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The **London**



Challenge

Transforming London Secondary Schools

department for

education and skills

creating opportunity, releasing potential, achieving excellence



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Preface

by the Prime Minister

Piecemeal change is not enough to build a first-class education system for London. Radical structural reform is essential, not only to raise standards in existing schools, but to reshape the system around diversity, choice and the new specialist principle. Nationwide we are moving to a new specialist system with a diverse range of good schools and school sponsors and a modernised curriculum tailored to the needs of each individual pupil. Nowhere is the challenge to create this new system greater than in Inner London – and we need a level of innovation and reform to match.

No parent or child should be left without a choice of good primary or secondary school. We need to inject more dynamism and bottom-up pressure for change locality by locality, particularly in the areas of greatest under-performance and parental dissatisfaction. We therefore propose:

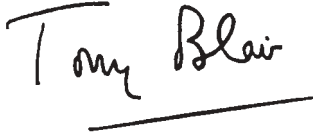


- At least 20 entirely new schools, to provide greater choice and specialist opportunities for London pupils and to meet growing demand for places.
- At least 30 new academies – independent schools funded by the state – over the next five years, both entirely new schools and replacements for existing weak or failing schools.
- At least 15 new 6th form colleges, offering greater choice and higher standards in post-16 education, especially where existing provision is poor.
- A bigger say for parents and local communities in the creation of new schools and colleges together with stronger incentives for such bottom-up change, including the expansion of successful and popular schools. For every entirely new school there will be a competition open to all – including parents groups – to determine who should run it.
- At least 290 specialist schools in London by 2006.
- To use the new Leadership Incentive Grant – worth £125,000 a year for nearly 300 London secondary schools – to improve leadership, and to support and, where necessary, change leadership teams and middle management to create better schools.

Radical reform will be focused most urgently on the two areas of Inner London where the problems are greatest – Haringey, Hackney and Islington in the north, and Lambeth and Southwark in the south. But we intend to promote improvement across the capital, with a new London Commissioner focusing in particular on schools failing to reach acceptable standards and building on all the existing strengths of London's education system.

We will also give greater support to teachers and head teachers in meeting the challenges they face, for example in tackling violence, disruption and truancy. Attracting more talented teachers and leaders into London schools is another key priority.

In all these ways, we want London to lead the creation of a new specialist system, building the confidence of parents and the achievements of pupils.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tony Blair". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a solid horizontal line that underlines the text.

Tony Blair

Foreword

by the Secretary of State

London is a great world city

It is an economic and cultural dynamo, whose success is vital for the whole of the United Kingdom.

It is a kaleidoscopic mix of thriving local communities, each with their own history, culture and connections and each changing with sometimes dramatic rapidity.

This great city needs and deserves a truly world-class education system, which serves every community and enables every person in the city to fulfil their own individual creative potential. That is what the proposals published in this document are intended to achieve.

London already does have some world-class universities, some world-class colleges and some world-class schools. It has some world-class teachers and some world-class educational facilities. And the educational performance of London's schools has improved significantly in recent years. Fewer than 11% of children in inner London achieved 5 good O levels in 1987 – more than 40% achieve the equivalent now.

But there are still far too many schools which are failing to inspire and lead their communities and far too many areas where educational aspirations are low. Too many parents are anguished and fearful, rather than proud or confident, when choosing their child's secondary school. And there are far too many who feel that either expensive private education or lengthy journeys across the city from home to school are the only satisfactory answer.

This situation is unacceptable, and it is the reason why we are determined to establish an education system which is truly world-class everywhere in London. That system has to be founded more on the creativity and diversity which is the city's strength, rather than uniformity. It has to provoke and challenge rather than accepting mediocrity. And it has everywhere to stimulate excellence and establish world standards. In short the exhilarating achievement which characterises some London schools must become the trademark of all London schools.

Though the Government is allocating more resources to London, and we are prepared to allocate still more, I do not fundamentally believe that London's educational problems are problems of resources. It is much more about significant and radical reform that will mobilise the vision and leadership of the London educational community to achieve educational excellence. We need to make a visible and radical break with the past to transform aspiration and create a culture of achievement

To that end the proposals which we set out today have three essential components:

First we have to focus on the two areas of London where we consider the problems to be greatest. These are the north London group of three local authorities (Haringey, Hackney and Islington) and the south London group of two (Lambeth and Southwark). In these areas we need to establish an educational organisation and systematic drive for



excellence which rewards success and does not tolerate failure. We have to develop a diverse system of academies and specialist schools which ensures that parents have a choice between excellent alternatives.

Second we have to work exceptionally closely with the schools which are failing to reach acceptable standards and to take whatever decisions are necessary to raise the quality of those schools, so that their local communities can have full confidence in what they can achieve.

And third we must strengthen, across the whole of London, the standing of London's education. We must celebrate and enhance the quality of London's teachers and create better educational opportunities for students. We will create a new and better deal for students, teachers and head teachers – so that London becomes seen as a highly attractive part of the country in which to study and to teach.

This document sets out the ways in which this strategy will be put into place. As we seek to achieve it, I hope that we will have the support of the whole London community to work in partnership to raise our aspirations and create the education service which the people of this great city deserve.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Charles Clarke', written in a cursive style.

Charles Clarke



Executive Summary

London – the Learning City

1. London's strength depends more than ever on its education system. Just as London is determined to be a world leader in other areas, so it should become the world-leading city for learning and creativity. That means a secondary education system that is not merely good, but excellent – matching the best anywhere. That ambition is the starting point for the London Challenge. It is one that we believe can be achieved within the next five years, with significant visible progress in the next three. When the very best of what is happening now in London's schools becomes the norm; when all London's resources and communities are fully engaged in the task of raising standards – then our aim will be realised.
2. We want a secondary school system in London in which:
 - Every school is good at the basics and strives for excellence in its areas of strength; has a distinct mission and ethos and the autonomy to manage its own affairs; and is committed to working with other schools, colleges and universities to share and extend this excellence.
 - Every pupil is able to achieve their potential.
 - Every parent has real confidence in a choice of local schools which can provide an excellent education.
 - Every teacher feels proud to be part of an education system delivering real excellence to young people.
3. Since 1997 there has been sustained progress. In tests, the proportion of inner London 11 year olds getting the expected level in English has gone up from 54% in 1997 to 69% in 2002. The proportion of pupils attaining five A*-C GCSEs has risen to 41% compared to just 11% in 1987. The gap between inner London and the national average has reduced substantially. Some schools with great heads are making rapid progress.
4. But a lot more needs to be done. In inner city London, the choice of where to send your child to secondary school is often the most agonising decision parents have to face. Everyone rightly wants to attend a good school with an achievement culture which reflects the expectations and ambitions of its pupils and staff. In London, the choice is often resolved by going private, moving house or criss-crossing London on hour long journeys. For those who live in areas with several inadequate local schools, the choice is especially painful. For these parents, incremental change is not sufficient. We need to do things differently.
5. We believe that now is the moment to seize and so for the first time we have a Commissioner, Tim Brighouse, whose focus is to work with all the agencies – particularly the boroughs and the schools themselves – to bring about a step change in secondary schools' success. We need to harness the dynamism and innovation in the system to meet the scale of the challenge. We want London to pioneer the creation of the new specialist system, to lead the way in taking advantage of new freedoms for schools and to become a place which responds rapidly to parents' wishes through innovative forms of new provision. This strategy seeks to build on all that is now good in London's schools and on the progress of some of the fastest improving areas of the country. It has three crucial components.

Transforming Key Areas

6. Some areas of London face very great challenges in improving results. There will be a relentless drive to turn round failure in the most challenged areas, where neighbourhood renewal and joined up policies are essential to make the best of school improvement. We are going to focus on the areas in five boroughs – Islington, Haringey, Southwark, Hackney, Lambeth – where there is much to be done and which include many of the secondary schools facing the greatest challenges. In these areas we seek a genuine transformation.
7. The change we seek is cultural. It is a step change in aspiration and expectation. Everything in this strategy will support that. But in addition, we will target our investment sharply, to make a visible and striking break with the past. We intend to work with local authorities to develop a plan for the future of these areas which will include some or all of the following:
 - Investment in **academies** – independent schools fully funded by the state – focused in significant numbers to transform the landscape of education.
 - Other **new schools** – particularly where many pupils leave an area for their secondary education – with competitions open to all (including parents’ groups, churches and voluntary groups, for example) to determine who will provide the school.
 - Increased **sixth form** provision – including new sixth form colleges and school sixth forms – in places where little is currently available.
 - Targeted use of **‘extended’ schools** – open in the evening and at weekends, providing a full range of services and support to students and their families and breaking down barriers to achievement.
 - The creation of the **new specialist system**, with every secondary school specialising in an area of strength and together providing a coherent offer to parents.
8. Through these changes, we seek a decisive break with the past and a new future of opportunity and excellence for the young people of these areas.

The Keys to Success

9. Many London schools serve very deprived communities. Some have over a long period found it hard to develop a strong culture of achievement. For the London Challenge to succeed, we need these most challenged schools to succeed. They are the front line in the attempt to break the link between deprivation and underperformance – the ‘Keys to Success’.
10. Nationally, the Government has said that by 2006, there must be no secondary school where fewer than 25% of young people achieve 5 A*-C GCSEs. Currently, about 40 schools in London are below this target. They are very varied. Most face considerable challenges, often taking in children who fell behind at primary school. Some have taken considerable steps forward and are improving fast – on ‘value added’ measures, some are scoring well. Still others, despite their best efforts, have not been able to establish a culture of achievement.
11. Each school will have a tailor made support programme and heads with energy, commitment and a record of leadership success. With LEAs and the schools, we will identify the programmes in this strategy that can back rapid improvement:
 - For some schools, becoming an **academy** – fully rebuilt and with a committed sponsor.
 - For some, a new start will provide the best means of making a rapid and significant step forward.
 - For some, **federation** with another school, as a means of providing support and leadership capacity to schools facing real challenges.

- The **Leadership Incentive Grant**, which provides a significant opportunity to ensure that schools have the head and the teachers able to lead subjects and year groups, properly supported, including through a £7.5m package of leadership support.
- For schools where there is a need to strengthen support outside the classroom, the chance to become an **'extended' school**, offering a range of services to students and their families.
- For schools where there is a need to strengthen middle leadership and teaching and learning, the opportunity to employ the highly skilled **'Commissioner's Teachers'** described below.

A Better Deal for London

12. This targeted work is crucial to the success of the London Challenge. But so too is the work we will undertake for the whole of London.

A better deal for London students

13. Each London child deserves a personalised education tailored to their needs, with an understanding of the level they are achieving and what they need to do to achieve more, support to develop special talents and extra help to those falling behind. Across London, we want to raise aspirations, engage more young people with the opportunities and the wealth of resources that London provides and make sure that all London students experience the advantages that learning in London can provide.
 - London students will routinely take advantage of a wide range of sporting, cultural and business opportunities, making best use of the capital's rich assets through a new **London Student Pledge**.
 - There will be a dedicated **London Gifted and Talented Centre** as part of a £10m drive to improve provision for gifted and talented young people.
 - There will be **extended 'dawn till dusk' provision** with new opportunities for after-school clubs, extra tutorial support and more school sport.
 - There will be a crackdown on bullying, and all forms of disruption, which create unacceptable barriers to learning, through the **Behaviour Improvement Programme**.
 - There will be a new **London schools website**, giving every parent and pupil all the information they need to choose a secondary school in one place.

A better deal for London teachers

14. We want London to be recognised, as in many other professions, as the peak of the teaching profession. London's schools have been held together by outstanding teachers and leaders committing their careers to the city's schools. This document therefore sets out a radical strategy for attracting the best heads and teachers to the capital and keeping them there. London schools will increasingly be seen as the most exciting places to teach, with high challenges and professional rewards:
 - **Chartered London Teacher status**, for teachers who develop their skills and meet a demanding set of standards, will reward expert teachers who remain teaching in London.
 - A targeted programme will enable the potential future leaders of London's education service to afford family homes through a **mortgage guarantee scheme**.

- **Teach First** will bring 200 of the brightest and best graduates from our top universities into teaching in its first year – and many more thereafter.
- London teachers will benefit rapidly from greater support and a **remodelled workforce**, so that they can focus on the core professional tasks that only they can do and are backed by effective support staff within the classroom and outside.
- Some of London's best teachers will be working in some of its most challenging schools, as part of a new cadre of **London Commissioner's teachers** – advanced skills teachers recruited and rewarded to take on some of London's toughest challenges.

