Schools And The Future Of Education*, Technology Colleges Trust Conference, Birmingham, 26 November 2002.

9 The Centre for Research on the Wider Benefits of Learning has conducted extensive research on the benefits that learning brings both to the individual learner and society as a whole. <http://www.learningbenefits.net/>

10 6.4% boys, 4.3% girls. DfES statistical bulletin 26/2002 *GCSE/GNVQ Examination Results of Young People in England, 2001/02 (Early Statistics)*.

knowledge, educational achievement and aspirations to prepare them for further or higher education, without recourse to second chances.

12. Our final purpose in focusing on the Government's policy of using diversity in secondary education as a means of increasing parental choice and raising levels of attainment is in respect of our responsibility to hold the Department for Education and Skills to account for its expenditure. It is through inquiries such as this that we are able to scrutinise the work of the Department and evaluate the impact of policy and the extent to which public funds have been wisely spent. In this context we are particularly interested in assessing the extent to which the Government's policies are supported by evidence. The specialist schools programme is a major area of education funding, amounting to £145.3 million in 2002–03.

Table 1: Specialist schools programme: additional costs

Specialist schools programme: additional costs		
Year	Number of schools ¹¹	cost*
1998–1999	327	£41.0m
1999–2000	403	£49.8m
2000–2001	536	£71.9m
2001–2002	685	£94.0m
2002–2003	992	£145.3m
* including one-off initial capital development grant and recurrent funding.		

Data source: unpublished correspondence from the DfES 21/03/03

3 Diversity in English Secondary Education

13. Diversity in secondary education can be described and delivered in a number of ways, by reference to school type, the constitutional arrangements under which schools are governed, financed and held accountable; their curriculum; their pupil intake; or combinations of these. Recent governments have placed great emphasis on attaining diversity among schools by creating or emphasising structural differences between schools, in terms of their constitutional arrangements, and the present Government has explicitly linked this form of diversity with its efforts to raise standards. The specialist schools programme has been explicitly identified as a school improvement programme designed to raise pupil achievement by this means. However, the scope for creating diversity through the curriculum is significantly limited by the requirement for all maintained schools to deliver the National Curriculum.¹²

14. Differences between schools in terms of their intake reflect both geography and active measures to determine the pupil profile of schools through admissions criteria and/or selection. The fourth and final part of this inquiry will focus on admissions to English secondary schools and their consequences, but for the purposes of this stage of the inquiry

11 Ev 94

12 Ev 2

we have taken the opportunity to consider the evidence on the relationship between diversity and admissions.

15. Our theme is diversity so we begin with a review of the range of diversity in the secondary sector. This is not intended to be an exhaustive account but rather to clarify, for the purposes of this report, the common school descriptors and their meanings.

16. The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 established a new framework for the organisation of schools and the following categories of maintained schools, to take effect from September 1999.

Community schools where the local education authority (LEA) employs school staff, owns the schools' land and buildings and is the admissions authority;

Foundation schools where the governing body is both employer and admissions authority. A school's land and buildings are either owned by the governing body or by a charitable foundation.¹³

Voluntary Aided schools where the governing body is both employer and admissions authority. The school's land and buildings (apart from playing fields which are normally vested in the LEA) are usually owned by a charitable foundation. The governing body will contribute towards the capital costs of establishing the school and any subsequent capital building work.

Voluntary Controlled schools where the local education authority employs schools' staff and is the admissions authority. School's land and buildings (apart from playing fields which are normally vested in the LEA) are usually owned by a charitable foundation.¹⁴

17. Foundation, voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools may be designated by the Secretary of State as having a religious character. The staffing arrangements of these schools include scope to preserve the religious character of schools through the application of a religious or denominational test in appointing or promoting staff. Such schools also provide denominational collective worship.¹⁵

18. While most pupils transfer from primary to secondary school at age 11, this arrangement is not universal. In the maintained sector some pupils are educated in middle schools, either 'deemed primary' (years 4-7) or 'deemed secondary' (years 5-8). In addition secondary schools are known by a further level of nomenclature reflecting, with varying degrees of accuracy, the manner in which they admit pupils. Such labels include comprehensive, designated grammar (selective), secondary modern, faith, and independent schools.

13 Prior to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 many foundation schools were classified as grant maintained schools.

14 Ev 91

15 Ibid.

Comprehensive schools

19. Theoretically the dominant model in English education, the comprehensive principle of a balanced pupil intake and equality of educational opportunity for pupils of all ability levels and social backgrounds, consistently has been attacked by influential voices in successive governments and the national media whose preference is for a more stratified education system. Consequently, 10% of English LEAs retain a wholly selective admissions policy for secondary schools, almost one third of English LEAs operate a partially selective system and a majority of the remainder have to deal with a variety of more subtle forms of selection. Consequently, in some parts of the country the comprehensive label has not been attractive. Professor Tim Brighouse has said of the term *comprehensive* that:

“Its use has increasingly implied something vaguely second-rate. The phrase “the local comp” has become sufficiently worrying that very few of the 3,000 plus schools which could reasonably incorporate its use in their headed notepaper and school signs choose to do so.”¹⁶

20. Designed to replace the tripartite secondary model of grammar, secondary modern and technical schools, comprehensive schools, in their original mission, were essentially defined by their intake, based within a community, admitting pupils across the full ability range of that community. In some areas, this has been refined by the development of banding for school admissions; allocation of school places based on intelligence tests to ensure a good ability mix in each school. In practice other factors, including a multiplicity of Government initiatives, have served to frustrate this comprehensive ideal so that most secondary schools, and certainly those in the larger towns, cities and metropolitan areas, do not attract and retain a truly comprehensive pupil intake that is representative both of the full ability range and the communities within which they are located.

21. School diversity impacts on schools’ pupil intake in ways surely unimagined by policy makers. Wholly selective schools and those schools which select a proportion of their intake; the operation of parental preference; specialist, single sex and faith schools, all have the effect of narrowing the pool from which the intakes of non-selective, non-specialist schools are drawn. Such schools therefore largely comprise the children of parents who fail to obtain a place in their preferred school and of those who were unwilling or unable to exercise their preference. Thus, physical and social geography combine to produce a spectrum of schools distinguished by their intake.

Selective schools

22. Selection is used as an admissions device in a number of different school types. Independent schools and grammar schools routinely select some or all their intake, usually by means of the common entrance examination (in the case of independent schools) or the 11-Plus, (for grammar schools). There are currently 164 designated grammar schools in England. The place of grammar schools in English education has been the subject of much campaigning over the last 4 decades. While such schools are now relatively few in number, their selective practices impact on the educational experiences of very many young

16 Professor Tim Brighouse, Caroline Benn, Brian Simon Memorial Lecture, 28 September 2002.

people.¹⁷ There are also schools in wholly selective areas whose pupils are largely those not selected (or not submitted for selection) to grammar schools. They have frequently adopted new titles such as high schools and in some cases developed sixth forms.

23. In addition to the wholly selective grammar schools, the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 permits the admissions authority of any maintained secondary school which declares a subject specialism, to select up to 10% of its intake on the basis of aptitude. It is a common misapprehension that this facility is limited to those schools formally designated as specialist by the Department for Education and Skills.

24. There are also an unspecified number of partially selective schools, selecting up to 50% of their intake on grounds of ability or aptitude. These schools, which had selection procedures in place in 1997/8, may continue to select a proportion of their pupils provided that there is no change in the methods of selection or the proportion of pupils selected.¹⁸ This selection is not limited to a maximum of 10%. There is no provision for the creation of new grammar schools. Existing grammar schools may change their admissions to non-selective in response to a parental ballot, though none have yet done so.¹⁹

Faith schools

25. Faith schools have been enthusiastically supported by the DfES and the Prime Minister on grounds of their distinctive ethos and perceived academic success.²⁰

26. The 1944 Education Act provided for the incorporation of existing faith schools into the maintained sector. These schools were designated as Voluntary Aided (mainly Catholic), and Voluntary Controlled (mainly Church of England). There are 580 secondary schools or middle schools, deemed secondary with a religious character. Designation as a faith school is limited to foundation and voluntary schools. In the maintained faith school sector, Roman Catholic and Church of England schools dominate, although there are now a small but increasing number of Muslim, Sikh and Jewish maintained schools.

27. Faith schools have, uniquely for providers of generalist education in the maintained sector, been permitted to interview applicants and their parents in order to ascertain religious affiliation and commitment where this is explicit in the admissions requirements. Professor Richard Pring of Oxford University told us that research on this practice has suggested that “selection based ostensibly on ‘faith’, skewed the social class intake of Church schools”.²¹ This may in turn account for the marginally higher than average academic achievements of pupils in faith schools.

28. A recent study by Professor Anne West and Audrey Hind at the London School of Economics on the operation of overt and covert selection in school admission, found that 10% of Voluntary Aided schools reported interviewing parents and 16% reported

17 Ev 177

18 School Standards and Framework Act 1998, section 100.

19 Ev 92

20 “Blair ensures triumph of faith”, *Times Educational Supplement*, 1 March 2002, p 11.

21 Ev 2. Professor Pring cites the work of Benn, C & Chitty, C *Thirty Years On*, David Fulton, 1996.

interviewing pupils.²² Guidance contained in the new Code of Practice on School Admissions²³ discourages this practice with the advice that “for the admission round leading to September 2005 intakes and subsequent admissions, no parents or children should be interviewed as any part of the application or admission process”.²⁴ The issue of school admissions will be pursued in detail in a later report.

Independent schools

29. Over 9%²⁵ of pupils in England aged 11–19 years attend fee paying secondary independent schools. These schools, many of which operate under charitable status, are subject to regulation through the Department for Education and Skills and to inspection by Ofsted and the Independent Schools Inspectorate.

The new diversity

City Technology Colleges and Specialist Schools

30. The specialist model has a remarkable pedigree. It has developed through a lineage of eight Secretaries of State, apparently never losing favour. This success is in no small part attributable to the tenacity of its leading proponent, Sir Cyril Taylor, Chairman of the Specialist Schools Trust.²⁶ This sustained advocacy has enabled the specialist model to withstand changes in administration and educational fashion, and has developed and adapted to the policies of successive Secretaries of State.

31. The trend for subject specialism began with the City Technology Colleges initiative 1988 and the Technology Colleges programme in 1993. Technology Colleges were intended to prepare more young people to go into careers in science and technology, while also attempting to raise levels of attainment in secondary schools, particularly in the troublesome inner cities. The CTCs were set up as independent schools, funded by the Government and sponsored by industry. It was in part the disappointing level of business sponsorship that was the key to the transformation of the initiative into the specialist schools programme.

32. The specialist schools programme was launched in 1994 and was restricted to an elite group of grant maintained and voluntary aided schools wishing to specialise in technology. Evidence of academic success was an explicit criterion for entry to the programme. The initiative continued the emphasis on business links, but reduced the level of financial sponsorship to an initial £100,000, which could be drawn from a number of sources. The programme was expanded in 1995 to incorporate specialisms in modern foreign languages and in 1997 to include sports and arts.²⁷ Some suggest it is paradoxical that the Government’s key diversity policy, the specialist schools programme, apparently

22 *Secondary school admissions in England: Exploring the extent of overt and covert selection*, Anne West & Audrey Hind, London School of Economics, 2003.

23 *School Admissions Code of Practice*, 02/2003, DfES/0031/2003.

24 *School Admissions Code of Practice*, 02/2003, DfES/0031/2003 para 3.16.

25 *Statistics of Education, Schools in England*, National Statistics 2002 edition p 26 and 73 not including CTCs.