The London Leader

15. We want to send a clear message to the successful, dynamic heads in London: you will have maximum freedoms required to deliver high standards. The length of the school day, the type of lessons, the pattern of the timetable, partnerships with business, the involvement of parents, the ethos of the school, the recruitment and retention of staff, ways of making good behaviour the norm and bad behaviour unacceptable, use of classroom assistants, the shape of the curriculum – these are all ripe for school by school innovation.
16. Just as we need London's teachers to be leaders of the profession, so we need its school leaders to be amongst the very best in the country. We will:
 - Use the **Leadership Incentive Grant** (LIG) to secure the very best school leadership, supported by strong collaborative arrangements with other schools. LIG will be available to 279 of London's 411 secondary schools – and provides £125,000 per year over 3 years, to incentivise improved leadership, change leadership teams where necessary and develop good heads of subject departments and heads of year.
 - Introduce a **£7.5m package of leadership development** in London – including consultant leaders (expert heads who can work to support other heads), and development for middle managers, where problems of retention have weakened the pool of potential middle leaders.

The London School

17. We want London to be at the leading edge of the creation of the new specialist system – and to respond to the wishes of parents. That is why we will embark on the biggest secondary school building and improvement programme since the war. We aim to create a diverse range of exciting new schools – each with a distinct ethos, each with a culture of high achievement. Neighbourhoods in the capital that have not had a decent school for decades will see fresh schools starting up, bringing with them new hope for local communities. For every entirely new school, a competition open to all (including parents groups, for example) will determine who should run it. Successful and popular schools will expand.
 - Over five years, there will be **at least 20 new schools**, to meet growing demand for places, mostly built in areas where many pupils leave the area to go to secondary school.
 - Over the same period, **at least 30 new academies** – independent schools fully funded by the state – providing new opportunities where existing schools' performance is low.
 - By 2006, **at least 290 specialist schools** in London.
 - Over the next year, **21 'full service' extended schools** – schools providing a full range of services (such as study support, after-school activities, childcare, adult learning and health and social services) to young people and their parents – breaking down the barriers to learning.

- Over three years, **15-20 new sixth forms or sixth form colleges**, particularly in areas where sixth form provision is not extensive.
- We will launch a **Business Challenge**, to encourage employers and City firms to get behind London schools and ensure that every school is backed by support from a business; and make London's higher education institutions an integral part of the London Challenge – working in partnership with schools to raise aspiration and opportunity.

Learning and Teaching in London

18. We want to help tackle the major learning challenges that London faces: improving transition between primary and secondary school so that pupils make faster progress at the start of secondary education; and enabling the lowest achieving groups to achieve more. We will:
 - **Test a shortened Key Stage 3 (2 rather than 3 years) in 20 London schools** – focusing on improved transition, and seeking to accelerate progress at the start of secondary school.
 - Introduce **new support for transition** between primary and secondary school and develop and implement innovative ways to improve the start of secondary school for young people – looking at the curriculum, timetable, buildings and environment of schools.
 - Pilot a new **package to raise the attainment of currently low achieving groups** and particularly African-Caribbean and white working class boys; new work to help schools with high levels of pupil turnover; and new catch-up materials for those who fall behind.
 - Ensure that London leads the way in the implementation of the 14-19 agenda.

Supporting Change

19. London's schools receive support from a variety of sources – but particularly from London's 33 LEAs. Because of their small size, some of these authorities can be fragile. We want to help to overcome this fragility and make sure that support for schools is as robust and consistent as possible. We will build a programme designed to promote real and permanent collaboration between LEAs to strengthen their school improvement arrangements; and appoint a group of London Challenge Advisers to ensure that the programme is delivered on the ground.
20. All this amounts to a policy of ever higher standards, better behaviour in the classroom and more choice for parents. In some areas too many parents have opted out of local schools. For them incremental change is no longer sufficient. Parents will return only if they see significant and radical change.
21. We believe in collective provision and popular public services in which every hard-working family in London has a stake. That requires us to tackle disadvantage, to achieve equity, and progressively higher standards to increase excellence. The only route to excellence and equality today in secondary education is radical reform.
22. Crucial to this effort are London's teachers. Their daily efforts and skills change children's life chances. Their work will shape London's future – and the London Challenge represents our determination to get behind their efforts.

The London Challenge

- 1.1. London is a world-class capital – whether in business, the arts, culture or sport. Its universities and scholarship are the equal of any. And it is a focal point for the financial, media and creative industries. Perhaps more than any other capital, it dominates national life. It has also long acted as a magnet for people from across Britain and overseas. Its long and proud history endures; and it continues to influence the reality and perceptions of Britain abroad. It is this dominance that makes economic prosperity and social cohesion in London so crucial to the health and wealth of the UK.

London – the learning city

- 1.2. With demand for skills growing and the city becoming ever more diverse, the strength of London's economy, its social cohesiveness and the opportunities available to Londoners depend more than ever on higher educational standards. And the factors that make achieving higher standards for all so urgent also make their achievement that much harder. So, just as London is a world leader in many other areas, it should be equally determined to be the world's leading learning city. Which means that Londoners should have a secondary education system that is not merely good, but excellent – matching the best anywhere. That ambition is our starting point for the London Challenge.
- 1.3. If London's young people are to have a world class system of secondary education, it must achieve three fundamental aims. It must raise their aspirations and enable these to be achieved. It must harness all London's resources – so that available opportunities match the talents of London's young people. And it must give every young person and their parents confidence that their education will prepare them for success in later life.
- 1.4. London's schools and colleges must therefore enable every young person to achieve the highest standards of which they are capable. They must offer them a real choice of high-quality academic and vocational routes between the ages of 14 and 19. Whatever their vocation, young people should emerge with the qualifications and skills they need to succeed. Standards must continue to rise for all by narrowing the achievement gaps between different schools and areas. London must become a city where every child can achieve to the best of their ability, whatever their class, gender or ethnic background. This should give parents confidence that local schools and colleges can meet their children's needs and provide them with real choices.
- 1.5. We have set ourselves the task of achieving this ambition within five years. Moreover, we hope to see significant visible progress by 2006. This is no idle aspiration. We know what the best schools do already; we are confident the rest can do the same. And we intend to harness the collective resources of London's higher education, business, cultural and sporting sectors to help raise standards. Once every community supports and challenges its schools to improve, our shared ambition will be realised.
- 1.6. London has the chance to benefit as never before from a Government commitment to raise secondary school standards. The National Primary Strategies have already improved literacy and numeracy standards, giving London secondary schools a better base than before. Key Government programmes such as the Key Stage 3

strategy, designed to improve standards at the start of secondary school, Excellence in Cities, the urban school reform initiative and the new Leadership Incentive Grant, introduced to raise standards of leadership in secondary schools, particularly benefit London. And with London's population expected to grow, the demand for new schools offers the chance to reshape provision.

- 1.7. The Government has appointed the first Commissioner for London Schools, Tim Brighouse, to support the first Minister for London Schools, Stephen Twigg. This document sets out the programme of work they will lead, with a shared ambition to put London at the forefront of national and global educational reform.
- 1.8. This strategy builds on the best in London's schools and on the progress of some of the fastest improving education authorities in the country. The Commissioner can make such excellence the norm. No individual has previously been able to look across the whole city to find new ways to make the education system work better, irrespective of institutional boundaries. (Even the Inner London Education Authority, abolished in 1990, only covered 13 of the capital's 33 authorities). The Commissioner will be a catalyst of change. He will promote innovation and new thinking, spreading ideas and good practice widely.
- 1.9. Some London schools are outstanding and some recent improvement dramatic. In primary school tests, the proportion of inner London 11 year olds achieving the expected level in English rose from 54% in 1997 to 69% in 2002 and in outer London, from 64% to 75%. There were equally large improvements in mathematics. The gap between inner London and national performance reduced considerably with some of the most deprived and previously lowest achieving areas amongst the fastest improvers. GCSE results have also improved rapidly in some areas. Between 1999 and 2002, Wandsworth saw a 13 percentage point improvement in pupils achieving five or more GCSE A*-C grades and Tower Hamlets a 12.5 point improvement.
- 1.10. We wish to see this progress replicated across the whole of London – outer and inner; west and east; north and south. Our strategy seeks to address the common problems of the city and build on the best. But this is no 'one size fits all' approach. We recognise local diversity and difference – and will focus our work accordingly.

Meeting the London Challenge

- 1.11. Ours is a three tier strategy: it involves transforming the educational landscape in parts of London with historic patterns of low aspiration and low achievement; supporting schools facing the greatest challenges to establish a strong culture of achievement; and putting in place changes across London that will strengthen the system throughout the capital.
- 1.12. Through the London Challenge, we will seek to create in London a system committed to the pursuit of excellence, with the dynamism, innovation and challenge that comes from encouraging schools to build on their distinctiveness and strengths. We want London to lead the way in the creation of the new specialist system, with much greater diversity of provision. Specialist schools have been successful first and foremost because they have provided a means for inspirational head teachers to forge a distinctive mission and ethos which is right for their school. They have used their specialist status to raise standards across the board. We want every London school to have the opportunity to become a specialist school.
- 1.13. We want to free schools to innovate, taking advantage of the nationwide deregulation of the system and new legislative freedoms. The length of the school day, the type of lessons, the pattern of the timetable, partnerships with business, the involvement of parents, the ethos of the school, the recruitment and retention of staff, ways of making good behaviour the norm and bad behaviour unacceptable, use of classroom assistants, the shape of the curriculum – all these are ready for innovation school by school.
- 1.14. As part of this new, more diverse and innovative system, we want to see greater innovation in the provision of schools. New academies across London will be an important part of that. In addition, new legislation means

that competitions open to all (including parents groups and voluntary organisations, for example) will be held when brand new schools are required. We want the provision of new schools to be more responsive to parents' wishes – so we will encourage LEAs to hold competitions for replacement as well as brand new schools. And we will strongly encourage the expansion of successful and popular schools.

- 1.15.** The benefits of this new system to individual schools are important. But there are much greater system wide benefits to be had where specialist schools work in partnership with one another and with colleges, special schools, pupil referral units, primary schools, middle schools, universities and the independent sector. We have to create a learning community with the learner right at its heart. In some areas, schools are already sharing teaching staff and undertaking joint professional development. Excellence in one school is being cultivated and improved through collaboration with others and then spread for the benefit of all.
- 1.16.** So, the London Challenge will use every available resource. We will harness existing Government programmes to help create a new specialist system; to transform buildings; to encourage today's best teachers to stay and school leadership to improve; and to tackle the distinctive challenges of teaching in London. And we will work with other public services to ensure that young people arrive at school ready to learn. But the London Challenge is not just for Government – it must engage all those who wish London's young people to achieve more – parents and universities; and those from the business, media, sporting and cultural spheres. We must all play our part in meeting the London Challenge.

Measuring success

1.17. We set eight simple measures of success:

- Better test and exam results at 14, 16 and 18.
- Reductions in the gap between the lowest and highest levels of achievement by schools and areas of London and by class, gender and ethnicity, while raising the level of the best.
- Ensuring no school has fewer than 25% of pupils achieving 5 or more A*-C grade GCSEs by 2006.
- Improvements to the quality of all schools and their leadership, as measured by Ofsted inspection and by 'value added' measures of the progress that students make at school.
- Increases in 'staying-on' rates for young people in education after GCSE and A level.
- Increases in parental satisfaction with education as measured by annual surveys.
- Improved retention rates for teachers in the capital and a more satisfied workforce, as measured in annual surveys.
- Increases in pupil satisfaction with education measured by annual surveys.

1.18. We set out below some of the key milestones on the way to achieving the vision.

On the way to our vision

● In London by September 2004.

1. There will be over 160 specialist schools using their specialism to drive whole school improvement; more than 20 schools and their partners will be part of the Leading Edge Programme – high performers with a track record of working with other schools to raise standards.
2. We will have established 6 academies (new independent schools, fully funded by the state) to transform standards in some of the capital's most challenging schools.
3. There will be 21 full-service extended schools providing a full range of out-of-school opportunities and services to young people and their families – from after-school activities and study support to family learning and health services.
4. There will be 14 secondary training schools taking a lead in the training of teachers.
5. New measures will be in place to improve the quality of head teachers and other school leaders. Consultant leaders will be supporting heads in the most challenging schools and strengthening leadership across London. 279 schools will be receiving the Leadership Incentive Grant and working with other schools to build leadership capacity and strengthen teaching and learning throughout schools.
6. We will have launched the new Chartered London Teacher programme to recognise and reward teachers committed to London schools and offer them the chance to access wider opportunities for professional development. The first London Commissioner's Teachers will be working in the most challenging schools – very highly skilled teachers helping them to build a culture of achievement.
7. Our London Student Pledge will offer every London secondary school student access to the best of what London has to offer.
8. The new London Gifted and Talented Centre will have begun operation, providing new and better opportunities to London's gifted and talented young people.
9. We will have launched new measures to engage business and universities with our challenge – a 'Business Challenge' to engage them in supporting schools more; and strong partnerships between universities, colleges and groups of schools to raise aspirations and provide new opportunities.
10. In areas of London with a history of low aspiration and low achievement, implementation of plans to transform the educational landscape will be underway.

● In London by September 2006 the educational landscape of areas of London with a history of low aspiration and low educational achievement will be being transformed, not least through the building of new schools, colleges and academies.

1. There will be at least 290 specialist schools, and 21 academies working to transform key areas of London with a history of low achievement and aspiration.
2. There will be at least 10 new secondary schools, concentrated where there is currently a large net outflow of pupils to other areas.
3. There will be at least 33 full-service extended schools, providing a full range of services to London's young people and their families.

4. There will be at least 28 secondary training schools.
5. There will be 15-20 new sixth form colleges – whether as entirely free-standing sixth form colleges, in schools or as autonomous centres in existing FE colleges.
6. Schools, colleges and universities will be working together to extend opportunity and raise aspirations. Local education authorities will also be collaborating to build the capacity of the education system to improve.
7. Every secondary student will be receiving the benefits of the London Student Pledge, providing them with greater access to London's wealth of resources; and every London secondary school will have a high-quality link with a business.
8. More teachers will be staying in London for longer, and the fit of the London school workforce to the curriculum will be significantly improved.
9. Parental perceptions of London's education system, as measured by annual surveys, will be improving.
10. London schools and LEAs will meet the 2006 'floor targets' for performance at GCSE level. The gap between London and the rest of the country in examination results at 14, 16 and 18 will have narrowed.

● **In London by September 2008 areas with a history of low performance and lack of parental confidence will have been transformed through a major capital programme. And differences of attainment between different parts of London will have been cut.**

1. There will be at least 20 new secondary schools, concentrated where many local children currently travel long distances to go to school – away from their local schools.
2. All schools which want specialist status will have qualified for and achieved it. We will have established at least 30 academies– focused on transforming provision in areas where parents have historically had little confidence in schools.
3. As schools, including those that met their floor targets in 2006, continue to improve, achievement gaps between London and the rest of the country at 14, 16 and 18 will have been cut.
4. Achievement gaps by class, gender and ethnicity will also have been cut.
5. Post-16 staying on rates will improve – reducing the gap with the rest of the country
6. Increasingly, schools will be operating on a 'collegiate' model – so that each pupil and teacher gains the benefit of belonging to a wider institution as well as their own school – raising standards and broadening opportunities.
7. Secondary school students will routinely take advantage of a wide range of London's cultural, sporting, business and other assets as part of their secondary education.
8. London schools will increasingly be seen by teachers as highly desirable places to teach – with high challenges and high professional rewards. Annual surveys of teachers will reflect this. Differences in retention between London and the rest of the country will have been cut.
9. Leadership will be assessed by Ofsted as among the most effective in the country.
10. Parental confidence in the education system will have improved further, as measured in annual surveys. Parents and students will have greater confidence in secondary education – and feel that they have real choice at 11 and in post-compulsory education.

2

The Current Position

2.1. London faces unique challenges, but offers unique opportunities. While dominating the life of the nation and its economy, the capital's workforce and population are increasingly different from the rest of the country. London's overall prosperity sits alongside significant deprivation. These factors make it imperative that the capital's schools achieve real excellence.

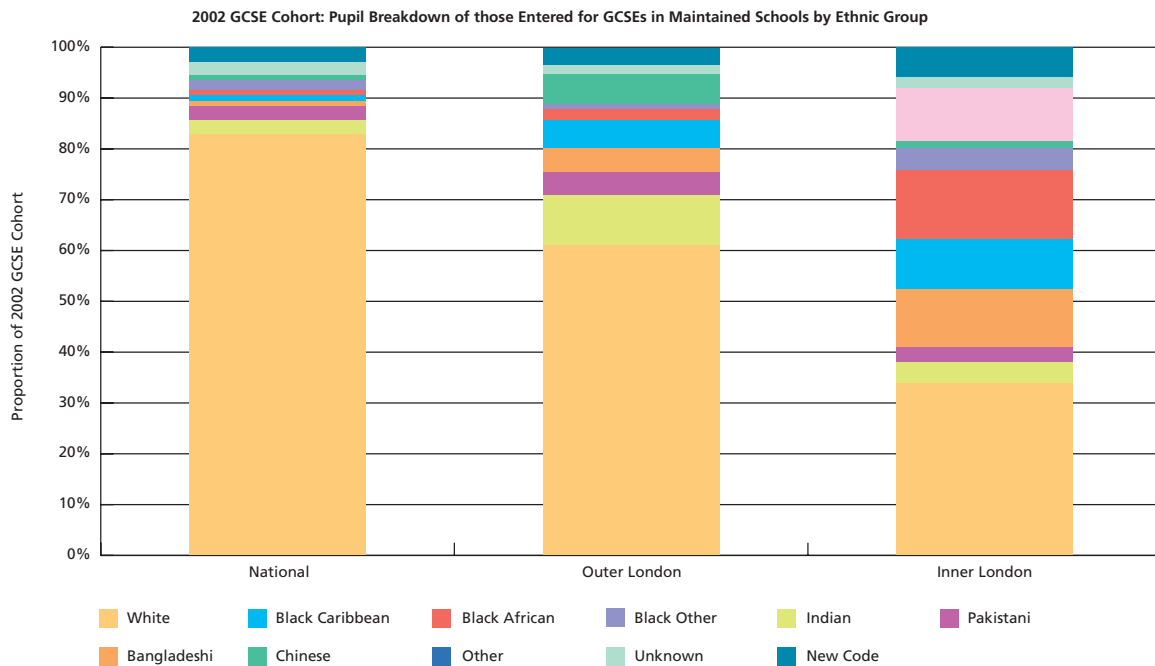
2.3. London is also the most culturally and ethnically diverse part of Britain. Its economic success makes it the natural first choice for overseas visitors and migrants. As Figure 2.1 shows, London's pupil population is significantly more diverse than those in other parts of the country. Recent research found 300 languages spoken each day in London schools¹.

London the City

2.2. London's history and diverse resources make it a unique national asset. Whether in sport, the arts, business, finance, the media or universities, there is a uniquely concentrated range of world-class facilities.

2.4. London is the powerhouse of the UK economy and an area of great wealth. During the 1980s, London wage rates diverged from national rates more significantly than before as the labour market became sharply professionalised. The resultant demand for high level skills continues to grow.

Fig 2.1 London is significantly more diverse than the country as a whole



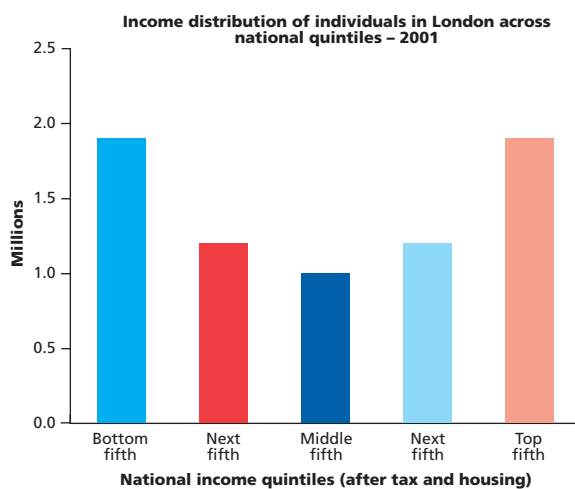
Source: NPD 2002

Produced: SDAU

1 Baker and Eversley (2000)

2.5. But London also has areas of severe deprivation. As figure 2.2 shows, the city has more people with very high incomes and more with very low incomes than the national average. And while central London has many people in work, unemployment is also higher than average in inner London because so many of those in jobs commute from the suburbs and beyond. As the labour market has become more professional, there has been a sharp and continuing fall in the number of unskilled jobs.

Figure 2.2: **More Londoners are in the top fifth of national income, and more in the bottom fifth**



2.6. London families also differ from the rest of Britain. There are more young people and fewer married couples. There are proportionately more lone parent families – in some council wards, as many as half of children belong to lone parent families; and at any one time, 37% of inner and 22% of outer London children live in a home where no one works.

2.7. So London combines two contrasting sets of characteristics: those of the wealthy, economically vibrant south east; and those of other large cities and metropolitan areas (perhaps in a more concentrated form). This is the social and economic context in which London schools operate.

London secondary education

- 2.8. We must be honest about the problems and challenges faced by London's education service. Many parents simply do not have sufficient confidence to send their child to their local state secondary school. And where they do opt for state schools, the transfer from primary to secondary schools is often made more stressful because they cannot be sure they will find a school they would wish their children to attend.
- 2.9. DfES research² found that fewer London parents apply to their nearest state school or confine their choices to schools within their LEA than elsewhere in Britain; and fewer get the school they most want for their child. As Figure 3.1 indicates, the consequence is that many pupils go to schools in other education authorities. This partly reflects the legacy of the Inner London Education Authority when schools were established in one borough to serve the population of another. But it also results from parental dissatisfaction with local schools.
- 2.10. This is also why significantly more London parents send their children to independent schools than the national average – 14% in inner London, compared to 7% nationally. Some parents even move house to improve their children's chances of admission to a particular state school.

Average performance in tests is lower in London than elsewhere

- 2.11. Within maintained secondary schools, average performance at 14, GCSE and A-level is lower in inner London than nationally (see Figure 2.3). Outer London schools now achieve above national average GCSE results, but significant differences remain at A level, where the national average point score is 254.5 per student and the outer London point score is 227.1 per student.³

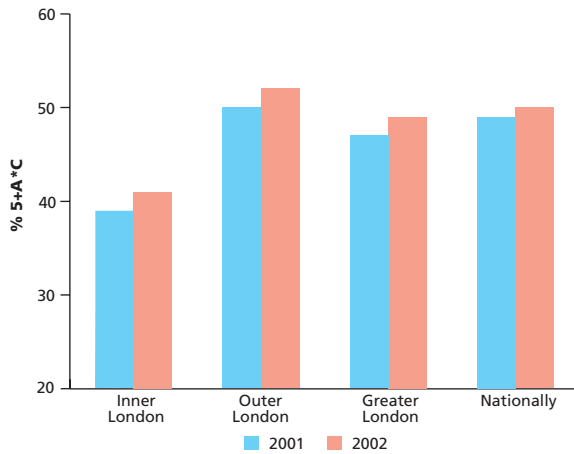
2 Flatley et al (2001) 'Parents' experiences of the process of choosing a secondary school', DfES, London.

3 Where an A grade A-level is worth 120 points, a B grade 100 points and so on. The A level point score in inner London is 188.5 per student, and in Greater London it is 216.8 per student.

- 2.12. But performance in London schools is improving. In 1987, just under 11% of Inner London pupils achieved 5 good O-levels (compared to 26.4% nationally); today 41% achieve 5 good GCSEs (compared to 49.5% nationally³). This reflects the narrowing gap between inner London and national performance. Excellence in Cities has

Figure 2.3: **London and national GCSE results: percentage achieving 5 A*-C GCSEs**

(Coverage: maintained, CTCs and special schools only)



been extended to 21 London LEA areas and results in LEAs which form part of that programme have improved at twice the national average. Nonetheless, there remains an 8.5 percentage point gap between inner London and national performance at GCSE.

- 2.13. One problem is that pupils starting secondary school in inner London tend to have had poorer primary school results than the national average. And then, as in other large metropolitan areas, they make less progress in the early years of secondary education (Key Stage 3) than the national average. However, they do make up some of this ground since their progress in the two years before they take GCSEs (Key Stage 4) tends to be substantially higher than the national average. It follows that raising achievement during Key Stage 3 – between the ages of 11 and 14 – is a particularly important issue in London.