26 Previously the Technology Colleges Trust, and formerly the City Technology Colleges Trust, the TCT changed its name with effect from 31 January 2003.

27 Ev 88

emphasises curricula differences, while delivering schools that are largely identical in curriculum terms, but different in terms of their funding and resources.

33. Giving evidence to the Committee, Sir Cyril Taylor outlined the seven arguments for the promotion and extension of the specialist schools programme:

- a) Specialist schools raise standards;
- b) They offer diversity and choice in secondary provision;
- c) Many specialist schools specialise in subjects valuable to the modern economy;
- d) They make a positive contribution to education in the inner cities;
- e) Partnerships between specialist schools and their primary and secondary neighbours help to raise standards in other schools;
- f) Specialist schools have been pioneers in developing new approaches to teaching and learning, especially in the use of ICT;
- g) Business/education partnerships bring benefits to support pupils' learning.²⁸

34. While the required level of sponsorship to qualify for specialist school status has been reduced (to £50,000, and £20,000 for the smallest schools), this still represents a considerable and sometimes insurmountable difficulty for some schools in areas where schools and local industry alike face difficult circumstances.²⁹ However, in schools where productive relationships with local business have been forged, such as those we visited in Birmingham, significant benefit has been derived through the involvement of business in education, and this is to be welcomed.

35. The statement made by the Secretary of State on 28 November 2002 that:

“My Department is announcing a new partnership fund of £3 million in 2003–04 to be administered with the technology colleges trust in accordance with guidelines from my Department. This is designed specifically to help schools that have difficulty in meeting the current £50,000 sponsorship requirement.”³⁰

This additional funding is, of course, welcome. However, the scale of the fund, in the context of the number of schools yet to join the programme and the level of sponsorship to be raised by each school, means that in practice, the fund will be sufficient to help only a relatively small number of schools.

36. The emphasis of the programme has shifted over time from creating centres of excellence in the subject specialism, to its current mission which is explicitly aimed at school improvement.³¹ David Miliband MP, Minister of State for School Standards, told us:

28 Q 331

29 Ev 160; Education and Skills Committee, Second Report of Session 2002–03, *Secondary Education: visits to Birmingham and Auckland*, HC 486, Q 112.

30 Rt. Hon Charles Clarke MP, HC Deb, 28 November 2002, col 442.

31 Q 277

“The purpose of the specialist school programme is that it is a school improvement programme, not... a sort of fetishism of a particular subject. There is a danger that because we have the label “specialist schools” it could give off the idea that if you go to a science college all we are interested in doing is teaching you science, whereas that is not true. The purpose of the specialist school programme is to help raise standards across the board.”³²

37. The essence of specialist schools is therefore the investment in, and development of, subject-specific staff expertise and resources, rather than schools delivering a curriculum biased towards a particular discipline.

38. To qualify for designation, schools must present a four-year school and community development plan with ambitious but achievable targets and performance indicators against which success can be judged. Each application must raise at least £50,000 in unconditional sponsorship in order to be considered. Schools with less than 500 pupils (based on figures from the most recent Annual School Census) are required to raise a reduced level of sponsorship (equivalent to £100 per pupil, with a minimum of £20,000). Applications for specialist status must include:

- a) A four-year Development Plan with measurable objectives and performance targets which focuses on improving provision for and standards in the relevant specialist subjects;
- b) Sponsorship details, including proposals for achieving ongoing links with sponsors;
- c) An outline of the school's bid for a capital grant to improve facilities for teaching the specialist subjects;
- d) An indication of how the school would use the additional annual grant to implement your School and Community Development Plans and achieve the targets which you have set for improved performance and higher standards

39. It has been widely acknowledged that the process of designation has become a valuable part of the process, encouraging schools to engage in critical evaluation of their work and their future direction,³³ although the amount of work involved in the process, particularly in terms of the effort involved in raising sponsorship is substantial.³⁴

40. The role of business and industry in the development of the specialist schools programme has received significant media attention and we acknowledge and welcome the part that both public and private sector organisations have to play in raising pupil achievement. These valuable contributions are made in staff time as well as physical and financial resources and, from the evidence we saw on our visit to Birmingham, clearly make a significant impact on the learning opportunities available to many pupils.

32 Education and Skills Committee, Minutes of Evidence, Session 2002–03, *Work of the Department for Education and Skills*, HC177–ii, Q 104.

33 Q 353, Q 402

34 Ev 160

41. We consider that there may be further opportunities for business and public sector organisations to develop their role in education and we are particularly interested in the part that local economic regeneration organisations may be able to play in raising aspirations and achievement in their communities and in encouraging active participation by local business.

42. We are mindful of that the ability of schools to attract sponsorship is linked to the nature of the specialism they pursue and the interests of local business and industry. **We are concerned that those schools working towards the recently approved specialisms in the humanities may therefore find it particularly difficult to attract financial support.**

43. In 2001 Ofsted conducted an evaluation of 327 specialist schools with at least 2 years in operation.³⁵ In January 2003 Ofsted prepared an update on this report for this inquiry.³⁶ The evidence affirmed the strong academic performance of many specialist schools, particularly the languages colleges, but observed that sports colleges continue to achieve below the national average using the 5 A*–C GCSE measure.³⁷ Sir Cyril Taylor, in response to this finding, acknowledged that the performance of sports colleges was associated with the profile of the pupil intake, which was of lower ability than that for the other specialisms,³⁸ while Professor Gorard of Cardiff University, observed that the sports and arts colleges have the least segregated intake of the specialist schools.³⁹

44. There are currently 992 designated specialist schools in operation and the Government has a target for at least 2000 to be in operation by 2006.⁴⁰

Academies

45. The Learning and Skills Act 2000 made provision for the creation of *City Academies*, independent schools funded directly by Government, without the control and accountability structures of local education authorities.⁴¹ Subsequently re-branded as *Academies*, these schools may be established to replace one or more LEA maintained schools. Academies may be established in any setting, for any age group. They have a broad curriculum but usually place an emphasis on one or two curriculum areas.⁴² There are currently three Academies in operation and the Government expects at least 33 to be open by 2006. The strategy document, 'A New Specialist System'⁴³ notes that the DfES is in discussion with a number of city technology colleges about becoming academies.

35 *Specialist Schools: An evaluation of progress*, Ofsted, October 2001.

36 Ev 64–5

37 Ev 65

38 Q 355

39 Stephen Gorard and Chris Taylor, *Specialist schools in England: track record and future prospect*, Cardiff University 2001, p 21.

40 Ev 93; Target set in *Investment for reform*, DfES, July 2002.

41 Ev 178

42 Ev 92

43 *A New Specialist System: Transforming Secondary Education*, DfES, February 2003, p 22.

A Shifting landscape of initiatives

46. Beyond the high profile policies outlined above, there is a further raft of school based initiatives, including Extended Schools (bringing a broad and variable range of services onto the school site); The Leading Edge Programme, formerly the Advanced Schools programme (the best secondary schools spreading good practice and stimulating school improvement in their neighbours); and Training Schools (developing practice in teacher training). These overlay curriculum initiatives such as the Key Stage 3 strategy and regional programmes including Excellence in Cities, Excellence Clusters and a range of special grants and support for schools facing challenging circumstances, those causing concern and schools in special measures.⁴⁴

47. This intricate and shifting latticework of policy, programmes and initiative, provides a complex backdrop to the focus of our inquiry and a very real challenge to all those who seek to evaluate the impact and the value for money of any one of the Government's education policies.

Table 2: The scope of diversity in English secondary education 2003

The scope of diversity in English secondary education 2003		
Description	Number	Additional funding
Specialist schools	992 (in operation) target of at least 2000 by 2006	Capital grant of £100k grant in addition to £20 k – £50k sponsorship raised by the school. Premium of £123 per pupil, per annum.
Grammar schools	164	None. 47 designated grammar schools have specialist status and receive associated funding. Grammar schools are eligible to apply for funds from the Partnerships between Grammar and Non-selective Schools (GNS) initiative. Grants are up to £20k, issued for one year only. ⁴⁵
Faith schools (schools with a religious character)	580 (secondary and middle deemed secondary)	None.
City Colleges	15	Recurrent funding modelled on funding for maintained schools, including the specialist school element of £123 per pupil per year.
Academies	3, further 30 planned by 2006	Recurrent funding modelled on funding for maintained schools, including the specialist school element of £123 per pupil per year.
Independent schools	1528 schools with pupils aged 11 and over	None Independent schools are eligible to apply for funds from the Partnerships between Grammar and Non-selective Schools (GNS) initiative. Grants are up to £20k, issued for one year only. ⁴⁵
Leading Edge Programme	Applications in progress. First participant schools to be announced in May 2003.	Up to £60k per annum

44 Including the Leadership Incentive Grant (£125,000 per year for 3 years), grants for schools facing challenging circumstances (£20,000 – £70,000) and support for schools in special measures (through LEAs, £70,000 per year) source: Ev 102, part 4.

45 Partnerships between Grammar and Non-selective Schools (GNS) initiative was signalled in the 2001 White Paper *Schools: achieving success* in which the Government advocated working in new partnerships in a variety of circumstances, including designated grammar schools.

The scope of diversity in English secondary education 2003 (cont)		
Description	Number	Additional funding
Beacon schools	324	Average £38k per annum This initiative is being phased out and replaced by the Leading edge programme. Beacon schools may apply for Leading edge status
Training schools (secondary)	130 (from 2003), further 40 per year planned fro the next 3 years	£55k per annum
Extended schools	25 LEAs have been funded to develop pathfinder projects for extended schools. Funding is at the level of £200,000 (+ £25,000 specifically for school-based childcare)	Up to 240 full service extended schools are planned by 2006. Each school will receive £162k start-up funding and £93k per annum thereafter.

Data source: DfES

4 Development of Government policy

48. In this section we explore the evolution of successive Governments' policies on diversity in an attempt to answer the question "How did we get to where we are today?" As outlined above, Government initiatives have given rise to a wide range of different school types. While we recognise this range, for the purposes of this report we focus on the specialist schools initiative.

49. Since 1997 the Labour Government has made much of its intention to design and build policy on the basis of evidence and research.⁴⁶ It is the aim of this inquiry to investigate the extent to which the Government has made appropriate use of the evidence in the development and pursuit of its policy of diversity of provision in secondary education.

50. Government has claimed great successes for its policy of diversity and based these claims on the evidence offered by research. The 2001 White Paper *Schools Achieving Success* stated "specialist schools are a key part of our proposals for a more diverse system because of their proven success in raising standards."⁴⁷ Establishing the extent to which these claims have been proven has been a central theme of this inquiry.

The 1997 inheritance

51. The 1997 Labour Government inherited from the preceding Conservative administration a specialist schools programme⁴⁸ built on the language of choice and

46 HC 177–ii, Q 124.

47 *Schools Achieving Success*, Cm 5230, para 5.9.