But there are great inequalities of achievement in London

- 2.14. The average performance hides stark differences between and within schools, between and within areas of London and between and within different groups. The document accompanying this one sets out the variable performance of different LEA areas – including in results at 14, 16 and 18, and in the choices that parents make for their children. And as Figure 2.3 showed, there is a big difference between boroughs in another respect – while some attract more pupils from other areas to their schools than leave, the opposite is true elsewhere.

- 2.15. Analysing performance data by gender, ethnicity and free school meal eligibility (see Figure 2.5 and Figure 2.6), reveals great performance disparities. So for example only 15% of black Caribbean boys eligible for free school meals achieve 5 good GCSEs while 80% of Chinese girls not eligible for free school meals do so. Given the diversity of the London population and its levels of wealth and poverty, such alarming gaps are perhaps the single greatest issue facing London. At the same time, the evidence also shows that in London, while those eligible for free school meals do as well as the national average, those who are not eligible for free school meals do less well than the average for that group.

Addressing the underlying issues

- 2.16. There are three key challenges if we are to realise our vision:
- To transform the educational landscape in those parts of London with historically low aspiration and achievement. We will work with LEAs and others to build a future of excellence and opportunity with new schools, academies – independent schools

fully funded by the state – and fully refurbished schools.

- To focus our support on schools in the most challenging circumstances where it is hardest to establish a culture of achievement. We will work with LEAs, dioceses, governors and others to improve these frontline schools – the keys to the success of the London Challenge.
- To strengthen the system across the capital so that:
 - London is at the leading edge of the creation of the new specialist system.

- Every school has the staffing and leadership necessary for success.
- Aspirations are raised.
- London schools have the support they need in the classroom to meet the distinctive challenges and opportunities of learning and teaching in London.

2.17. In the following chapters we analyse the underlying issues facing London’s education service in each of these areas, and how we intend to address them.

Figure 2.4 Achievement at GCSE of pupils eligible for free school meals, by ethnic group

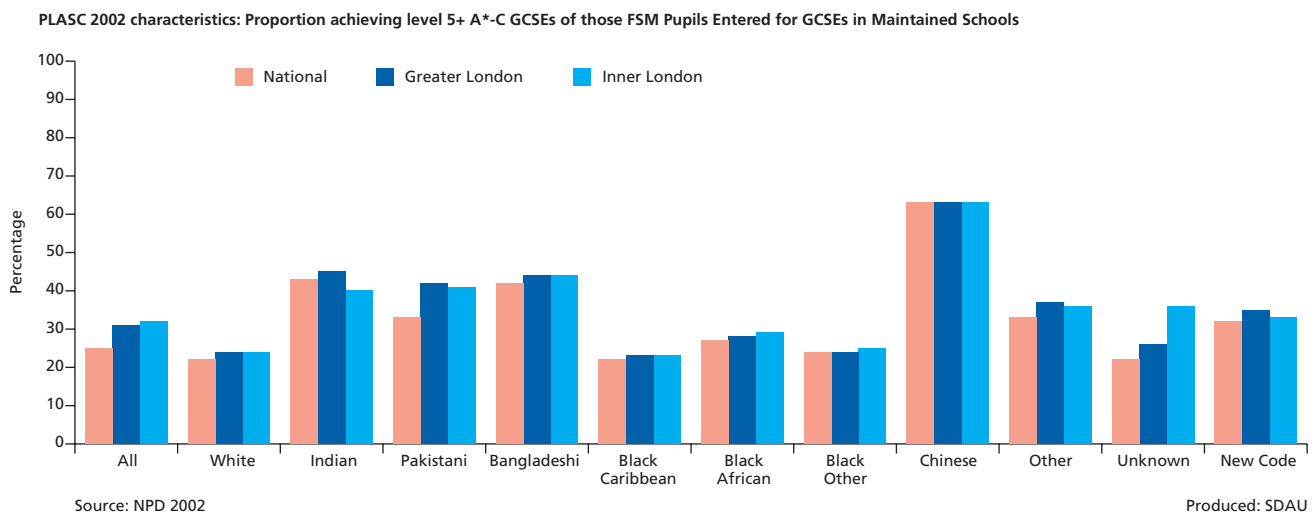
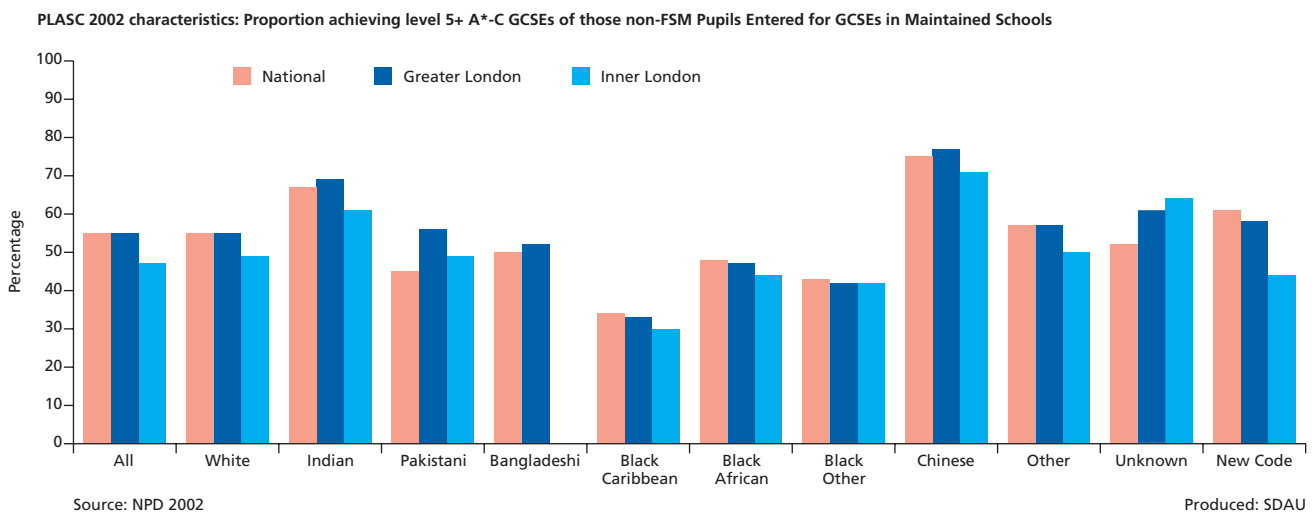


Figure 2.5: Achievement at GCSE of pupils not eligible for free school meals by ethnic group



Transforming Key Boroughs

3.1. Some areas of London face very great challenges in raising attainment. The success of their schools is crucial to the success of the London Challenge. So we will focus many of our efforts on those areas requiring the most support.

Transformation

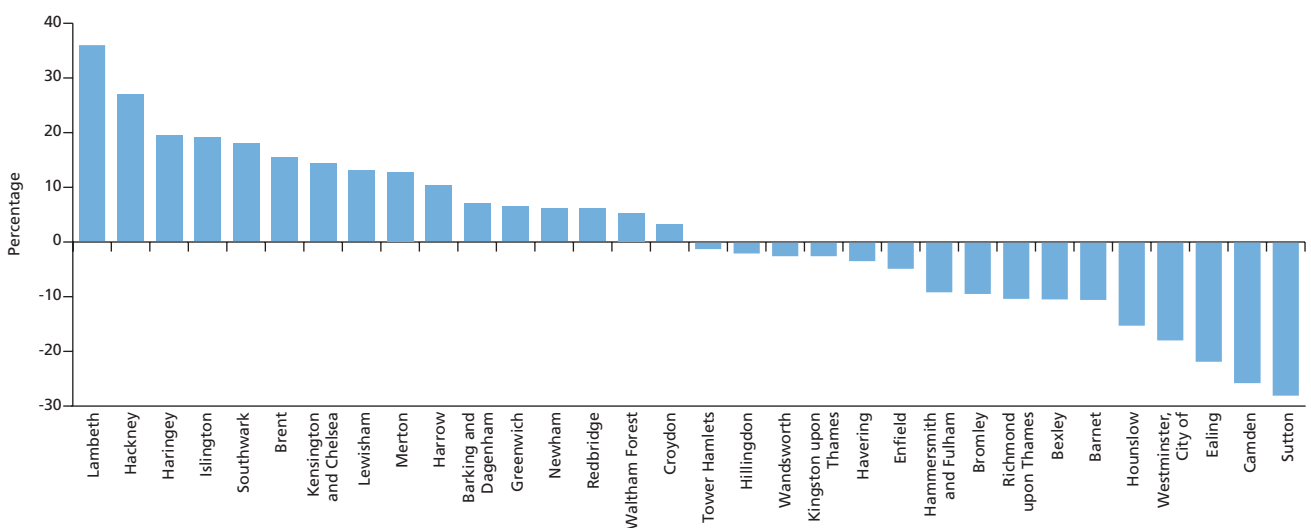
3.2. Those areas of London facing the greatest challenges often have large numbers of primary pupils leaving the area for their secondary education and few coming in. Figure 3.1 illustrates this. Of course, lack of parental confidence in schools is not the only factor that leads to this – in some cases, schools in one borough were established to serve the population of another at a time when inner London had a single education authority. In other cases, it is the result of rigorous action in the past to close poor-performing schools. But lack of confidence is often a factor.

3.3. Lack of parental confidence in schools may reflect historically low exam performance and the weakness of the LEA. But this lack of confidence can also make it harder for schools to improve and influences how the whole London education system is regarded. By transforming the capital's schools we hope not only to see genuine improvements in standards, but also to win back the support of parents.

3.4. There are three elements in this transformation: building academies and other new schools; developing successful changes already under way (such as interventions in some local authorities); and ensuring that existing schools succeed.

3.5. New schools not only meet a need for extra places. They also allow innovative models of schooling to be introduced and can represent a decisive break with the past. A new school can create wider change in an area. With new

Figure 3.1: Net pupils leaving each LEA as a percentage of year 6 pupils



leadership, skills and energy, it can change the local culture of education as well as improving the community infrastructure.

- 3.6. We will therefore develop investment plans with LEAs for such areas to make a step change in provision and expectations. These plans will include some or all of the following:
- **Significant investment in new academies:** potentially involving several academies in one borough, either as new schools or replacing low achieving existing schools. New academies will be required to work together and with other schools to secure wider change.
 - **New schools, through competitions:** enabling new providers (including groups of parents) to bring forward innovative ideas – re-engaging communities which have lost confidence in their local schools and where large numbers of pupils leave the area to go to school.
 - **Increased sixth form provision:** through sixth forms in new schools or through other forms of discrete sixth form provision – whether as entirely free-standing sixth form colleges or as autonomous centres in existing FE colleges.

Key areas

- 3.7. The London Challenge will help transform education in two key areas where disadvantage is particularly concentrated – one to the north of the centre (largely covering Hackney, Islington and Haringey) and one south of the river (largely covering Southwark and Lambeth). These areas face different challenges and their progress in addressing them varies. But by working with other regeneration programmes, including neighbourhood renewal and Local Strategic Partnerships, schools can both benefit from and support the wider transformation of the community.
- 3.8. In some areas, new solutions are already making a real impact against the odds:
- **Hackney** has a history of low school performance and LEA weakness and results

at 14, GCSE and at A-level have not moved forward significantly. Last year they fell back by 2.4 percentage points. Parental confidence in local schools has been low – 40% of pupils attend schools in other boroughs. But the new Brooke House sixth form college has shown that there is a real demand for good quality A-level and post-16 provision. The Learning Trust, a not-for-profit organisation, has taken over the LEA's education service. A new academy is being built in Hackney and we are discussing with the Learning Trust the possibility of significant further investment in academies. Our joint aim is to create a genuine step change in the provision available in the borough.

- **Haringey** has benefited from a successful intervention in the LEA involving the outsourcing of strategic management of the borough to a private sector organisation – Capita. After historically low test and exam results, results at 14 and at GCSE improved significantly in 2002, with some schools moving forward very strongly. Overall GCSE results were up by 4.5 percentage points in the last year. With Haringey, the London Challenge seeks to support these positive developments, ensuring they are spread across the borough.
- **Islington** also has a history of very low attainment, but has seen similar improvements in attainment at 14 and at 16. Overall GCSE results were up by 4.2 percentage points in the last year. CEA@Islington has been contracted to lead school improvement and other work for the borough. Several schools have seen successful changes. Islington's schools were oversubscribed in 2002 for the first time and there are plans being considered to build new academies and a new school in the borough.
- Many **Southwark** schools face very challenging circumstances. The outsourcing contract which followed intervention in the

LEA has recently been terminated and we are working with the authority to establish new arrangements. While GCSE results have improved faster than average (and by 2.1 percentage points in the last year), and value added in key stage 4 is very strong, attainment at all levels remains low. Many pupils leave the borough – though the new Charter School (see Box 9.3) has started to encourage more to stay and other schools are increasing in popularity. Two academies are due to open in Southwark in the next year – one an entirely new school, the other as a replacement one. We are discussing with the authority wider plans for more academies.

- **Lambeth** has seen significant improvements in examination performance—the proportion of pupils gaining five good GCSEs rose by 4.2 percentage points to 40.1% in 2002, following a similar gain the previous year. But significant challenges remain. While more Lambeth parents choose borough schools than previously, many Lambeth children still attend secondary schools outside the borough. Those that stay have limited A-level and other post-16 opportunities. We are working with Lambeth to provide new schools, including one academy already firmly planned and the potential for more, and to increase post-16 provision, supporting expanded 6th form provision in schools.

3.9. So in each borough, despite improvements, great challenges remain. The boroughs will not only benefit from the specific programmes aimed at raising their standards, they will also be supported by our London wide strategic work to improve leadership, teaching and learning, the school workforce, aspirations and the structure of the system. By working in the focused way outlined in this chapter, we intend to support local efforts to change the culture and expectations in these key areas of London to produce a visible transformation not only of the infrastructure, but also in what people believe can be achieved.

The Keys to Success

4.1. If the London Challenge is to achieve its goals, then the schools with the biggest challenges must become successful schools. They are at the frontline in our quest to achieve universally high standards and to break the link between deprivation and underachievement. They hold the keys to the success of the London Challenge.

Supporting schools to succeed

4.2. Nationally, the Government has set 'floor targets': by 2006, no secondary school should have fewer than 25% of its pupils achieving five good GCSEs; with a minimum for 2004 of 20%. In 2002, some 40 London schools fell below the 2006 target.

4.3. These schools often start off with lower-achieving pupils than other schools, or face more serious problems with pupil behaviour. Nevertheless, they are at different stages in their efforts to establish a culture of achievement. The first group is improving fast and scores well on 'value added' measures of young people's progress at school. Examples are set out in Box 4.1 and Box 4.2. This group shows what is possible. A second group has further to go, but is putting in place the foundations for rapid improvement. These schools have strong leadership, effective staff and a clear improvement plan, which they are implementing rigorously. Still others, despite their best efforts, have not yet been able to establish a culture of achievement or improvement in the school.

Supporting rapid change

4.4. The London Challenge will work with other partners to ensure that these schools have the systems, structures, plans and staffing they need

to make rapid progress. Where all the pieces are in place and there is a clear focus for rapid improvement, we will provide coherent and effective support to help schools to take advantage of the opportunities available.

4.5. Such extensive support could include:

- The opportunity to become an academy, as described in chapter 9.
- The opportunity to federate with another school, as a means of providing support and leadership capacity to schools facing real challenges.
- For some schools, a new start as the best means of making a rapid step forward.
- The Leadership Incentive Grant, described in chapter 8, so that schools have the quality of leadership at all levels and governance necessary to succeed, supported through collaborative arrangements with others.
- The programme of leadership development, leadership support and consultant leaders through the National College for School Leadership and the London Leadership Centre, described in chapter 8 as a means of supporting leadership teams.
- The chance to become an 'extended' school, offering a wider range of services to students and their families, as described in chapter 9.
- The opportunity to employ 'Commissioner's Teachers' where middle management needs strengthening, as described in chapter 7.

Box 4.1: Park View Academy

Park View Academy in Tottenham has just had a good Ofsted report three years after being given 'a fresh start' in 1999 – with a new head, a new team and a new image. The new school replaced a school that had then been failed by Ofsted.

Headteacher Peter Walker attributes the turnaround to early confidence building:

'When a school has a difficult, troubled history, a first step to recovery is winning the confidence of local parents that things are going to change. We set out with two aims – to create a success culture and to build a distinctive identity for the school. These have not changed. While we know there are no quick fixes, parents want to see evidence early on that things are going to change.'

'We ran meetings for parents in primary schools. We not only outlined our vision for the new school but also listened to their concerns about the past and their views about how the new school should be.'

'Students from the old school and potential parents were influential in shaping the new school's identity with a different name, a formal uniform, a distinctive Year 7 curriculum, and money spent on ICT.'

Through a £10 million building programme, Park View now has a computer-equipped community learning centre, said to be the 'most striking' building in Tottenham. The school has recruited a skilled, committed team of teachers and support staff who believe in the vision for the school and want to be part of it. Teachers are keen to stay: only one left at the end of the Spring term.

After three and a half years, the work is starting to bear fruit. Results rose substantially at KS3 last year. The school had more applicants than places for the first time in 2002. And the school is celebrating a successful OfSTED inspection. One Year 11 student says: 'I wish I could start again with a school as good as this.'

Having secured rises in the lower grades at GCSE, Park View is working hard to increase the percentage of higher grade passes over the next 18 months and aims to make the school one of the most improved in the country.

Box 4.2: Bishopsford Community School

Bishopsford Community School [in Merton] has had to disappoint some pupils this year, just three years after it opened as a Fresh Start school in September 1999. It replaced a failing school which had falling roll numbers, poor academic standards and poor behaviour.

The school opened with 400 students aged 12-16 years of age. This September it will have 1000 students and will be oversubscribed in year 7. KS3 results improved significantly in 2002 (maths, for example, from 41% achieving the expected level to 55%). GCSE results also moved forward but significant challenges remain. The school has had a significant amount of financial investment both from Fresh Start and links with PFI, with a total of £10 million invested so far.

Head teacher Paul Harwood attributes his success to a number of strategies:

'The essence of our approach at Bishopsford is a clear and consistent emphasis on learning and teaching. Our mantra 'Challenging all to Achieve' is displayed in all classrooms together with a checklist of features, which characterise effective lessons. We follow a common lesson format: setting objectives, expanding on them and reviewing progress in a plenary at the end of lessons.'

Achievement at Bishopsford generates reward. A series of end of term good news events gives students the message that hard work, politeness and punctuality and close to full attendance are not just worthwhile in themselves but will be acknowledged by visits to leisure centres, adventure parks and London highlights like the London Eye and IMAX cinema.'

4.6. Many of these schools will have received targeted support from the 'Schools facing Challenging Circumstances' programme, intended to help lower achieving schools to improve. Further support will build on the progress already made in these schools.

Working in partnership

- 4.7. Local education authorities (or those agencies which have taken on their role after interventions) will retain the key responsibility for helping the weakest schools to improve. They will be supported by the resources of the London Challenge.
- 4.8. No school in London should fail to meet the floor targets. More than that, we want these schools to show that schools can overcome challenging circumstances and enable their pupils to succeed. Some London schools are already showing what is possible. The Commissioner and the London Challenge will enable the lessons of these successes to be shared with all schools.

Learning and Teaching

- 5.1. The crucial test of any schooling system must be the quality of its lessons and how well its pupils are taught. Everything in this strategy is intended to support better teaching and learning. Our strategy must therefore start from a proper understanding of the challenges in the classroom. While there is no single issue unique to London, some problems are more concentrated and have much greater intensity in the capital, which makes the combination of issues facing some schools in London unusual.
- 5.2. Schools vary greatly in their performance. Such differences remain (as some of the evidence in chapter 2 shows) even when allowance is made for the background of pupils or their primary school attainment. Moreover, there is as much variation within schools between pupils of different ethnic groups or social backgrounds, and between boys and girls.
- 5.3. From the evidence emerges a challenge for every London school – to understand and to tackle differences in performance within and between schools. The success of the London Challenge depends on ensuring that **every** group in London begins to achieve at or above national norms (including those from better off backgrounds who currently do not). But it also depends on London becoming **the** place where the link between deprivation and underachievement is broken. Only when, for example, white working class and Black Caribbean pupils achieve well, can the London Challenge be said to have succeeded.

Box 5.1: Waldegrave school

Waldegrave School is an 11 to 16 girls' comprehensive in Richmond upon Thames. It has impressive results: 75% achieved five or more A*-C grade GCSEs in 2002 and results at 14 in English, Maths and Science showed an average of almost 90% of pupils achieving level 5 or above at Key Stage 3.

The school says it owes its success to:

- A sharp focus on raising achievement through better taught lessons – using every opportunity including teacher training days and staff meetings to share ideas about 'What is a Good Lesson at Waldegrave'.
- Extensive use of data based on pupils' previous test results to raise expectations of what students at all levels can achieve in the future
- All staff including caretakers, administrative and technical staff are included in reviews of performance so that everyone knows they have a contribution to make to the achievement of pupils

The school aims to work closely with other schools so that it shares its good practice and learns from others.

5.4. Crucially, effective schools in London are making very effective use of the data and evidence that exists to begin to tackle these challenges and to inform teaching and learning. They are using it to help every student to understand the level they have achieved and what they need to do to achieve more.

Excellence in early secondary education

5.5. London schools are more effective at helping pupils make progress in the run up to GCSEs, than in the early years of secondary education (Key Stage 3). This is because:

- London schools draw their pupils from a greater number of primary schools than average (over 40 schools on average in outer London, 50 in inner London), making it harder for children to make the move and primary and secondary teachers to share information.
- Many school timetables do not prioritise year 7 children, so their first experience of secondary school may be unsettled, making it harder for them to begin to achieve.
- At the same time, London schools (like others) prioritise examination groups. In hard-pressed schools, which may be struggling for the best staff, this can have a far greater impact than in those with more capacity.

5.6. We will work to build the capacity of every school using the approaches set out in later chapters. However, the national Key Stage 3 strategy also has a particularly important role in tackling these problems. It has brought a faster pace to lessons for 11-14 year olds and is helping teachers to improve their teaching skills. It is informed by evidence of best practice targeted to meet local needs, with consultants working directly with schools.

5.7. The London Challenge will seek to do even more by:

- Testing a shortened Key Stage 3 in 20 London schools, so that pupils complete the curriculum in 2 rather than 3 years. This

programme will try to make the move from primary to secondary school easier so that faster progress can be made in the early years of secondary school.

- Targeting support on schools drawing their pupils from many different primaries to help them share good practice in supporting young people to start secondary school.
- Working with the DfES Innovation Unit, so that LEAs and schools develop and implement innovative ways to improve the start of secondary school for young people. These might include new timetables which reduce the number of new teachers pupils meet, perhaps using the best primary teachers to cover core subjects; changing buildings to create more welcoming primary-style environments for the youngest children; and developing smaller schools within a larger campus.

Closing achievement gaps

5.8. As we have argued, a key test of the London Challenge's effectiveness will be its success in raising the attainment of those who achieve least at present, including those from some minority ethnic groups and the white working class. The Key Stage 3 strategy includes targets to improve their performance, and offers extra support for bilingual learners – those for whom English is not their first language.

5.9. Over 40% of England's ethnic minority pupil population study in London. Young people from ethnic minorities make up a similar proportion of London's pupils. Yet pupils from African Caribbean and some Asian backgrounds achieve significantly poorer results than average. Some London boroughs are already working effectively to address these gaps. (See for example Box 5.2). And the recent DfES strategy document, *Aiming High: Raising the Achievement of Minority Ethnic Pupils* makes important proposals of particular value in London including:

- Publishing annual results achieved by different minority groups.

- Ofsted reporting on the implementation of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act.
- Improving training of leaders, teachers and others in the school workforce.
- Working to avoid disproportionately excluding pupils from ethnic minorities.

5.10. The London Challenge will support this work by:

- Piloting new Key Stage 3 materials and approaches to raise the achievement of African-Caribbean boys, to strengthen work with those for whom English is not a first language and to develop further support for white working class pupils.
- Strengthening school leadership and governance, ensuring that training promotes high expectations and focuses on the challenges of leading and raising the attainment of all pupils in an urban multi-cultural school.
- Ensuring that our new Chartered London Teachers (see Chapter 7) understand the best ways to raise achievement for all pupils in a multi-cultural classroom.

Helping schools to manage pupil mobility

- 5.11. Some London schools find it difficult to deal with a large turnover of pupils. Even assessing pupils' level of knowledge quickly so that they can be taught appropriately can place significant demands on teachers. Ofsted found that where more than 12% of pupils below GCSE age move school in a year, it becomes harder for the whole school to raise standards. Many London schools face even higher levels of turbulence.
- 5.12. The London Challenge will support schools with a high pupil turnover through the Key Stage 3 strategy, building on earlier work by the DfES and LEAs like Newham, to develop and share good practice in managing mobility. Through the national strategy, we will provide information and support to help schools to cope more effectively with the demands of a highly transient pupil population.