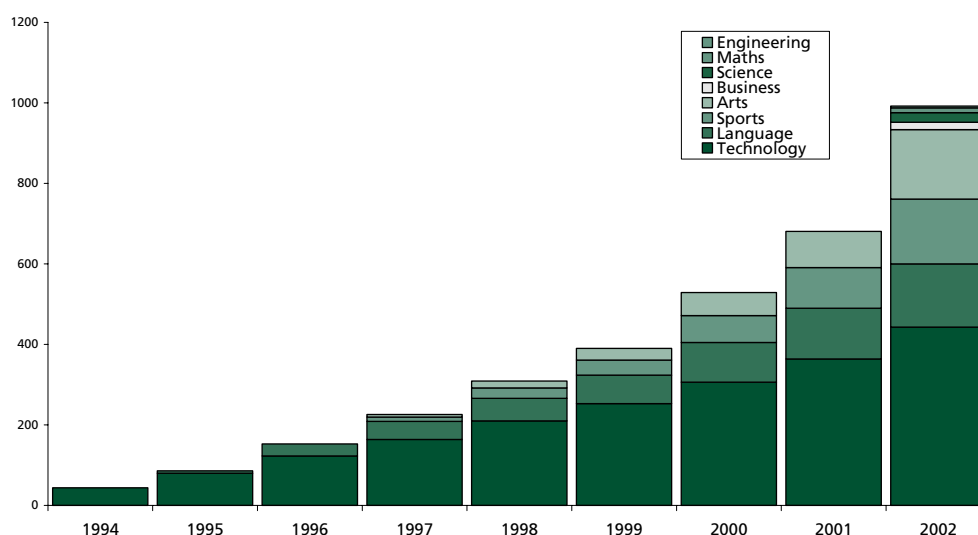
48 Including 181 operational specialist schools Ev 93. There were also grant maintained schools, a category which was abolished by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

diversity, a vocabulary which has long outlived the policy framework contained in the 1992 White Paper of the same name.⁴⁹ Up to the time of the 1997 election the specialist schools programme had been a flagship Conservative policy and an embodiment of Conservative aspirations for secondary education, combining promises of raised achievement, with significant investment from business, institutional autonomy, competition between providers and choice for consumers.

Specialist schools re-launched, diversity discovered

52. In 1997 the new Labour Government was faced with a choice: to abandon the specialist model or make it its own. The new administration embraced the philosophy of diversity of provision. The specialist schools programme was re-launched with a target of 450 more specialist schools by the end of the Parliament,⁵⁰ creating a paradoxical combination of policy statements emphasising “standards, not structures”⁵¹ and policy actions emphasising structural change as the gateway to increased resource and raising standards. The re-launched specialist schools programme refined the mission of schools within the programme to incorporate a community dimension and to share their resources with partner schools.

53. In 2001 the Government reaffirmed its commitment to the programme in its White Paper, *Schools Achieving Success*⁵² by headlining the encouraging research undertaken by Professor David Jesson on behalf of the Technology Colleges Trust, and by announcing the expansion of the programme to 1,500 schools by 2005 and the addition of four new specialisms in science, in engineering, in business and in enterprise and in maths and computing.



The development of subject specialisms over time

49 *Choice and Diversity: a new framework for schools* – education white paper 1992.

50 Ev 37

51 *Excellence in Schools*, DfEE, 1997, p. 5 (reference from Ev 129).

52 Cm 5230.

Choice and diversity

54. The 2001 White Paper and other departmental publications at the time made much of the value of diversity and the necessary link between diversity and choice, in the battle to improve standards of attainment. The then Secretary of State, Rt. Hon. Estelle Morris MP told the Social Market Foundation that “this greater diversity is good for pupils and parents and will ensure there is more choice and innovation in the school system.”⁵³ Such claims for the power of choice and diversity persist today. Announcing the Government’s most recent expansion of the specialist schools programme the Secretary of State declared that “...specialist schools lie at the heart of our drive to raise standards and offer more choice in secondary schools.”⁵⁴ This and previous Governments’ emphasis on choice has resulted in a significant mismatch of expectations. Government rhetoric on *choice* has, perhaps inevitably, not been matched by reality in the application of parental *preference* used to allocate school places.

55. In practice, parents have found that the reality of school diversity and choice can act to limit rather than expand their options for their children’s education. The existence of single sex, faith and specialist schools is a positive and welcome choice for those who want them and who are able to secure places for their children, while for those who do not, such schools can limit choice. We saw an example of this in Birmingham, where the existence of what we were told is the largest girls school in Europe presented a welcome option for parents and children who wanted it, but the resultant gender imbalance in surrounding schools diminished choice for those who wished to send their children to co-educational schools with an even gender balance.⁵⁵

56. While much emphasis has been placed on choice as a positive feature in Government publications and Ministerial speeches, in practice parental choice is limited by geography⁵⁶ and the haphazard manner of specialist school development and distribution. Professor Gorard told us “in most of the...country where you live determines whom you go to school with and the education, parental occupation, income, background of the parents of other students in the school.”⁵⁷ This means that, in practical terms, the creation of a range of specialist schools produces relatively little diversity and therefore choice, anywhere except in relatively few large town or cities with well developed public transport systems.

57. The Campaign for State Education, in written evidence to the Committee, asserted that diversity had reduced choice.⁵⁸ This view was supported by Professor Ron Glatter of the Open University. He argued that although the diversity agenda had produced many different variations in secondary schooling, in practice families found their choices restricted to a small subset of these. In cases where pupils may not be eligible for a place at one or more of their local schools, for reasons of faith or selection, for example, the real extent of parental preference was limited. Professor Glatter told us “in most areas, even

53 *Professionalism and Trust: the future of teachers and teaching*, speech by Rt Hon Estelle Morris, Secretary of State for Education and Skills, given to the Social Market Foundation, 12 November 2001.

54 DfES Press notice 2002/0228.

55 Education and Skills Committee, Second Report of Session 2002–03, *Secondary Education: visits to Birmingham and Auckland*, HC 486, para 15.

56 Q 18

57 Q 44

58 Ev 176

urban ones... many parents see their realistic choice as limited to two or three schools at most, and so in a diverse system...diversity could be perceived by families as in fact constraining rather than enhancing choice. The key point is that choice and diversity do not go together. They are different ideas.”⁵⁹

58. We found that in addition to geography and the distribution of schools, the extent of real choice is limited by economic and social factors, including the ability to travel and negotiate the system of school admissions. Dr Philip Woods of The Open University explained “There is also a difference in terms of the capacity for people to travel around who do not have their own resources or the flexibility in their work patterns to travel and take a child further... Also...the issue of cultural capital... being a factor in the ability to negotiate the system: to know where you can go, to know who to ask if you do not know something and so on.”⁶⁰

59. The ability to travel is key to the ability to exercise choice in relation to schooling. LEAs are responsible for transport policy at the local level and often do not extend to supporting travel to the schools of choice, but rather to the nearest appropriate school. We were told that the Government has no plans to develop its school transport policy,⁶¹ thus perpetuating the division between those who have the resources to fund school transport—and thereby school choice—and those who do not.

60. The extent to which there is a demand for diversity is unclear. The Department for Education and Skills argued in evidence to the Committee that evidence of demand is demonstrated by oversubscription statistics returned by schools within the diversity programme,⁶² although this criterion would apply equally to all oversubscribed schools. As the Department acknowledges, there is a danger in confusing demand for diversity with demand for good schools. Professor Gorard told the Committee:

“People see them as being better schools and the reason the advocates of these schools move very quickly from talking about these schools as schools in their own right, with these characteristics which are desirable, to schools which appear to be better than neighbouring schools suggests there is not much appeal in their *sui generis* status as either faith-based or specialist schools. People are saying these schools are better because they are actually better schools.”⁶³

61. It is true that in many, if not most, areas of the country, the practical extent of choice is limited by distance and the distribution of schools. This is particularly the case in rural areas and small towns where there may be no practical alternative but for children to attend the local school. It is perhaps in response to these realities that the Government’s emphasis on choice has receded in policy terms. Ron Jacobs, head of the Specialist Schools Unit at the DfES, acknowledged that the extent to which the Government’s diversity strategy delivered real choice varied across the country⁶⁴ and told us that “the Government

59 Q 287

60 Q 288

61 Q 280

62 Ev 141

63 Q 22

64 Q 279

now says less about choice than it did five years ago.”⁶⁵ Indeed, the Secretary of State said in evidence to the Committee that “there is no doubt whatsoever that the most important areas of choice that need to be established within the education system are within schools rather than between schools.”⁶⁶

62. This apparent retreat on choice, while inconsistently articulated, suggests that the Government has acknowledged that it is the quality of all schools rather than choice between schools that parents and pupils most desire.⁶⁷ As Ray Shostak, Director of Children, Schools and Families for Hertfordshire Local Education Authority put it:

“what Hertfordshire parents say to me is that what they want is a high quality local school.... it is public service and people have a right to get to a high quality local school and not have to, as it were, shop around for it.”⁶⁸

63. We are concerned about the serious mismatch between the Government’s rhetoric on the relationship between choice and diversity and the reality. Research is required into the impact of choice and diversity policy on different regions and different social groups in order that Government policies on diversity and school transport may be refined to mitigate its negative effects.

Diversity and faith

64. *Schools achieving success*, the 2001 White Paper that heralded the Government’s expansion of its diversity policy, welcomed new providers into the maintained sector. It specifically highlighted providers in the faith sector and measures to remove barriers to the development of more faith schools:

“We wish to welcome faith schools, with their distinctive ethos and character into the maintained sector where there is clear local agreement. Guidance to School Organisation Committees will require them to give proposals from faith groups the same consideration as those from others, including LEAs.”⁶⁹

65. The motivation for the expansion of faith-based schooling appears to come from two directions. First is the belief that in a multicultural and multi-faith society it is only fair that the benefits of state-funded, faith-based education should not be limited to the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches. In evidence to the Committee, Professor Tim Brighouse said: “I suspect there will be more Muslim aided secondary schools...if we are to have faith secondary schools it is desirable that there should be.”⁷⁰

66. The second motivating force, the belief that faith schools obtain higher standards, is more problematic. Evidence from the National Foundation for Educational Research⁷¹

65 Q 281

66 Education and Skills Committee, Minutes of Evidence, Session 2002–03. *Work of the Department for Education and Skills*, HC 177–i, Q 8.

67 Q 261

68 Q 258

69 Cm 5230, para 5.30.

70 Education and Skills Committee, Second Report of Session 2002–03, *Secondary Education: visits to Birmingham and Auckland*, HC 486, Qq 275–276.

71 Memorandum from Ian and Sandie Schagen (DP02) [not printed].

(NFER) suggests that not only is the performance premium for faith schools not significant, but that it may be derived from a combination of school practices, for example entering all pupils for an additional GCSE.⁷² According to NFER, this undermines the notion that the faith formula, more widely applied, would give rise to improved attainment. Dr Sandie Schagen, Principal Research Officer at the National Foundation for Educational Research told us:

“On the basis of our research, looking exclusively at achievement, there is not any evidence at all to suggest really that increasing the number of faith schools will improve the level of achievement....Our finding is that basically, when you apply value-added analysis, that advantage all but disappears, which suggests that the difference is based on intake. Interestingly, you can hypothesise that if they do have better ethos and better behaviour and so on that would lead to better achievement, but we did not find any evidence that that is so.”⁷³

Of course it may be that parents are seeking not higher standards, but a different ethos to that of most schools.

67. At present, faith schools in England are predominantly those supported by the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches. It is therefore likely that any demand for significant expansion of faith schooling is likely to originate from other groups and to have the potential to create a school system divided not only on religious lines but also by ethnicity.⁷⁴

68. The expansion of faith based education has been enthusiastically and publicly supported by the Prime Minister,⁷⁵ although concerns expressed from other quarters appear to have had the effect of reducing the priority given to this initiative. More recent announcements from the Department for Education and Skills and comments on education by the Prime Minister have seen the prominence of the faith sector recede in relation to other initiatives.

69. We welcome the Government’s more balanced approach to the promotion of faith schools and urge extreme caution in any future expansion of the faith sector. Tensions in Northern Ireland between the the two communities illustrate the problems that segregated schools can exacerbate. Future developments in this area should guard against the creation of ethnically segregated schooling.

Diversity Pathfinders

70. In *Schools achieving success* the Government signalled its intention to establish a small group of pathfinder projects to find ways of spreading the benefits of diversity and specialisation to a set of schools working cooperatively.

72 Ibid.

73 Q 215

74 Ev 2

75 “Blair ensures triumph of faith”, *Times Educational Supplement*, 1 March 2002, p 11.

71. In June of 2001, Local Education Authorities which were already actively developing plans for greater school diversity were invited to submit proposals to be part of a project expected to demonstrate how the benefits of diversity in secondary education could be maximised to improve standards of teaching and learning across the whole system. Six LEAs were selected late last year and began implementing their plans in January. The projects were expected to run until April 2005.

72. The six pathfinders are: Cornwall, Portsmouth, Newham, Hertfordshire, Birmingham and Middlesbrough. Two other LEAs, Warwickshire and North Tyneside, have been invited to be 'associate pathfinders'. They receive no pathfinder funding but are included in the evaluation of the project being undertaken by the Institute of Education, University of London and The Open University. Project funding ranges between £263,000 for Middlesbrough and £490,000 for Hertfordshire.

73. The key aims of the project are:

- To facilitate close, practical, working links between secondary schools to ensure that the benefits of resources and expertise gained through the diversity programmes can be effectively shared in local communities of schools;
- To develop LEA-wide strategic plans, in close collaboration with headteachers and heads of departments in secondary schools, to expand the range and number of specialist schools in such a way that the benefits of the diversity created will extend to all students
- In addition to these two project-wide aims, each pathfinder has other aims designed to meet the particular needs of its regions.

74. The Committee took evidence from the team responsible for the Diversity Pathfinder project in the Department for Education and Skills, the external evaluation team and a representative from one of the participating LEAs.

75. The theme of the project, to develop collaboration and cooperation between schools, offers a welcome counterbalance both to the haphazard distribution of specialist schools and to the concentration of specialist resources in a relatively small number of schools. Margaret-Anne Barnett, team leader on school diversity policy for the DfES, explained:

“If you are going to increase diversity, if you are going to have more specialist schools and you want them to genuinely benefit as many students as possible, then it seems logical to have a good spread of different specialisms in local areas and to have schools working together in order that every child attending his or her local school can benefit not just from the specialism in their own school and subjects in their own school but the specialist expertise in schools around them.”⁷⁶

76. This emphasis on coordination and collaboration in diversity policy was not a feature of the early days of the specialist schools programme. At the outset, LEAs had no role in the designation process and specialist schools were not required to extend their good

practice or resources beyond their own walls. Ron Jacobs told the Committee that this new direction had its origins in the Excellence in Cities initiative which first gave a role to local education authorities in coordinating bids for specialist status and ensuring appropriate distribution of specialisms and associated resources.⁷⁷

77. Cooperation between secondary schools in terms of sharing good practice, resources and developing strong community links, is desirable in itself and likely to be an important means of raising pupil achievement in participating schools. However, as is the case in other areas covered in this report, more evidence is required to establish the impact of collaborative models.

Specialist status for all

Expanding the number of schools

78. On 28 November 2002 the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, Rt. Hon Charles Clarke MP announced that the cap on the number of schools able to gain specialist status was to be lifted, enabling access to specialist status and additional funding for all schools that were able to meet the criteria.⁷⁸ The Department's press notice stated:

“Specialist schools are at the heart of the Government's drive to raise standards in secondary education and to move beyond the old one-size-fits-all-system. Expanding the specialist school scheme will not mean a compromise in standards – excellence will be spread, not diluted. Specialism means schools working with their pupils to raise levels of achievement across the curriculum.”⁷⁹

79. Later on the same day, the Secretary of State told the Kent Headteachers' Conference:

“I want as many schools to become specialist as possible. If your local school is a specialist school, it is more likely to be a good school – one which not only achieves more highly, but which offers greater choice to pupils within a broad and balanced curriculum. This is why specialist schools lie at the heart of our drive to raise standards and offer more choice in secondary schools.”⁸⁰

80. Having assumed its post-1997 identity as a strategy for school improvement, the now universal specialist schools programme has become an important lever for institutional reform, using the process of specialist school designation as the mechanism by which individual schools trade reform and modernisation for increased public investment.

81. The (one-off) capital cost of grants to designate as specialist all existing maintained mainstream secondary schools that are not yet specialist would be £216 million. The annual cost of additional recurrent funding for the specialist schools programme if all existing maintained mainstream secondary schools were specialist schools is estimated at

77 Q 245

78 HC Deb, 28 November 2002, col 442.

79 DfES Press Notice 2003/0018, 28 November 2002.

80 DfES Press Notice 2003/0018, 28 November 2002.

£358 million. The £3 million fund, granted to the Specialist Schools Trust to assist schools seeking designation as specialist to raise sponsorship, is not included in these sums.⁸¹

Increasing the number of specialisms

82. Following the announcement regarding the removal of the cap on funding for specialist schools, the Department announced the creation of new specialisms in the humanities (geography and history). The creation of a new 'rural dimension' was also announced, enabling rural schools to reflect the needs and interests of their communities in their chosen specialism.⁸²

83. This expansion of the range of specialisms has addressed some of the concerns expressed in evidence to the Committee, for example by the Royal Geographical Society,⁸³ while leaving unanswered the question as to why the range of specialisms has unfolded in this particular order.

84. The announcement falls short of the bids made by the National Union of Teachers, the Campaign for State Education and the Secondary Heads Association⁸⁴ for schools to be able to define their own specialism within the specialist schools scheme.

85. In the announcement on 28 November 2002 and in the Department's strategy document *A New Specialist System: Transforming Secondary Education*, the Government's vision of a universal specialist system became clear, supported by an emphatic restatement of the view that school diversity drives up standards of achievement.⁸⁵ Such claims for diversity present their own dilemmas. Specialist schools are, in curriculum terms, much like any other in the maintained sector; they are bound to deliver the full National Curriculum to all their pupils, except where this has been specifically disapplied. Confusingly, however, their publicity often emphasises their difference: the profile of the specialism, specialist resources, activities and staff. To play down the unique selling point of subject specialisation may be a risk in a competitive market and call into question the additional funding for the development of subject specialisms, while to overplay it risks discouraging parents and pupils who seek a good general education.

86. This dilemma is a product of the specialist schools policy itself and reveals the tension between the origins of the initiative in the City Technology Colleges, with an explicit aim to encourage more young people into science and technology, and the Labour Government's reinvention of the policy as a school improvement initiative. It is clear that this tension between specialist and generalist education needs to be resolved if specialist schools are to become the dominant model in the maintained sector.

81 Source: unpublished correspondence from the DfES 02/05/03.

82 *A New Specialist System: Transforming Secondary Education*, DfES, February 2003, p 20.

83 Ev 183

84 Ev 187, 180, 160

85 *A New Specialist System: Transforming Secondary Education*, DfES, February 2003, p 11.

5 Issues arising from the evidence

Diversity redefined

87. In this exploration of diversity in secondary education it has been notable how narrowly the definition of diversity has been drawn. While one might expect to see much that is distinctive in terms of pedagogy and curriculum, in practice one encounters conformity to a narrowly constructed norm; schools wishing to operate within the maintained sector, but without these norms, find little in the way of welcome. Diversity has been defined largely in structural terms, with the focus on increasing the number of school types and thereby the superficial differences between schools. **As all maintained schools are required to deliver the national curriculum, it would have been more helpful if greater emphasis had been given to the concept of diversity within each school and to curricular flexibility as a means of enabling schools to respond more effectively to the individual learning needs of each pupil.**

88. We have noted the evidence from Summerhill School⁸⁶ regarding the difficulties it has faced in relation to Ofsted inspections and the expectations of inspectors. We have also received submissions regarding Steiner Waldorf schools and Human Scale Education, revealing a far broader definition of diversity than that currently offered by the Government's diversity policy.⁸⁷

89. We welcome the commitment of the Secretary of State and the Minister of State for School Standards to pursue discussions with providers outside the maintained system⁸⁸ and look forward to revisiting this issue when next we take evidence from them.

Communities of schools: how schools impact upon their neighbours

90. In focusing our attention on the evidence underpinning the Government's diversity policy we have been interested to discover how thoroughly and to what effect the evidence on the impact of diversity policy has been collected and evaluated. It is central to the development and operation of school improvement initiatives that they should have the effect of supporting and improving achievement across the board. It is therefore critical that evaluation takes account of the impact on neighbouring schools and measures achievement not just in individual schools which can be affected by changing patterns of admission or exclusion, but area wide. An early area of interest in this context was the extent to which evaluation of the specialist schools programme took cognisance of the intake and performance over time of the non-specialist neighbours of specialist schools.

91. It is apparent from our inquiry that the impact of specialist schools on their neighbours has been a neglected area of work and one which renders the existing

86 Education and Skills Committee, Minutes of Evidence, Session 2002–03, *Standards and Quality in Education*, HC 531-i, Q 94

87 DP34 [not printed], Memoranda from Dr Brien Masters (DP 34) and Dr Richard House (DP 36), and Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship (DP 37) [not printed], Ev 195, Memoranda from Human Scale Education (DP 32) (DP 33) [not printed], DP33 (Human Scale Education).

88 HC 177-i, Session 2002–03, Q 43. HC 177-ii, Q 172.

evidence incomplete and any conclusions arising from it, potentially unsound. Without data relating to the composition and performance of schools surrounding specialist schools it is all but impossible to believe that the policy, and therefore the extent to which public funds have been wisely spent, can be properly evaluated.

92. That the neglect of this important aspect of policy evaluation continues into the experimental Diversity Pathfinder projects is a matter of particular concern. In evidence to the Committee Dr Philip Woods commented that “I do think it is a good question, an important question, because it is conceivable that you could have a cluster of schools that is working very, very collaboratively within its own borders but is having detrimental effects outside it.”⁸⁹ The acknowledgement by the Departmental team that the issue is worthy of further consideration by the team is therefore welcome.⁹⁰

93. The Minister of State for School Standards told us that “the key test is whether becoming a specialist school will help the school improve the education of the children in it”.⁹¹ While it would be hard to disagree with the sentiment behind this statement, it is equally important that specialist status in one school should not impact adversely on the education of children in neighbouring schools.

94. The Government’s emphasis on evidence-based policy is to be welcomed, but care should be taken to ensure that research models are sufficiently well developed in order to deliver meaningful analysis. For example, the absence of data on the impact of initiatives on neighbouring schools is a very serious weakness in the existing analysis and should be addressed.

Diversity and standards

95. The assertion that diversity drives up standards has often been made, most recently in the Government’s strategy paper *A New Specialist System: Transforming Secondary Education*,⁹² although the precise mechanism by which this goal is achieved remains unclear, except that the characteristics of successful specialist schools are generally those shared by all successful schools.⁹³

96. The evidence is rather more equivocal than Government claims suggest, as David Bell, Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Schools told us:

“You cannot argue for a massive differential in achievement between specialist schools and other schools and I think that is widely accepted, but there are other benefits that specialist status has brought and we have reported on those over the past months.”⁹⁴

89 Q 293

90 Q 242

91 HC 177–ii, Session 2002–03, Q 107.

92 *A New Specialist System: Transforming Secondary Education*, DfES, 10 February 2003, p 11.

93 Tooley, J, Howes A (1999) *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Schools*. Technology Colleges Trust, cited in Jesson, Taylor evidence Q 356.

94 Education and Skills Committee, Minutes of Evidence, Session 2002–03, *Standards and Quality in Education: HM Chief Inspector’s Annual Report 2001–02*, HC 531–i, Q 30.