Box 5.2: Islington's strategy for achievement

Islington LEA's ethnic minority strategy seeks to establish where intensive work is needed and target resources accordingly. The strategy draws on long term trends of attainment for different minority ethnic groups, with particular attention paid to additional factors such as language, gender, free school meals, post code, attendance and prior attainment.

This allows schools to receive more precise information about where to focus their efforts – for example, on those in the later stages of acquiring English.

The strategy involves staff training, targeted intervention programmes for particular pupils and work with parents and specific cultural communities through supplementary and mother tongue schools where community members help plan lessons.

The strategy is funded through the borough's Education Development Plan. It has already shown results including above average GCSE improvement for Black African, Black Caribbean, Bangladeshi and Turkish pupils and more satisfied parents – the number of parents satisfied with their children's education rose from 83% to 94% and the number declaring themselves very satisfied increasing from 13% to 50% between Spring 2001 and Autumn 2002

Placing London at the leading edge

5.13. We want London to be at the forefront of future developments in learning and teaching. As new work is developed through DfES programmes, London schools will have the opportunity to benefit. For a start, this will include piloting four volunteer catch-up programmes (Reading Challenge, Writing Challenge, Mathematics Challenge and Learning Challenge) in selected London LEAs; new programmes to help teachers learn to manage behaviour better; and new training packages for supply teachers, teacher returners and overseas-trained science and ICT teachers.

Opportunities 14-19

5.14. The Government's recent strategy for 14-19 year-old education should ensure that every young person can continue learning after sixteen, develop the skills they need to succeed in life and fulfil their potential. London has a real opportunity to lead the way in its implementation. At present, too few young Londoners stay on in full time education, often because some parts of London have little attractive post-16 provision. But with so many schools and colleges, employers and training providers, London's young people have a real opportunity to succeed across a full range of vocations – and to realise the vision of the 14-19 plans more rapidly than elsewhere.

5.15. The Commissioner for London Schools will work with schools, colleges, LEAs and Learning and Skills Councils to make this happen. Projects such as Greenwich's 'G-plus' arrangements, where colleges and schools work together to provide a coherent offer of post 16 courses across the borough, already encourage more young people to continue learning. We will ensure that others learn from such experiences. And we will increase the range and quality of sixth form provision significantly by 2006, particularly in areas where participation and attainment have historically been very low.

5.16. We will work with the Learning and Skills Councils, the London Development Agency and the London Skills Commission to strengthen pathways into employment. With them, we will seek to ensure a more coherent approach to post-14 education, skills and work-based learning.

The London Student

6.1. Our most important challenge is to encourage young people to aim higher. Each London child deserves a personalised education tailored to their needs, with an understanding of their current attainment and how they can achieve more. Those with special talents should be able to develop them, while those in danger of falling behind should get extra help. Across London, we want to raise aspirations, engage more young people with the opportunities and the wealth of resources that London provides and make sure that all London students experience the advantages that learning in London can provide

6.2. The aspirations of young people and their communities are often too low. Some communities remain insular: some people resist travelling on public transport or leaving their home estates. This insularity can restrict young people's horizons and limit their future options. Raising their aspirations is crucial to tapping their potential and improving their achievement at school.

Raising aspiration – the London Student Pledge

6.3. London has the potential to inspire and enthuse. Its rich history, cultural treasures, business leadership and sporting traditions may be a natural magnet for people at the leading edge of their career. But many young Londoners never experience this side of their city. We must draw on all the resources of the city to widen the opportunities available.

6.4. So we will consult on the detail of a 'London Student Pledge' – which will set out the key experiences that every young Londoner should

enjoy during their time at secondary school. Of course, no list is exhaustive. Nor is it intended to capture the absolute determination of every secondary school to provide good teaching all day, every day for every pupil. But it can awaken young Londoners to what their great city has to offer – and encourage them to be more ambitious about their own futures.

6.5. Some activities and experiences will take place outside school. So we will work with other organisations to help provide them. Parents and schools will have an important role in ensuring that young people gain these opportunities. As a basis for consultation, we propose ten things that every London secondary school student should experience:

- To have an opportunity early in their time at secondary school to have their achievements formally recognised, perhaps in a sporting, public speaking, essay writing or painting competition.
- To take part in a public event such as a sports match, musical performance or painting exhibition.
- To be involved in a school play, musical or reading either as an actor or by helping to produce it.
- To take part in a residential course or visit that will further their education.
- To have the opportunity to help others in a voluntary activity.
- To attend an artistic or sporting event, at one of London's major venues.

- To have opportunities to understand and celebrate diverse cultures and to extend their international knowledge, understanding and experience. Examples could include joint classes via videoconferencing with students from overseas, or exchange visits.
 - To engage in an enterprise that requires planning, design, completion and review. Examples could include running a school shop, building a new machine or helping with the design of a new school facility.
 - To make use of cutting-edge learning technologies, including online learning to extend their knowledge and understanding.
 - To contribute their views on London issues and have their voice heard.
- 6.6. By 2007, we will also guarantee every young person access to at least two hours physical activity a week (in and out of school). London primary pupils will get early access to language teaching through the National Languages Strategy. And we will extend existing work to provide more study support for young people, including through

Playing for Success centres, sponsored by leading football and other sports clubs.

Improving behaviour and attendance

- 6.7. Low aspirations can hold back a whole school, as well as individual students. For young people to learn effectively, they must attend school regularly. And for teachers to teach effectively, schools must be orderly environments where pupils respect teachers and each other. Poor pupil behaviour and attendance are significantly greater problems in London than elsewhere. London pupils miss 1.5% half-days due to truancy, compared to 1.1% elsewhere.
- 6.8. Figure 6.1 sets out the behaviour comparisons. Tackling poor behaviour and improving attendance are crucial for progress in London education.
- 6.9. When pupils behave badly or truant, they harm their fellow pupils as much as themselves. So we support head teachers who deal firmly with violent or disruptive pupils, including permanently excluding them. We have also made clear to independent appeal panels that we would not

Box 6.1: Mulberry School for Girls

At Mulberry School in Tower Hamlets, pupils not only get good results, they also have the chance to experience a wide range of cultural and sporting opportunities during the school day and beyond it.

Students are offered many after-school and holiday programmes. These include courses in film making, Islamic calligraphy, sports, martial arts, street dance, music technology, cooking, web-page design and jewellery making.

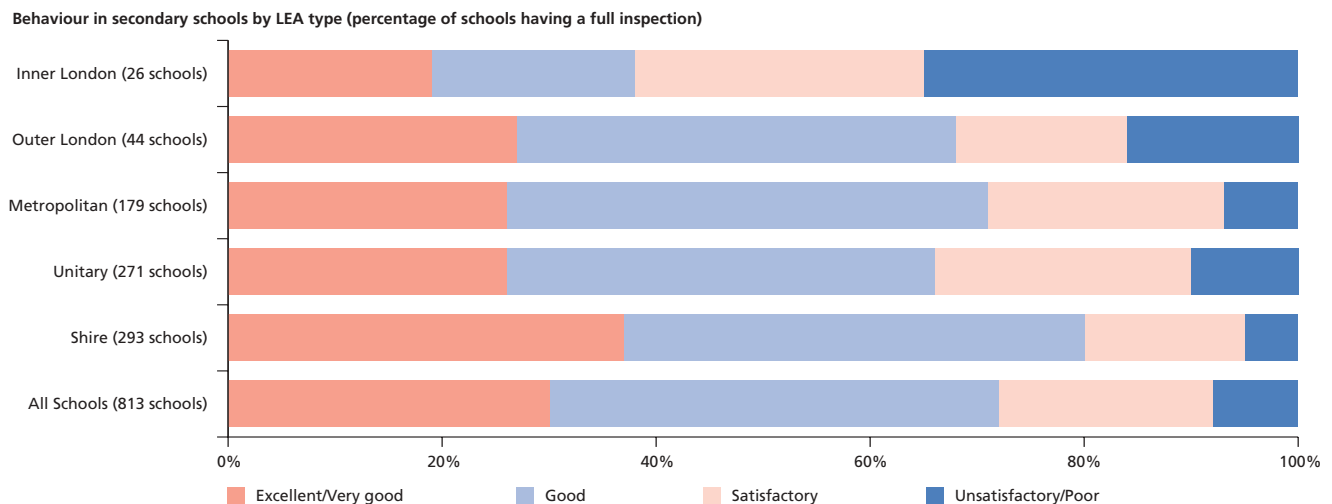
The Expressive and Performing Arts Project gives Year 9 students a chance to work with professional artists, while every Year 8 student has the opportunity to attend a residential week on the Isle of Wight, which is designed to promote team working as well as environmental knowledge and study skills.

The school believes this programme of events enriches the basic curriculum and sees such opportunities as an entitlement for all pupils. The activities are designed to increase their self-confidence, motivation and aspirations while they acquire new knowledge and skills.

Mulberry's OfSTED report in March 2002 said: *'The school promotes an ethos in which all pupils are valued and given the confidence to succeed, and has successfully gained the support of parents and the community in extending and enhancing the pupils' experiences.'*

Results at Key Stage 3 have risen dramatically. The proportion of pupils achieving level 5 or above in English rose by 19 percentage points between 2001 and 2002.

Fig 6.1: Behaviour in London secondary schools (percentage of schools having a full inspection)



normally expect them to reinstate a pupil who had been permanently excluded for violence – or for other serious offences such as supplying drugs.

6.10. We are acting decisively to improve poor behaviour and attendance in London. Eighteen London LEAs are currently part of the Behaviour Improvement Programme, and a further four will join later this year. This programme helps schools facing the greatest challenges to tackle poor behaviour. It helps them to prevent young people drifting into truancy, poor behaviour or street crime, while ensuring that excluded pupils receive a full time education. Senior managers receive funding to focus on behaviour and attendance. The programme also supports pupils at risk of exclusion or with serious social problems. Later in 2003, each authority in the programme will be required to develop an 'extended' school, offering a range of such services. We will continue to examine what further steps can be taken to support head teachers and teachers in dealing with disruptive behaviour.

6.11. Parents in London are not only key consumers of schools, but essential to their success. Their support for schools is crucial in improving behaviour, to the success of their own children and in helping schools to improve. We will be working with schools and LEAs to help them to adopt innovative models for engaging parents more fully with schools. An example is the 'Inspire' model – a project that involves families in joint

activities with schools to strengthen partnerships in children's education, particularly raising achievement in literacy and numeracy.

6.12. Choosing a secondary school can be one of the biggest choices parents and pupils face. There is a mass of information, but all too often it is not easily accessible and this leads to confusion about what choices are available. We want to provide London parents and pupils with information at their finger tips to ensure that they can make the right choices when deciding which schools to apply for. To do this we will develop a "London Schools Website" bringing every piece of information that pupils and parents need to know about each school together in one place. Every parent and pupil will be able to go into the site, type in their postcode and have a list of schools in their vicinity complete with full information about the school's standards and performance, exam results, Ofsted report, criteria for pupil admissions as well as the ethos and culture, specialism and other achievements. There will also be a direct link to the school's individual website.

Improving provision for gifted and talented young people

- 6.13.** The gifted and talented education arm (GATE A) of the London Challenge will raise the aspirations, attainment, motivation and self-esteem of gifted and talented London children and young people. It will extend the gifted and talented work already developed in Excellence in Cities schools throughout London, benefiting both primary and secondary pupils.
- 6.14.** We will fund a consortium to run GATE A from this year, including higher education partners and LEAs. A new London Centre for Gifted and Talented Young People will take the lead in ensuring that all London's ablest young people benefit from best practice in the city. Programmes will be provided virtually, as well as at the centre. We intend to maximise their effectiveness. The centre may become part of one of inner London's academies.
- 6.15.** GATE A will develop clusters of authorities and schools to spread good practice more widely and will involve the wider educational community and the business, sports and cultural sectors. Professional development will be central to equipping teachers to support gifted and talented pupils in the classroom. It will be supported by online resources. GATE A will also seek to ensure that youngsters from London are strongly represented in national programmes, such as the Centre for Gifted and Talented Youth summer programmes at Warwick University.
- 6.16.** As we seek to break the link between deprivation and poor performance, we must recognise and bring out hidden talents. Identifying gifted and talented pupils who may be currently underachieving will therefore be a priority. There will also be some 'open access' provision which will be available to more students than typical gifted and talented programmes. We also plan to pilot children's palaces with the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA) where children and young people can try new experiments or experience the latest high-tech equipment.
- 6.17.** GATE A will thus have an important role in delivering the Student Pledge for gifted and talented young Londoners. And through open access and the children's palaces, it will also contribute to the wider delivery of the London Student Pledge.