97. During the course of our inquiry we have used four key sources of evaluation on the impact of specialist schools: the research undertaken by Professor David Jesson for the Specialist Schools Trust;⁹⁵ the research report from the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER), commissioned by the Local Government Association; evidence drawn from Ofsted inspections; and analysis and the value-added data on school performance, published during the course of our inquiry. In order to further our understanding of this research we took oral evidence from Professor David Jesson, Dr Sandie Schagen and Dr Ian Schagen from NFER and a team from Ofsted.

98. The Government's claims for the success of the specialist schools programme rely heavily on the work undertaken by Professor Jesson for the Specialist Schools Trust.⁹⁶ Professor Jesson's analysis is supportive of the initiative, claiming a premium on performance in specialist schools of a net value-added of 5% compared to other schools.⁹⁷

99. Other sources are more cautious in their assessment. In evidence to the Committee, Dr Sandie Schagen told us:

“The impact we found is not as big as is sometimes claimed. It is relatively small in terms of total point score, for example. I think it was just under two points' difference between pupils in specialist schools and pupils in other schools, so it is not so big. The other point is making the inference which we feel is not justified that because pupils in specialist schools appear to do slightly better in value added terms one cannot therefore assume that that difference is due to the fact that they are in specialist schools, because there are clearly other factors that could be at work which, for various reasons, we have not been able to take account of.”⁹⁸

100. Data from Ofsted, based on the 2001 evaluation of specialist schools and evidence from subsequent inspections,⁹⁹ indicate that while pupils in specialist schools may achieve slightly higher average point scores at GCSE, there is no significant differential in the trend of improvement between specialist schools and their non-specialist counterparts. Mike Raleigh, Divisional Manager of the Secondary Education Division within Ofsted, told us:

“With the exception of sports colleges, the other categories of specialist schools achieved higher GCSE average point scores than schools nationally, with language colleges having the highest proportion of five or more A to C GCSE grades. The trend of improvement—and I think this is an important fact—since 1997 for those schools is broadly similar to the national picture.... It is also perhaps worth pointing out that technology colleges, which form easily the biggest group of specialist schools, have shown a slight fall in their improvement trend since the analysis we undertook in 2001.”¹⁰⁰

95 Previously known as the Technology Colleges Trust.

96 *Schools Achieving Success*, Cm 5230, 2001 p 40.

97 Professor David Jesson, *Value added and the benefits of specialism*, Technology Colleges Trust, April 2002, p 5. Professor Jesson compares non-selective specialist schools with non-selective other schools. Value-added measures attempt to calculate the distance travelled by pupils between two assessment points.

98 Q 186. Other factors might include parental support, pupil motivation or external tutoring.

99 Ev 39–41

100 Q 110

101. The Minister of State for School Standards, David Miliband MP, was more positive in his appraisal of the relative performance of specialist schools and their non-specialist counterparts. He told us “the longer a school is a specialist school the stronger the evidence that its performance outstrips other similar schools.”¹⁰¹ The Minister backed up this assertion in a letter to the committee. He wrote:

“From 1997 to 2001 GCSE/GNVQ scores of schools designated specialist on or before 1996 have risen faster year-on-year than the average of mainstream, maintained schools not in the programme.”¹⁰²

102. Mr Miliband’s claim was energetically challenged by Professor Stephen Gorard. He argued that the early specialist schools were not representative of the whole group and therefore could not be taken as an indicator of how other schools would perform in time.¹⁰³ The Department’s statistics bear this out: only one third of the specialist schools designated in or before 1996 were community schools, while nearly two thirds of the current 992 are community schools.

103. In addition, Professor Gorard argued that the statistical analysis used by Professor Jesson, the key source for the Department, did not take sufficient account of year on year improvements in pupils’ GCSE attainment. Professor Gorard said:

“As you will know... every year the GCSE scores are going up, by and large, for whatever reason... Therefore you have to factor that increase in. If you take that out, there is no difference. The further you go back in time, the bigger the difference between any school, specialist or otherwise, now and the school then.”¹⁰⁴

104. What is clear is that the Government’s over-reliance on a narrow range of research on the comparative performance of specialist schools has served to obscure rather than illuminate the issue. In choosing research partners, the independence of all parties may be compromised by too close an alliance of Government, research providers (however distinguished) and stakeholder groups.

Measures of achievement

105. During the course of our inquiry we have considered the manner in which the performance of schools is measured and compared. In the recent past this has been done chiefly by means of a measure based on the proportion of a school’s year 11 gaining 5 or more GCSEs at grade A* to C. This is a relatively crude measure, originating in the school leaving certificate, which has persisted through the development of GCEs to the present day. The development of value-added measures, pupil level calculations of learning based on distance travelled rather than destination, has been welcomed. Value-added scores were published for all schools for the first time in January 2003.

101 HC 177–ii, Session 2002–03, Q 117.

102 Ibid. Q 118, Ev 37

103 Q 77

104 Ibid.

106. Since the introduction of school performance tables in 1992, schools have been subject to comparison through the unofficial league tables published in the national press. These tables are produced using GCSE performance data published by the DfES and have become an important resource for parents, although their value has been widely questioned.

The 5 A–C GCSE measure*

107. During the course of our inquiry we have found the 5 A*–C GCSEs indicator for attainment at 16 to be an inadequate and misleading measure of pupil achievement. For the most able, in grammar schools for example, the measure is meaningless as all pupils will be expected to exceed 5 A*–C GCSEs,¹⁰⁵ while for the least able it does nothing to reflect the often very considerable distance travelled by individual pupils who, despite their and their teachers' best efforts, fall short of 5 A*–C GCSEs.

108. Researchers in school performance have also found the 5 A*–C GCSEs measure deficient. Dr Sandie Schagen told the Committee:

“We regard it as unstable because it can be influenced by the performance of just a few children. We all know there are schools which deliberately focus on children who are on the C/D borderline to try to push up their results. There is no secret that that happens, and we feel that from a statistical point of view the outcome measures you use should be ones that reflect the performance of all the pupils in the school and cannot just be influenced by the performance of a few.”¹⁰⁶

109. Refining this point and reflecting on the purpose of such data beyond headline-grabbing league tables Dr Ian Schagen told us:

“Schools are complex, multi-faceted organisations. You need a range of outcome measures to look at different schools, which is why we use about seven or so and there are a number of others. You can look at schools subject by subject and find that certain schools are doing well in certain subjects and not so well in others. That kind of information is more of value in terms of driving school improvement than in publishing league tables. If you can tell schools where they are doing well and not so well compared with what you might expect given their prior attainment and other circumstances you can give them a lot of valuable information which can help them to improve.”¹⁰⁷

110. Professor Jesson defended the 5 A*–C GCSEs measure and argued that alternatives, such as the average point score, had not been widely understood or entered meaningfully into the discourse on school performance:

“The issue is that the point score, in spite of its introduction seven or eight years ago, is still misunderstood as a means of evaluating the performance of a school. I find it still very difficult to understand what it means when I find a point score, which is

105 Q 335

106 Q 187

107 Ibid.

identified as being the reference point for a school, but it bears no relation to the public debate about how well that school has done... It would have been perverse for the work which I do to have taken the less well understood measure and used that in preference to one which I have to say is very current, appears to be well understood and even though it relates at the moment to only half the population is something we wish to see increased.”¹⁰⁸

111. Narrow and simplistic approaches to measuring school improvement have not and cannot provide sufficient evidence as to the efficacy of the Government’s diversity policy across the ability range. This raises questions about the planned expansion of the programme: without further evaluation it is not possible to assess the extent to which the apparent benefits of specialisation might be extended across secondary education, not least because in a universal specialist model the programme will necessarily be evaluated on the performance of all pupils, including those who are at present selected out of this sector.

112. It is the responsibility of all concerned with pupil achievement and school improvement to use those measures which give the fullest possible picture of performance. The Department for Education and Skills and researchers in this field share a responsibility to use these measures in the discourse on school standards and to bring them to public attention and understanding.

Value-added measures

113. The recently published value-added measures of pupil achievement offer an important contribution to the evaluation of school performance and have been widely welcomed. In evidence to the Committee, Professor Jesson told us that “Value added is the key measure for looking at like with like. In fact I have been an advocate of this for something like the last 12 years, so it is quite comforting for me to see that we are beginning now to recognise that this is the way to make comparisons.”¹⁰⁹ However, Professor Jesson has subsequently qualified this view, expressing his anxiety that “Even though the method is called ‘value-added’ – it does *not* compare like-with-like in any reasonable manner: it appears to operate precisely in the direction of favouring schools with ‘high’ intakes, whilst at the same time disadvantaging those in more difficult circumstances.”¹¹⁰

114. It is apparent from the evidence submitted to the inquiry and the debate in both the academic literature and the media that there is an unresolved dispute regarding how best to measure and evaluate school performance and improvement.¹¹¹ The recent publication of value added scores, which take into account the level of attainment at entry compared to achievement at GCSE, have added both richness and further complexity to the debate without yet contributing much in the way of clarity. HMCI, David Bell told us:

108 Q 345

109 Q 337

110 Correspondence from Professor Jesson, 27 January 2003. See also “Bog-standard comps do as well as the specialists”, *Times Educational Supplement*, 24 January 2003.

111 Memorandum from Ian Schagen and Harvey Goldstein (DP18) [not printed]. See also “Selective versions of reality”, *Times Educational Supplement*, 25 January 2002, p 21.

“I seem to recall a discussion maybe a few years ago when people were saying, ‘Just wait until we get the value-added data and all will be well. We will really know what is going on.’ I think that, to some extent, the value-added data does what all data does. Yes, it is important but it actually raises other questions. It does not give you, as it were, the final answer about whether a school is good or bad. I think it adds to that richness of data and I think it will, over time, be utilised and more and more people will become comfortable with what it means, but I think it is not going to give us, as it were, the answer to whether a school is a good or bad school.”¹¹²

Performance tables

115. The publication of school performance tables has been a contentious issue from the outset. Initially promoted as an instrument of choice, performance tables and their unofficial counterparts in the media, school league tables, have over time, taken on a new mission as an instrument of public accountability and school improvement. The Minister of State for School Standards, while recognising the limitations of the 5 A*-C GCSE measure told us:

“I do not want to lose the institutional accountability that has come from the five A to C measure... I do not want to end up with performance data that is so overwhelming in its complexity that no one understands it, but I am not averse to the intelligent distribution of data and recognition of achievement especially as we must remember that assessment and examination has the purpose of institutional accountability, but its most important purpose is probably to help children move on and recognise their own strengths and weaknesses and make the most of their own studies.”¹¹³

116. Performance tables, while providing welcome information to parents, have painted a one-dimensional picture of the work of schools, focussed entirely on the GCSE pass rate. There is some evidence that this has affected the ways in which some schools work and provided an incentive for schools to concentrate their efforts on those pupils at the grade C/D borderline,¹¹⁴ arguably at the expense of both more and less able pupils, limiting the extent to which the tables reflect the full range of the schools’ achievements.

117. While we acknowledge and support the use of pupil attainment data for the purposes of strengthening public accountability, the emphasis must be on the use of such data for school improvement. For pupil attainment data to be meaningful in this context the key measures for pupil and school achievement need further development and to be applied consistently across the range of school improvement and pupil attainment projects. In particular, it is vital that these measures provide a picture of the full ability range, including the proportion of pupils who at 16 do not obtain any qualifications, and take full account of the intake profile of each school.

112 HC 531-i, Session 2002-03, Q 41.

113 Education and Skills Committee, Minutes of Evidence, Session 2002-03, *Work of the Department for Education and Skills*, HC 177-ii, Q 192.

114 “Lack of trust ‘hampering campaign to reduce exam numbers”, *Times Educational Supplement*, 28 March 2003.

Measures of disadvantage

118. In order to compare accurately the performance of schools it is essential to calculate, not only prior attainment, but also the extent to which their populations differ in social and economic terms. The leading indicator used to identify disadvantage is eligibility for free school meals, although since the introduction of the Working Parents' Tax Credit, this has become a less accurate proxy for disadvantage. In the future the data made available through the Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) will enable greater refinement of measures of disadvantage, and this is to be encouraged.

119. For an accurate picture of school populations the use of free school meals data must be balanced with data on the pupils who do not qualify for free school meals. In this way it is possible to differentiate, for example, between a school with 40% of pupils eligible for free school meals with the remainder just above the qualifying line and another school with the same proportion of children eligible for free school meals but where the rest of pupils are from affluent homes. At present this detailed analysis is not undertaken and the lack of this additional data detracts from the value of free school meal eligibility statistics.

120. **The development of more sensitive measures of deprivation than that offered by free school meals eligibility is critical to improving the effectiveness with which policy and resources may be targeted.** The use of data on parental level of education combined with socio-economic indicators offers a helpful way forward.

121. During the course of our inquiry we have been particularly interested to learn about Professor Stephen Gorard's work on social segregation in schools, measuring the extent to which schools have a representative sample of the population in social and economic terms.¹¹⁵ This work is important because it gives access to data about what are often the unintended consequences of policy initiatives. We expect to return to the issue of social segregation in more detail during the final stage of our secondary education inquiry, on school admissions.

Separating the impact of investment from specialism and other initiatives

122. During this inquiry we have tried to establish the extent to which the impact of the specialist schools programme, the process of application and designation together with the creation of a subject focus within a school, can be distinguished from the effect of the significant injection of cash that follows designation together with the recurrent specialist premium on per pupil funding. In 2002–03 the specialist schools programme cost £145.3m. Specialist schools receive a capital grant of £100,000 to add to the £50,000 raised through sponsorship and an additional £123 per student per annum.

123. Given the scale of this additional investment it was therefore a surprise to us to learn that no evaluation has taken place on this aspect of the programme.¹¹⁶ The effect of this investment is important because it may be that it is the process leading to designation, rather than the funding or the specialist focus, that is the key to school improvement.

¹¹⁵ Memorandum from Stephen Gorard (DP 01) [not printed].

¹¹⁶ Ev 144

Giving evidence to the Committee, Sir Cyril Taylor acknowledged that there has been no systematic evaluation of the way in which specialist status is thought to contribute to school improvement.¹¹⁷

124. We asked Dr John Dunford, General Secretary of the Secondary Heads' Association how he saw the effect of designation. He told us:

“It varies enormously from case to case. There are cases... where it is a specialism which is really important. In other cases the process is important because the schools have to think through that plan in a very detailed way; in other cases it is simply the funding which is important because there are desperate things which need doing within the school, which they can only do if they have that access to another half a million pounds.”¹¹⁸

125. There are a number of other school improvement and pupil attainment initiatives operating in parallel with the expansion of the specialist schools programme which complicate any attempt to evaluate the impact of the specialist model in isolation. **It is a matter of concern that the Government has made its decision to extend access to the specialist schools programme, and associated funding to all schools, in the absence of clear evidence as to the alleged benefits of specialism, balanced against those of other initiatives. Evaluation of this initiative is essential so that the public and policy makers alike can be assured that policy is developed on the basis of sound evidence rather than wishful thinking.**

School admissions

126. The organisation of school admissions is an issue that we will return to in the final stage of this inquiry. However, so interwoven are the threads of school admissions, school diversity and pupil achievement, that we cannot conclude this first part of our inquiry without some mention of their interaction.

127. Much of the anxiety surrounding diversity policies is associated with their impact on neighbouring schools and the extent to which any change in performance may be attributable to a shift in the population of the school. Professor Stephen Gorard told us:

“What appears to happen is that in areas where specialist schools are prevalent, there is more segregation than in areas where they are not. The majority of the long-standing specialist schools are also tending to be either voluntary aided, voluntary controlled or foundation schools. What they have in common, and some of the other schools I have put in my study, is that they have different admission arrangements and different over-subscription criteria to the LEA schools with which they are competing in their local markets. In the LEAs where that is not the case, such as one LEA in our study in the south-east of England, specialist schools have to use the same criteria as the local comprehensives and the[ir] results... are indistinguishable from

117 Q 357

118 Q 402

the other schools in the LEA and the composition of the schools is indistinguishable.”¹¹⁹

128. Research by Professor Anne West and Audrey Hind at the LSE supports the view that it is admission arrangements rather than school diversity that is the key factor in social segregation:

“In a significant minority of schools, notably those that are their own admission authorities – voluntary-aided and foundation schools – a variety of criteria are used which appear to be designed to select certain groups of pupils and so exclude others. These include children of employees; children of former pupils; partial selection by ability/aptitude in a subject area or by general ability; and children with a family connection to the school.”¹²⁰

129. For parents, multiple admissions authorities with diverse and sometimes conflicting criteria present a bewildering prospect and we are mindful that it is the least advantaged parents, including those from minority ethnic groups, who experience the greatest difficulty in this context.¹²¹ Legislation now requires coordinated admissions arrangements both within and between LEAs. This change calls into question the whole issue of schools retaining the role as their own admissions authorities.

130. The evidence we received suggested that any rationale for schools operating as their own admissions authority may not be significantly outweighed by the wider benefits, not least to parents, associated with equity and clarity of process. We will return to this issue in more detail during the final stage of our secondary inquiry.

131. Both partial selection and schools operating as their own admissions authorities provide opportunities for schools to influence the profile of their intake ‘selecting in’ and ‘selecting out’ pupils with particular characteristics.¹²² The potential for the manipulation of pupil intakes by these means is undesirable and may be socially divisive.

Selection by aptitude: rationale and evidence?

132. The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 allows the admissions authority of any maintained secondary school which declares it to have a specialism in one of the prescribed subjects¹²³ to select up to 10% of its intake on the basis of aptitude in that subject. Legislation limits selection by aptitude to specialisms in physical education or sport; the performing arts; the visual arts; modern foreign languages; design and technology and information technology. Selection is not permitted in the humanities,

119 Q 18

120 Anne West & Audrey Hind, *Secondary school admissions in England: Exploring the extent of overt and covert selection*, London School of Economics, 2003, p 3.

121 HC 513–ii, Session 2002–03, *Secondary Education: Pupil Achievement*, Q 174.

122 West and Hind 2003.

123 Selection on the basis of aptitude is restricted to the following subjects: physical education/sport, the performing arts, the visual arts, modern foreign languages, design and technology and information technology. See *School Admissions Code of Practice, 02/2003*, DfES/0031/2003 A.72.

science and mathematics.¹²⁴ It is unlawful for schools permitted to select by aptitude to test for ability or to test for any subject other than those prescribed.¹²⁵

133. During the course of our inquiry we were interested to gain a better understanding of the rationale for this policy; the nature of aptitude; how is it distinguishable from ability; what impact selection by aptitude has had on the performance of schools which make use of this facility and how the pupils selected on the basis of aptitude differ in performance from their non-selected counterparts within the same schools.

134. In the year 2001–02, only 5.8%¹²⁶ of all designated specialist schools entitled to select pupils on the basis of aptitude did so. The Department told us that the rationale for the facility for partial selection was rooted in the Government’s view that “it is appropriate for the admission authorities of schools with a specialism to be able to select a small proportion of pupils on the basis of aptitude for that specialism so as to give opportunities to pupils who might not be able to gain admission under other admission criteria.”¹²⁷

135. The rationale for the subjects in which aptitude testing is considered appropriate was explained by the DfES in written evidence to the Committee.

“When subjects were prescribed in the Regulations under the 1998 Act the intention was to cover as much as reasonably possible of the specialist schools offer at that time. Technology, Language, Arts and Sports Colleges existed at that time.

The Department had previously commissioned research from NFER [National Foundation for Educational Research] into aptitude testing for Technology Colleges. The research left open the possibility that there could be valid tests for aptitude for technology but considered that the tests examined for aptitude for science and for mathematics were close to being measures of general ability. The Government concluded that it would not be appropriate to prescribe science and mathematics. The absence of media arts reflected the fact that the Government was not aware of any aptitude test in that area.”

136. The Code of Practice on school admissions offers a definition of aptitude to the effect that “a pupil with aptitude is one who is identified as being able to benefit from teaching in a specific subject, or who demonstrates a particular capacity to succeed in that subject”¹²⁸ although this is qualified by evidence from the Department for Education and Skills by the advice that any test for aptitude “should not assume prior knowledge of the subject.”¹²⁹ This gives rise to the bizarre conclusion that a child without aptitude for a subject would not benefit from being taught it, surely an unsustainable position for anyone with an interest in education and contrary to the most basic tenets of education theory.

137. Clarity on this issue was not significantly improved by the contribution of the Minister of State for School Standards. The Minister set out his view that ability testing

124 *School Admissions Code of Practice*, 02/2003, DfES/0031/2003 A.72.

125 *School Admissions Code of Practice*, 02/2003, DfES/0031/2003 A.74.

126 Unpublished correspondence from the DfES, 18 March 2003 Not including grammar schools.

127 Ev 143

128 *School Admissions Code of Practice*, 02/2003, DfES/0031/2003, cited in DP60 para 10.

129 Ev 144

refers to general intelligence, aptitude testing is focused on a particular area of the curriculum.¹³⁰ However, he declined to offer a definitive statement and instead argued that it was “more for individual schools if they choose that they want to use the power to select up to 10% to then make clear what they mean by that in an open and objective way.”¹³¹

138. When the Government first expanded the specialist schools programme, the ability to select by aptitude was considered a key feature for improving standards of attainment. It is clear that the Government no longer considers selection by aptitude to be central to the purpose of the specialist schools programme as a school improvement initiative.

139. We are not satisfied that any meaningful distinction between aptitude and ability has been made and we have found no justification for any reliance on the distinction between them.

140. Research by Professor Anne West and Audrey Hind at the LSE revealed a range of practices, indicative of the confusion as to the nature of aptitude. Some schools selected on the basis of demonstrated ability or attainment (thereby assuming prior knowledge) while others extended selection into subjects for which selection is not permitted under the Code. The research team also found that while specialist schools were three times more likely to select on the basis of ability/aptitude, the dominant factor appeared to be school type, with voluntary aided/foundation schools¹³² being over 27 times more likely than community/voluntary-controlled schools to select on this basis.¹³³ Of the 992 specialist schools currently in operation, over 35% are their own admissions authorities. This broadly represents the picture for all schools.¹³⁴

141. Evidence from the Secretary of State on the issue of selection was contradictory. While acknowledging that “selection regimes produce a system that inhibits educational opportunities for significant numbers of people”¹³⁵ he made clear that he did not envisage either extending the capacity for selection or pursuing legislation to end the practice.¹³⁶ These views are interesting set alongside those of the Minister of State for School Standards who told us that he considered it important that specialist schools should retain the ability to select a proportion of their pupils.¹³⁷

142. Specialist schools which use the power to select a proportion of their intake by aptitude, achieve greater academic success in the 5 A*–C measure; in 2001–02 such schools achieved 61.5% of pupils gaining 5+ A*–C GCSEs compared to 52% in non-selective specialist schools. Regrettably, the Department does not collect data on the differential performance of selected and non-selected pupils.¹³⁸

130 HC 177–ii, Session 2002–03, Q 142.

131 Ibid, Q 147

132 Voluntary aided and controlled schools have delegated authority for admissions.

133 West & Hind, 2003, p 10.

134 Data from DfES 25/03/03 VA=136/ FD=190/ CY=635/ VC=31.

135 Education and Skills Committee, Minutes of Evidence, Session 2002–03, *Work of the Department for Education and Skills*, HC177–i, Q 40.