The London Teacher

- 7.1. Working in London is seen to be the peak of many professional careers. Sadly, that is not always the case in teaching. But if London is to be an international education leader, then those who teach in London must be recognised as among the best in their profession.
- 7.2. Yet recent Ofsted inspections have found that staff in London schools are significantly less likely to be specialist teachers in the subjects they teach than is the norm nationally. While this may reflect high living costs or the historic staff mix in schools, it is an issue we need to address. This chapter sets out our proposals.

Retaining the leaders of the future in London

- 7.3. Despite falls in recent years, 2.1% of teaching posts are vacant in London, compared to 0.9% nationally. Moreover, 3.5% of posts are temporarily filled in London, compared to 1.7% nationally and there are more overseas teachers in London. Teacher retention also remains an important issue for many London schools. And it is often those schools that are already struggling that suffer most from teacher turnover. Their lack of stability affects standards.
- 7.4. There is a further problem. The pool of potential leaders is significantly weakened because many teachers do not stay in London in the long term. When they want to buy a home and settle down, they often leave the city.
- 7.5. Much is being done to encourage more teachers to stay. We continue to support the Recruitment and Retention Unit based in the Government Office for London (GOL) which has helped LEAs address the problem. With them we are developing a London-wide approach to the more effective use of supply teachers. And the Teacher Training Agency is developing a strategy with the Association of London Chief Education Officers to promote teaching opportunities in London, improve recruitment and retention, co-ordinate support for overseas-trained teachers and help qualified teachers to return to teaching in the capital.
- 7.6. London teachers' pay has increased very significantly too. The 2003 pay settlement established a new inner London pay scale and provided for a 10% increase in outer London weighting on top of general pay increases. Most importantly, it almost doubled the threshold payment for good experienced teachers in inner London, providing a clear incentive for them to stay or for others to teach in the capital. In April 1997, a teacher at the top of the ordinary classroom scale in inner London would receive £23,379. Following the recent pay settlement, the first inner London teachers moving to point 2 of the upper pay spine will be earning £35,673.
- 7.7. Better pay will help London to establish a strong pool of future leaders. But high housing costs may still persuade teachers to leave London after just a few years teaching. The Starter Home Initiative, a £250 million investment in key worker housing, helped 2,800 teachers in 2001-2 to buy their own homes. More teachers have benefited from the initiative than any other group of key workers.
- 7.8. However, at present, teachers are leaving London at the point at which they would like to purchase a family home. If we are to strengthen the pool of middle leaders in London, then we know that

we must also find ways to help teachers to afford family homes in London in the same way that they already can in other parts of the country. Particularly important is that those who have the potential to become leaders of London's education system in the future should have that support.

- 7.9.** We are therefore working with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to explore whether and how a carefully targeted scheme could help teachers identified as potential future leaders of London's education service to afford a family home. We are, for example, examining the possibility of a mortgage subsidy for experienced teachers, particularly those working in challenging circumstances or in areas with real problems of retention, who commit to a long-term career working in London schools. Such a subsidy could cover a significant proportion of the costs of a mortgage and continue while the teacher remained teaching in London. We are exploring how private finance could be used to support such a scheme. We will announce the outcome of our work in the late summer.

Teach First

- 7.10.** A further significant new initiative is 'Teach First', a partnership between London First, the DfES, the Teacher Training Agency and London businesses. 'Teach First' encourages good graduates, who might not otherwise consider teaching, to work in challenging London schools before beginning a business career. Business pays the programme's running costs, and agrees to recruit those accepted by 'Teach First' after they have completed 2 years of classroom teaching. Training costs are covered by the Teacher Training Agency. Graduates accepted by 'Teach First' will be trained on the job, and will become qualified teachers within their 2 years. The ambitious programme aims to introduce up to 250 new teachers to London's classrooms by September this year.

Developing the school team

- 7.11.** While London schools have more teachers per pupil than average, other professionals could play a much greater role in encouraging attendance or supporting disaffected children at school. Individual support from teaching assistants could improve attainment. Moreover, teachers in London

Box 7.1: Kemnal Technology college

Kemnal Technology College is an 11-18 boys' comprehensive school. It currently has 1200 pupils but this will rise to 1500 by 2005. Yet in 1990, there were only 500 pupils and only 7% achieved 5 or more good GCSEs. By 2002, 56% of pupils did so, making Kemnal one of the most improved schools in the country.

Computers have been one reason for the school's success. Staff connect their laptop to interactive whiteboards. All classrooms have internet access. Lessons and homework are available online for students to access at home. And from September 2003 parents will be able to check their son's online diary for lesson content, homework and attendance.

Another reason has been an innovative approach to staffing. Five cover supervisors have been trained by the college to cover lessons where needed. Each has a laptop allowing them to download the appropriate 'cover lesson' from a shared drive. By September 2003 no Kemnal teacher will be required to cover lessons.

Double Maths classes are taught in a double classroom, by one teacher with a radio microphone and a laptop connected to two interactive whiteboards. The teacher plans and introduces the lesson, sets and explains tasks and sums up. Three 'assistant teachers' each support a third of the group during the lesson.

Meticulous use of baseline data allows the performance of every student to be tracked. Early outcomes indicate that retention of teachers has improved and the school hopes to improve its GCSE performance by 10 percentage points over the next two years.

face the same issues balancing time for teaching and lesson preparation with other tasks as their colleagues elsewhere.

- 7.12.** The national agreement, which was signed in January 2003, should provide a spur for action. Innovative use of staff time, backed by effective use of Information and Communications Technology, is already providing a better education for young people in many London schools (see Box 7.1). We will support London schools to learn from this practice through the implementation of the national agreement, and make sure that London leads the way in remodelling its workforce.

The Chartered London Teacher

- 7.13.** If London is to become a sought after career posting for teachers we must recognise the particular skills that are needed to teach effectively in the capital's schools. So we plan to accredit the skills and experience of expert London teachers by creating a new 'Chartered London Teacher' status, rewarded through the pay system for those who stay in London. We intend to ask the School Teachers' Review Body to consider this as part of the forthcoming pay round with a view to including their recommendations in their next report.
- 7.14.** The new status will recognise and reward effective practice, promote professional development and provide incentives for good teachers to stay teaching in London. For a newly qualified teacher, we expect the qualification to take 5 years to complete, and we will be looking at ways to accredit more experienced teachers over a shorter period of time.
- 7.15.** The standard will cover five themes:

- teachers' own pedagogy (or teaching skill);
- their own subject or phase;
- their contribution to 'whole school' issues such as attendance and behaviour, or extra-curricular activities;
- working with students and families from diverse cultures; and

- identifying, researching and meeting the needs of individual students.

Further detail of each of these themes is set out in Box 7.2.

- 7.16.** Chartered teachers will be assessed in the same way as is currently used for performance related pay eligibility, with an extended 'London threshold', usually at the same time as the standard threshold assessment for teachers. While many teachers will be keen to apply for this status, it will be an optional bonus.

The London Commissioner's Teachers

- 7.17.** We should deploy our best teachers to meet London's toughest challenges and reward them accordingly. This is why we plan to establish a group of 'London Commissioner's Teachers' – comprising some of our best Advanced Skills Teachers, mainly teaching the core subjects, and ready to work in our most challenging schools. Over time, the scheme will be open to other teachers with particular expertise, such as assistant heads expert in improving school behaviour.
- 7.18.** The 'London Commissioner's Teachers' will be employed by the school where they are working, but they will receive additional pay through the existing flexibilities in the system. As a group they will share experiences and professional development opportunities. They will also advise the Government on key issues facing London schools and be recognised as among the leaders of London's education service.

Box 7.2: The five themes of the Chartered London Teacher

Pedagogy	Over time, urban teachers develop increasing skill and knowledge in, for example: preparing and planning lessons with colleagues and for different age groups; formative and other forms of assessment; questioning techniques; classroom organisation; managing other staff in the classroom; managing pupil behaviour; and the use of learning technology. This element will show the teacher's progress in use of general teaching techniques required to high levels in urban areas.
Subject or phase	Every teacher needs to be expert in their subject or with the age group they teach (their 'phase'). This element will show the teacher's deepening knowledge of their subject or phase, developed through reading, study, teaching experience, attending seminars or working with experienced colleagues.
Whole school issues	Teachers will participate in a range of whole school activities, for example, attendance, behaviour or out-of-school opportunities, observe other teachers and contribute each year to the school's developing teaching, learning and assessment practice. In addition, teachers will, in groups (in a way agreed with the head), contribute to reviewing key school policies, such as 'teaching, learning and assessment', 'equal opportunities and inclusion', 'behaviour and attendance', 'parental involvement' or 'training and development, including initial teacher training'.
Working with diverse cultures	Each year teachers will set themselves the task of acquiring the extra knowledge of London's diverse cultures that will improve their ability to inspire and enthuse their students and support effectively bilingual learners (those for whom English is not a first language) – whatever their current level of English.
Identifying researching and meeting the needs of individual students	Every school seeks to make better provision each year for youngsters' individual differences and develop strategies to overcome the barriers to their learning. To acquire Chartered status, teachers should demonstrate how they have observed individual pupils or groups of pupils and monitored and evaluated their progress.

The London Leader

- 8.1.** Effective leadership is essential to the quality of education that a school provides. The evidence from Ofsted suggests that London head teachers are generally as effective as other heads. But the demands of leading a hard-pressed London school can be considerably greater. And we need more heads at the peak of the profession to lead London schools.
- 8.2.** An effective cadre of middle leaders (at head of department/head of year level) is also an essential part of an effective school. Effective heads of department lead learning and teaching; other middle leaders are the backbone of pastoral care. But retention problems have weakened the pool of potential middle leaders in London schools, so teachers typically reach middle leadership positions earlier in their career in London than elsewhere. We must support them to be as effective as possible.
- 8.3.** The Government's new programme to strengthen leadership – the Leadership Incentive Grant – is a crucial part of our approach in London. In addition, we are investing heavily in a targeted programme of support for leadership across London.
- 8.5.** The grant's objectives are:
- To raise pupil attainment through better leadership by using the grant to build capacity for sustained improvement.
 - To strengthen leadership at all levels: for instance, by restructuring the management team or tackling weak or uncommitted leadership.
 - To stimulate collaboration: for instance, groups of schools tackling management problems together, making joint appointments or improving teaching.
- 8.6.** Each school receiving the grant should work within a group of schools, review its own performance and have its assessments reviewed by its peers. The group should agree how it will raise the performance of its members with the biggest challenges. Where there is weak leadership, the grant can be used to change the head teacher or replace other school leaders. 279 London schools are eligible – two thirds of all London secondary schools.
- 8.7.** The grant will be a powerful incentive for schools to work together to improve leadership and raise standards. The Commissioner for London Schools will be responsible for advising Ministers on the approval of their plans for collaborative working. He will particularly look for evidence that schools are taking a collegiate approach, using some of their money to strengthen middle leadership and share good learning and teaching practice.

The Leadership Incentive Grant

- 8.4.** The Leadership Incentive Grant (LIG) is available to secondary schools in Excellence in Cities areas and those facing challenging circumstances. It is designed to transform their leadership and management by strengthening leadership teams through professional development and greater collaboration. Eligible schools receive an additional £125,000 each year for three years to help them raise standards.

Building leadership

8.8. In addition to the Leadership Incentive Grant, the London Challenge will invest a further £7.5 million in leadership in the capital. This will be directed through the National College for School Leadership and the London Leadership Centre. This additional capacity will be available to all London schools, but will be targeted to support schools facing challenging circumstances and to support the delivery of Leadership Incentive Grant plans.

8.9. Their work to strengthen senior and middle leadership will include:

- Supporting heads by identifying, training and developing 50 extra experienced heads each year to be consultant leaders. They will then support other London heads, particularly those facing major challenges, through coaching or helping to tackle particular issues, such as poor pupil behaviour.
- Strengthening senior management teams, by enabling the senior teams of 100 schools to undertake the 'top team' programme, targeting support particularly on challenging schools with relatively new senior teams.
- Strengthening middle leadership, by funding 1,000 London middle managers annually to undertake a programme of training¹ especially adapted to the challenges of urban education; and by enabling 300 newly appointed heads of department to learn from other schools in similar circumstances which are achieving better results.
- Identifying and supporting potential leaders and reinforcing their confidence and ability to make a career in London – including through an 'aspiring leaders' programme for teachers in their second and third year of teaching, to provide them with the skills to become effective middle managers.