136 Education and Skills Committee, Minutes of Evidence, Session 2002–03, *Work of the Department for Education and Skills*, HC177–i, Q 39

137 Education and Skills Committee, Minutes of Evidence, Session 2002–03, *Work of the Department for Education and Skills*, HC 177–ii, Q 137

138 Ev 144. Figures do not include grammar schools.

143. For schools which are their own admissions authorities, the drive to improve pupil attainment creates an inevitable tension between the interests of the school and those of wider society. Evidence on the extent to which some schools admit pupils with special needs gives rise to particular concern.¹³⁹

144. It is apparent from the evidence gathered during this inquiry that the current policy which enables schools to select on the basis of aptitude rests on insecure grounds. We are not convinced of the case for selection by aptitude. The broader issue of selection for the purpose of school admissions will be a focus of the final stage of our inquiry into secondary education.

Competition vs. collaboration

145. Strong leadership and good teaching are key ingredients in the process of school improvement. Schools that find it hard to attract and retain staff, particularly in subject areas where teachers are in short supply, face a particular challenge in driving forward school improvement.¹⁴⁰ Specialist schools, by virtue of additional funds and physical resources, are at an advantage in the competition to recruit staff, not least because their preferential funding enables them to offer more attractive terms and conditions.

146. In many schools it is the expertise and vigour of a few specialist staff that is key to obtaining and maintaining specialist status. As the specialist model expands across the secondary sector, competition for staff will inevitably grow as staff in shortage subjects move to the best resourced schools. If the expertise of specialist teaching staff are to be appropriately shared, schools will need to develop ways of working together to achieve this end.

147. In written evidence to the Committee, officials from the DfES, commenting on the initial evaluation of the Diversity Pathfinder projects, observed that:

“Early indications are that the project has been a powerful catalyst for collaboration in the pathfinder LEAs. The depth of the collaboration, i.e. the degree to which collaboration between schools genuinely challenges poor performance and confronts issues such as social inclusion, varies across the pathfinders. Unsurprisingly it appears to be strongest in areas where the schools are not competing for students. Head teachers across the pathfinders are unanimous in their view that partnerships work best when the schools involved are in the partnerships as equals; not necessarily in terms of absolute school performance, but in the sense that each is seen as having something to contribute.”¹⁴¹

148. The message contained in this observation is at the core of the Government’s hopes for a new culture of collaboration between schools and groups of schools, although a significant amount of work will need to be done before effective collaboration can be made a reality. League tables and inspections will need to be adapted to take account of collegiate

139 Anne West & Audrey Hind, *Secondary school admissions in England: Exploring the extent of overt and covert selection*, London School of Economics, 2003, p 12, (3.1.5), Memorandum from Ofsted (DP42) (chart 4) [not printed], and Ev 173.

140 *Standards and Quality in Education, Annual Report of HMCI 2001–02*, Cm 286, p 67.

141 Ev 109

structures so to enable proper evaluation of their impact. Written evidence from the DfES¹⁴² confirms that the Diversity Pathfinder projects are leading the way in these areas and we will monitor their progress with great interest.

149. The coordination of diversity initiatives, for example the distribution of specialisms within an area, has been a long neglected aspect of diversity policy. While we acknowledge the view expressed by Dr John Dunford that this role is not necessarily one which must be undertaken by an LEA,¹⁴³ it is certainly the case that LEAs are well placed to undertake this work. This view was strengthened by our experience of visiting Birmingham and Auckland in the autumn of 2002 where we were able to contrast two models of educational provision. In Auckland, as elsewhere in New Zealand, schools are independent units managed by a Board of Trustees¹⁴⁴ with no intermediate layer of management or accountability between the Ministry of Education and individual Boards of Trustees. This model contrasted sharply with the situation in Birmingham where the local education authority provided, in addition to its regulatory role, a welcome source of support and advocacy to many of its maintained schools.¹⁴⁵

150. Politicians and officials in New Zealand identified the particular difficulty that their model presented. A high degree of independence for schools had led to significant difficulty in establishing a culture that enabled systemic change. Again, the contrast with our experience in Birmingham was stark: the ‘can-do’ attitude demonstrated by all we met in the city was striking and strongly associated with the work of the LEA, which had done much to bring schools together to encourage co-operation and improvement.¹⁴⁶

151. The Secretary of State has acknowledged the importance of cooperation and coordination. He told us:

“It seems to me that not only groups of schools but also groups of primary and secondary schools working together and the LEA all have the responsibility of trying to promote collaborative rather than competitive roles between schools. I shall try to ensure that my department promotes that approach.”¹⁴⁷

152. An important area for coordination, and one where some progress is being made, is in the area of school admissions. The Oaks Academy in Birmingham, one of the Diversity Pathfinder projects, is considering the potential of a joint admission policy across all schools within the group, with admission to the collegiate, rather than to a particular school.¹⁴⁸

153. Our conclusion is that competition and institutional autonomy are forces that can be barriers to the capacity for systemic change. The careful coordination of diversity

142 Ev 143

143 Q 403

144 Analogous to boards of governors in the UK.

145 Education and Skills Committee, Second Report of Session 2002–03, *Secondary Education: Visits to Birmingham and Auckland*, HC 486.

146 Education and Skills Committee, Second Report of Session 2002–03, *Secondary Education: Visits to Birmingham and Auckland*, HC 486.

147 Education and Skills Committee, Minutes of Evidence, Session 2002–03, *Work of the Department for Education and Skills*, HC177–i, Q 38.

148 Q 263

policy so as to ensure the capacity for broad based change should be a prime consideration in the further development of the Government's schools policy.

Equality of opportunity – access to specialist education

154. The extent to which the Government's diversity policy limits or extends access to learning opportunities has been at the centre of the debate on the impact of the specialist schools programme. The requirement for participating schools to take up active roles within their communities and to extend access to their enhanced resources was added in 1997 when the new Labour Government took on and extended the programme. The manner of this collaboration is left to individual schools to define in their submissions for specialist status and is therefore variable in its nature and impact. The community aspect of the programme was considered in the Ofsted evaluation of specialist schools conducted in 2001 and was found to be "the weakest element of specialist schools' work."¹⁴⁹

155. Competition between schools, combined with teacher shortages, particularly in certain subjects, has contributed to a sharp contrast between schools which find it relatively easy to recruit and retain experienced teachers and those that do not. It was in part a recognition of this situation that led Professor Tim Brighouse to develop his 'collegiate' model¹⁵⁰ for school cooperation. During our visit to Birmingham, Professor Brighouse told us:

"I believe that every school should be a specialist school and they ought to have the resource that goes with it because there is a huge danger at the moment that the pecking order means that those who are higher up the pecking order under the rules of becoming a specialist school get the extra resource. They already, if you look at the data, have the most advantaged children because of the pecking order system. That does not help the issue of social justice and every kid getting a fair chance of developing their talents, so the sooner it is directed to all schools the better. ... I think they need to move boldly to create groups or circles of schools where each is a school in its own right but where children at 11 choose to join a school and another educational body, a collegiate for the sake of argument, and the collegiate will be made up of the group of schools and would offer before and after school programmes and occasional inset and share their intranet and share their professional development, and where that collegiate would have its results published as a collegiate as well as individual schools, but where the resourcing of any individual school would depend on the results of each of the schools, to encourage collegiality."¹⁵¹

156. The Government's new found emphasis on collaboration and cooperation between groups of schools, currently being pursued through the Diversity Pathfinder project and promulgated most recently in the strategy document *A New Specialist System: Transforming Secondary Education*¹⁵² owes much to the Brighouse model and gives some

149 *Specialist Schools: An evaluation of progress*, Ofsted, October 2001, p 7.

150 Education and Skills Committee, Second Report of Session 2002–03, *Secondary Education: visits to Birmingham and Auckland*, HC 486, Q 292.

151 Ibid.

152 *A New Specialist System: Transforming Secondary Education*, DfES, 10 February 2003, p 12.

cause to hope that any negative effects of the specialist schools programme can be mitigated.

157. While in general we welcome the development of collegiate, cooperative models, we sound one note of caution. During our visit to Northern Ireland we discussed informally with a number of those we met the report of the Post-Primary Review Body,¹⁵³ which advocates a system of 20 collegiates with a complex set of arrangements for coordinating and managing them. It was clear that the suggested imposition of the collegiate model generated resistance in the schools community. Collaborative working will only succeed when all parties are happy to be involved

158. The Committee acknowledges the Department's renewed emphasis on the collaborative and community aspects of the specialist schools programme and initiatives being developed through the Diversity Pathfinder project. However, we believe that the nature of this collaboration is at present insufficiently focused on raising pupil achievement and therefore (to be consistent with the Government's stated policy) recommend that future funding for specialist schools and the basis of their evaluation should be explicitly linked to measurable success in raising pupil achievement in partner schools.

What matters most?

159. One of the lessons we have learned from the evidence in this inquiry, and one that has been reiterated in successive Ofsted reports, is that all good schools are good in broadly the same way: they demonstrate good management; good teaching; good personal support; good relations and good links with parents.¹⁵⁴ It is apparent that these characteristics are present in a number of specialist schools, although the extent to which they possessed these characteristics prior to designation is less clear. However, it is also the case that these characteristics are shared by a significant number of non-specialist schools. While Government certainly has a part to play, good schools are predominantly the result of the hard work and commitment of school leaders, staff and governors with, in many cases, valuable support from LEAs.

160. While some schools have used both the process and the funding associated with specialist status to great effect, the specialist schools programme, because it aims to identify good and improving schools, has had the paradoxical effect of granting additional funding to some already successful and well funded schools. The 47 maintained grammar schools that have gained specialist status are not the only example of this.

161. In our view, allowing selective schools to become specialist schools and so receive the extra funding that specialist school status brings, has had the effect of increasing the gap between high and low achieving schools rather than reducing it. If the specialist schools programme is a school improvement programme, the money might be better spent on schools which are attempting to raise levels of attainment from a lower base.

¹⁵³ *Education for the 21st Century; Report of the Post-Primary Review Body*, Department of Education Northern Ireland, October 2001.

¹⁵⁴ Q 140

162. We recommend that the position of selective schools in the specialist schools programme should be reconsidered. Eligibility for the specialist schools programme should be contingent upon each school's membership of a community of schools and on the achievement of measurable improvements in pupil attainment across the group of schools.

6 28 November 2002: Implications of the universal specialist model

"I hope that my announcement today will help all schools to become specialist"¹⁵⁵

Can the achievements of the few be extended to the many?

163. What the secondary education landscape will look like when the specialist model has been fully rolled out is far from clear. Nor is it clear whether the expansion of the range of specialisms is now complete, or whether we should expect additional categories to be unveiled. LEAs are now taking a far greater role in the coordination of bids for specialist status and therefore in the distribution of specialisms in within their authorities.

164. We would welcome a clear statement from the Government on how it envisages secondary education will look when all schools have specialist status; whether it anticipates further expansion in the range of specialisms; and how the Government, in partnership with LEAs, will secure the strategic distribution of specialisms so as to enable each cluster of schools to have an appropriate combination of subjects represented.

165. The current shape of secondary education enables, and may even encourage, some schools to select out low achieving pupils and, through the vehicle of exclusion, shift responsibility for others to other schools or pupil referral units. In the new specialist system, where specialist status is all but universal and schools are encouraged to form cooperative groups of schools, disadvantaged children of average or low ability, and those with non-aspirant parents, will have to go somewhere.

166. The universal specialist system will potentially include all schools and all pupils. The Government asserts that there is a causal link between schools gaining specialist status and their success in raising pupil attainment. Schools which have achieved specialist status can be exciting places with high levels of pupil attainment, as we saw during our visit to Birmingham. The question is, what is the main factor that makes them so? Is it the advantage that extra funds bring? Is it the management process that schools have to undertake? Or is it something inherent in the specialist schools policy itself? The extent to which the apparent achievements of the early specialist schools is repeated by their successors needs to be closely monitored. We urge the Government to engage in a more rigorous evaluation of the current programme than has so far been attempted.

155 Rt. Hon Charles Clarke MP, HC Deb, 28 November 2002, col 442.

7 Conclusions and recommendations

City Technology Colleges and Specialist Schools

1. We are concerned that those schools working towards the recently approved specialisms in the humanities may find it particularly difficult to attract financial support. (Paragraph 42)

Choice and diversity

2. We are concerned about the serious mismatch between the Government's rhetoric on the relationship between choice and diversity and the reality. Research is required into the impact of choice and diversity policy on different regions and different social groups in order that Government policies on diversity and school transport may be refined to mitigate its negative effects. (Paragraph 63)

Diversity and faith

3. We welcome the Government's more balanced approach to the promotion of faith schools and urge extreme caution in any future expansion of the faith sector. Tensions in Northern Ireland between the the two communities illustrate the problems that segregated schools can exacerbate. Future developments in this area should guard against the creation of ethnically segregated schooling. (Paragraph 69)

Diversity pathfinders

4. Cooperation between secondary schools in terms of sharing good practice, resources and developing strong community links, is desirable in itself and likely to be an important means of raising pupil achievement in participating schools. However, as is the case in other areas covered in this report, more evidence is required to establish the impact of collaborative models. (Paragraph 77)

Diversity redefined

5. As all maintained schools are required to deliver the national curriculum, it would have been more helpful if greater emphasis had been given to the concept of diversity within each school and to curricular flexibility as a means of enabling schools to respond more effectively to the individual learning needs of each pupil. (Paragraph 87)
6. We welcome the commitment of the Secretary of State and the Minister of State for School Standards to pursue discussions with providers outside the maintained system and look forward to revisiting this issue when next we take evidence from them. (Paragraph 89)

Communities of schools: how schools impact upon their neighbours

7. It is apparent from our inquiry that the impact of specialist schools on their neighbours has been a neglected area of work and one which renders the existing evidence incomplete and any conclusions arising from it, potentially unsound. Without data relating to the composition and performance of schools surrounding specialist schools it is all but impossible to believe that the policy, and therefore the extent to which public funds have been wisely spent, can be properly evaluated. (Paragraph 91)
8. The Government's emphasis on evidence-based policy is to be welcomed, but care should be taken to ensure that research models are sufficiently well developed in order to deliver meaningful analysis. For example, the absence of data on the impact of initiatives on neighbouring schools is a very serious weakness in the existing analysis and should be addressed. (Paragraph 94)

Diversity and standards

9. What is clear is that the Government's over-reliance on a narrow range of research on the comparative performance of specialist schools has served to obscure rather than illuminate the issue. In choosing research partners, the independence of all parties may be compromised by too close an alliance of Government, research providers (however distinguished) and stakeholder groups. (Paragraph 104)

Measures of achievement

10. While we acknowledge and support the use of pupil attainment data for the purposes of strengthening public accountability, the emphasis must be on the use of such data for school improvement. For pupil attainment data to be meaningful in this context the key measures for pupil and school achievement need further development and to be applied consistently across the range of school improvement and pupil attainment projects. In particular, it is vital that these measures provide a picture of the full ability range, including the proportion of pupils who at 16 do not obtain any qualifications, and take full account of the intake profile of each school. (Paragraph 117)

Measures of disadvantage

11. The development of more sensitive measures of deprivation than that offered by free school meals eligibility is critical to improving the effectiveness with which policy and resources may be targeted. (Paragraph 120)

Separating the impact of investment from specialism & other initiatives

12. It is a matter of concern that the Government has made its decision to extend access to the specialist schools programme, and associated funding to all schools, in the absence of clear evidence as to the alleged benefits of specialism, balanced against those of other initiatives. Evaluation of this initiative is essential so that the public

and policy makers alike can be assured that policy is developed on the basis of sound evidence rather than wishful thinking. (Paragraph 125)

School admissions

13. The evidence we received suggested that any rationale for schools operating as their own admissions authority may not be significantly outweighed by the wider benefits, not least to parents, associated with equity and clarity of process. (Paragraph 130)

Selection by aptitude: rationale and evidence?

14. We are not satisfied that any meaningful distinction between aptitude and ability has been made and we have found no justification for any reliance on the distinction between them. (Paragraph 139)
15. It is apparent from the evidence gathered during this inquiry that the current policy which enables schools to select on the basis of aptitude rests on insecure grounds. We are not convinced of the case for selection by aptitude. The broader issue of selection for the purpose of school admissions will be a focus of the final stage of our inquiry into secondary education. (Paragraph 144)

Competition vs. collaboration

16. Our conclusion is that competition and institutional autonomy are forces that can be barriers to the capacity for systemic change. The careful coordination of diversity policy so as to ensure the capacity for broad based change should be a prime consideration in the further development of the Government's schools policy. (Paragraph 152)
17. The Committee acknowledges the Department's renewed emphasis on the collaborative and community aspects of the specialist schools programme and initiatives being developed through the Diversity Pathfinder project. However, we believe that the nature of this collaboration is at present insufficiently focused on raising pupil achievement and therefore (to be consistent with the Government's stated policy) recommend that future funding for specialist schools and the basis of their evaluation should be explicitly linked to measurable success in raising pupil achievement in partner schools. (Paragraph 158)

What matters most?

18. We recommend that the position of selective schools in the specialist schools programme should be reconsidered. Eligibility for the specialist schools programme should be contingent upon each school's membership of a community of schools and on the achievement of measurable improvements in pupil attainment across the group of schools. (Paragraph 162)

Can the achievements of the few be extended to the many?

19. We would welcome a clear statement from the Government on how it envisages secondary education will look when all schools have specialist status; whether it anticipates further expansion in the range of specialisms; and how the Government, in partnership with LEAs, will secure the strategic distribution of specialisms so as to enable each cluster of schools to have an appropriate combination of subjects represented. (Paragraph 164)

20. The universal specialist system will potentially include all schools and all pupils. The Government asserts that there is a causal link between schools gaining specialist status and their success in raising pupil attainment. Schools which have achieved specialist status can be exciting places with high levels of pupil attainment, as we saw during our visit to Birmingham. The question is, what is the main factor that makes them so? Is it the advantage that extra funds bring? Is it the management process that schools have to undertake? Or is it something inherent in the specialist schools policy itself? The extent to which the apparent achievements of the early specialist schools is repeated by their successors needs to be closely monitored. We urge the Government to engage in a more rigorous evaluation of the current programme than has so far been attempted. (Paragraph 166)

Formal minutes

Monday 12 May 2003

Members present:

Mr Barry Sheerman, in the Chair

Mr David Chaytor
Valerie Davey
Jeff Ennis
Paul Holmes

Ms Meg Munn
Mr Kerry Pollard
Jonathan Shaw
Mr Andrew Turner

The Committee deliberated.

Draft Report (Secondary Education: Diversity of Provision), proposed by the Chairman, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the Chairman's draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Summary agreed to.

Paragraphs 1 to 166 read and agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the Fourth Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chairman do make the Report to the House.

Several papers were ordered to be appended to the Minutes of Evidence.

Ordered, That the Appendices to the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee be reported to the House.

Several Memoranda were ordered to be reported to the House.

[Adjourned till Monday 19 May at a quarter to Four o'clock.]

Witnesses

Wednesday 20 November 2002

Page

Professor Stephen Gorard, University of Wales Cardiff, **Professor James Tooley**, University of Newcastle upon Tyne and **Professor Richard Pring**, University of Oxford.

Ev 14

Wednesday 27 November 2002

Mr David Taylor, Director of Inspection, **Miss Kath Cross**, Divisional Manager, School Improvement Division, **Mr Tim Key**, Head of the Standards and Research Unit, and **Mr Mike Raleigh**, Divisional Manager, Secondary Education Division, Ofsted.

Ev 66

Dr Ian Schagen, Head of Statistics, and **Dr Sandie Schagen**, Principal Research Officer, National Foundation for Educational Research

Ev 75

Wednesday 15 January 2003

Mrs Margaret-Anne Barnett and **Mr Ron Jacobs**, School Diversity Division, DfES, and **Mr Ray Shostack**, Hertfordshire LEA.

Ev 109

Mrs Jennifer Evans, The Institute of Education, University of London, **Professor Ron Glatter**, and **Dr Philip Woods** The Open University.

Ev 132

Monday 20 January 2003

Sir Cyril Taylor, Chairman, Technology Colleges Trust and **Professor David Jesson**, University of York.

Ev 148

Dr John Dunford OBE, General Secretary, and **Mrs Kate Griffin**, President, Secondary Heads Association (SHA)

Ev 162

List of written evidence

1	Professor Richard Pring	Ev 1
2	Professor James Tooley	Ev 4
3	Ofsted	Ev 36
4	Ofsted	Ev 63
5	Ofsted	Ev 84
6	Dr Ian Schagen	Ev 85
7	Dr Ian Schagen	Ev 86
8	Department for Education and Skills	Ev 88
9	Department for Education and Skills	Ev 104
10	Diversity Pathfinders Evaluation Research Team	Ev 121
11	Professor Ron Glatter	Ev 124
12	Professor Ron Glatter	Ev 141
13	Department for Education and Skills	Ev 141
14	Technology Colleges Trust	Ev 145
15	Professor David Jesson	Ev 147
16	Secondary Heads Association	Ev 159
17	Brethren	Ev 173
18	National Autistic Society	Ev 173
19	Campaign for State Education (CASE)	Ev 175
20	Dr Richard House	Ev 181
21	Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers)	Ev 182
22	National Union of Teachers	Ev 183
23	Church of England Board of Education	Ev 188
24	Association of Colleges (AoC)	Ev 191
25	Human Scale Education	Ev 195
26	Rick Watson, Bucks Parents for Comprehensive Education	Ev 200
27	Socialist Educational Association	Ev 202
28	New School for New Cross Campaign and Local Education Action by Parents	Ev 204
29	Christian Action Research & Education (CARE)	Ev 208
30	Professor Stephen Gorard	Ev 211
31	Dr Ian Schagen	Ev 212
32	Dr Ian Schagen	Ev 212
33	STEP (Stop the Eleven Plus in Kent)	Ev 214

List of unprinted written evidence

Additional papers have been received from the following and have been reported to the House but to save printing costs they have not been printed and copies have been placed in the House of Commons library where they may be inspected by Members. Other copies are in the Record Office, House of Lords and are available to the public for inspection. Requests for inspection should be addressed to the Parliamentary Archives, Record Office, House of Lords, London SW1A 0PW. (Tel 020 7219 3074) hours of inspection are from 9:30am to 5:00pm on Mondays to Fridays.

Church of England Board of Education

Human Scale Education

Dr Richard House

Bucks Parents for Comprehensive Education

Ofsted

Fiona Carnie

London Children's Commissioner