- Supporting staff from ethnic minority communities to reach leadership positions, through the 'Shine' programme for aspiring heads, and by developing a 'Shine' programme for middle leaders.

Making London a centre of excellence for leadership and learning

8.10. Over time, we will also seek to make London a centre for leadership and learning. We will develop a network of specialist centres with the London Leadership Centre and City Learning Centres, state of the art Information and Communications Technology facilities normally based in secondary schools but open to other schools and the community. There are currently 20 Centres in London, with four more due to open by March 2004. The centres also help teachers to make the most of new technologies.

¹ The 'Leading from the Middle' programme

The London School

- 9.1. What then will the typical London secondary school look like in five years' time? It will probably be a specialist school making a unique offer to parents and pupils, sharing its expertise with other schools and their pupils. It will have world-class buildings that reflect the importance of its work with modern facilities to match. The school will be a centre of learning for its pupils and a resource for the whole community.
- 9.2. But getting from where we are to where we want to be will not be easy. Many London schools compete fiercely for pupils and for staff. Parents believe there to be a clear hierarchy of schools. And secondary school intakes vary enormously in terms of primary school achievement and family circumstances.
- 9.3. In London, schools whose pupils have done best in Key Stage 2 tests also:
- tend to take in the highest scoring pupils from their feeder primary schools;
 - tend to have fewer than average pupils entitled to free school meals (the key indicator for poverty)
 - tend to draw from very large numbers of primary schools – as parents from far afield seek to have their children admitted.
- 9.4. These effects are self-reinforcing and persistent over time, as schools seen to be effective continue to draw the best pupils from across the city.

Creating world class schools

- 9.5. The DfES publication *The New Specialist System* set out a wide range of opportunities for schools to help them to strengthen their ethos, act as a focus for school improvement and increase the diversity of the system. London can use these opportunities to create a coherent pattern of local provision and offer parents real choice.
- 9.6. Our first ambition is that every London school that wishes to do so – and is ready – should achieve specialist status. Specialism supports schools to strengthen their mission and ethos and develop real excellence in an area of strength – to raise standards across the school and to support others (including primary schools). For example, sports and language colleges can contribute strongly to improving opportunities in these areas in other schools. The resulting provision should give parents and young people real choice, while enabling schools to work together to provide broader specialist opportunities. 36% of London secondary schools are currently specialist, compared to 38% nationally.
- 9.7. Schools need to reach certain standards to enter the specialist programme, and we do not propose to change them for London. However, if a school is in an area with a coherent plan for development, and if it has itself a clear focus for its own improvement, then good quality applications will usually follow. Already many London LEAs and schools are imaginatively developing plans with a view to making the most of the opportunities of specialism and other government programmes. An example is set out in Box 9.1.
- 9.8. Every part of London should offer similar opportunities and choice. With the Specialist

Box 9.1: Lewisham

With their LEA, Lewisham schools are creating a collegiate of schools, which will work closely together to offer a diverse and exciting curriculum to all Lewisham pupils. The strategic partnership is designed to raise achievement, increase participation and improve progression routes across the secondary years with particular emphasis on the 14-19 phase.

The collegiate plans to combine the opportunities provided by several government programmes, including specialist status, federations, academies and extended schools. It will harness new technologies and the resources of schools, colleges and universities.

At its core will be a 14-19 federation of five schools including a new 16-19 school; a sixth form consortium (to become a 14-19 consortium); a strong single sixth form working collaboratively with others; and a planned federation of two new academies with a single Chief Executive and sixth form.

Complementary specialisms are planned across the partnerships to provide pools of expertise and resources for schools across the borough. These will link with teacher training and borough-wide projects where teaching and non-teaching staff work across different schools.

The breadth of specialisms and the collegiate approach will ensure that students have an entitlement to choice regardless of which school or college they attend – a choice of academic and vocational subjects and qualifications and of post-16 education and training courses.

Schools Trust we will support LEAs and Excellence in Cities Partnerships to develop equally coherent plans. And we will work with schools to ensure that they improve and develop their specialisms.

and historically poor standards, either replacing existing low-performing schools or as brand new schools. Most academies will have their own sixth forms. Investment in academies will be made where it can make the most difference.

Academies

- 9.9.** As part of this new specialist system, we plan 30 academies in London – state-funded independent schools supported by an external sponsor. Academies are being built in areas of deprivation

- 9.10.** We expect academies to work together and with the other local schools, ensuring through their funding agreements that they are a force for collaboration, so that every young person in the area benefits. Their impact should be genuinely transformational.

Box 9.2: The Bexley Academy

The Business Academy in Bexley is a state-of-the-art, purpose-built school offering a new and stimulating curriculum. The school aims to motivate students to become imaginative and productive world citizens who can benefit from and make a positive contribution to the challenges of the 21st Century.

The previous school was failing and had too few pupils. It had very low exam results, with serious discipline and behaviour problems. The new school opened as an academy in September 2002 and for September 2003 it is oversubscribed. Attendance has risen from a low base to over 90% since its opening.

Through a special partnership with business and industry, The Business Academy has established a Centre of Excellence that will enable students to gain a direct insight into the real economy, and enter the world of commerce, industry and finance. The school has its own trading floor built and designed with the London International Financial Futures and Options Exchange (LIFFE) Group, where students learn the principles of the stock market with real traders.

Box 9.3: The Charter School

The Charter School in Dulwich, in south east London was founded after local parents campaigned for a new school. Their campaign resulted from a concern about the lack of good schools in the area, which meant that by the late 1990s, up to 70% of Dulwich 11 year olds did not attend a Southwark state secondary school.

The school opened in September 2000 with 180 year 7 pupils all of whom lived within 1500m of the school and reflected the rich cultural and socio-economic mix of the local community. Ofsted visited the school in Feb 2003. They reported that teaching was 98% satisfactory or better, and 82% good, very good or excellent.

Their report stated: *'The Charter School is a very good school. Leadership across the school is of very high quality, particularly that provided by the head teacher. All members of staff are committed to providing a very good education to all pupils. They have created a secure and well organised school with a focus on achievement. The head teacher has a very clear vision based upon the principles on which the school was established. Pupils achieve well because of good teaching, a rich curriculum and a positive ethos, which encourages and motivates pupils.'*

Amongst the factors that have been important to the success of the school so far are:

- A very clear vision of a community school for the new millennium, open to the community for longer in the day.
- A modular curriculum with five modules per year, with assessment and target setting at the end of each module.
- The strength of teaching, with high quality specialist staff undertaking good forward planning.
- Personal tutors who oversee academic and pastoral progress of 20 pupils and meet with their parents three times per year.

New schools

- 9.11.** Population growth means London will need 20 new secondary schools by 2008. Building these new schools offers us the opportunity to enhance the diversity of the system and the choice available to parents. It means that new schools can be provided in areas from where there are currently significant outflows of pupils. And it gives us an excellent chance to develop innovative models of learning.
- 9.12.** School population growth is likely to be widespread in the city. However, many children and young people currently travel very significant distances to school. Some inner London families even decide to leave London altogether so that their children can attend other schools.
- 9.13.** New building is a major strategic opportunity to give young people the chance to study locally. So, new

schools will be built where there are large outflows of young people. By establishing good new schools in such areas, we can begin to build confidence in local schools, help to raise standards and reverse the outflows. This should not only reduce pupil journey times, it should also ease pressure on other schools and increase parental choice.

- 9.14.** We want these new schools to be innovative. New legislation requires LEAs to hold a competition when they require a brand new school to meet demand for extra places. Anyone, including parents groups and voluntary organisations, for example, can take part. We will strongly encourage LEAs to hold such competitions even when they are replacing an existing school and a competition is not legally required. Through this process, we hope to encourage new providers and innovative designs, as well as giving local communities a say in the chosen model. We will strongly incentivise

and support financially, bottom-up innovation in the provision of new schools, through the 'Building Schools for the Future' programme.

- 9.15.** This is part of our plan to create in London a system which responds effectively to parents' wishes. We will survey a representative sample of parents each year, starting this summer, to gauge their views. We will publish the results and they will be a key indicator of our success. We want new provision to respond to and meet parents' aspirations. In addition, we want more young people to benefit from the opportunities that London's most successful and popular schools provide. We will therefore encourage these schools to expand, where they wish to do so. We will provide financial incentives for the expansion of successful and popular schools by guiding LEAs to prioritise this in allocating capital to schools.

Sixth forms

- 9.16.** In some parts of London, there is very little good sixth form provision and most A-level students leave their local area to study. This has seriously affected parental confidence in local education. But it has also led to fewer pupils staying to study A-levels. Every part of London should provide an educational offer to young people after the end of compulsory schooling that is attractive to them and meets their needs.
- 9.17.** One element of our new school and academy building programme will be to extend sixth form provision, opportunity and choice. Evidence from Ofsted and others suggests that 16-19 year-olds do best in discrete 16-19 provision – whether this is in a school sixth form, a sixth form college or in a free-standing centre within a larger college. The five London Local Learning and Skills Councils are already working to improve the quality and extent of post-16 provision, and to provide sufficient places, quality and breadth where provision is currently weak. New school sixth forms and sixth form colleges are beginning to open in London. We expect 15-20 to be established by 2006. Some of the new colleges will be entirely free-standing; others will be discrete centres within existing FE colleges. They will be expected to build strong relationships with schools and universities to encourage aspiration and boost the numbers who go on to higher education.
- 9.18.** We also plan to transform existing London secondary schools through the Government's capital strategy. In *Building Schools for the Future*, we outlined our intention that all secondary schools should have facilities fit for the 21st Century within ten to fifteen years from 2005-6. The poor state of London school buildings and the need to raise standards in the capital make London schools a high priority for the programme. Greenwich is already a pathfinder area in developing this new approach.
- 9.19.** We will ensure that this major investment provides coherent patterns of education across wide areas, unconstrained by borough boundaries. It should also increase diversity, facilitate collaboration and help us to find new and better ways to serve local communities. We will ensure that it transforms London schools and encourages boroughs to work together.
- 9.20.** We will use the programme to develop innovations, which have already been successfully tried in other urban schools. For example, the 'small schools' model, which breaks large schools into more manageable and personal units, has been successful in the United States. All-through schools serving pupils from age 5-19 can avoid the problems associated with moving from primary to secondary schools. And careful design can enable younger secondary pupils to feel more secure when they move to a large new school, making it easier for them to concentrate on their lessons.
- 9.21.** Because London is served by 33, often small, LEAs, building and procurement expertise is too widely dispersed. Each authority can end up repeating the same mistakes and having to learn the same lessons as others who have undertaken similar projects. Economies of scale are reduced, too. For these reasons, we propose to establish a national procurement body. But there is also scope for London boroughs to work together to share expertise, buy materials and build new schools. We will support the creation of such partnerships.

Transforming schools with ICT

- 9.22.** London also has the opportunity to lead the way in its use of Information and Communications Technology. As a global economic and communications centre, it already has a communications infrastructure second to none. Used well, ICT can transform learning. As yet, relatively few schools exploit learning technologies to the full. However, the most advanced schools already make ICT integral to most lessons: lesson plans, teaching resources and pupil data are all held on the school's network and regularly updated.
- 9.23.** One good example is the 'ICT Test Bed' in Barking and Dagenham. Here, teachers have broadband internet access, which they combine with interactive teaching technologies, including digital imagers, projectors and graphics tablets, to engage and motivate all their pupils. Interactive whiteboards and other modern alternatives to the blackboard allow the best teaching materials to be available in classrooms at the touch of a button. They are already helping to improve the quality of lessons.
- 9.24.** More widely, all London boroughs have joined together to form the London Grid for Learning to deliver high levels of connectivity to London's schools. 25% of London primary and secondary schools currently have broadband connections, but by August 2003, this will increase to over 75%. The London Grid will host a 'portal' giving every pupil, teacher and school in London access to email, the chance to develop their own website, help with lessons and homework, and new opportunities to work with other schools. Its services can be accessed from home or school using any Internet connection. The Grid has initiated projects to develop new content and has negotiated special deals for its schools with several publishers.

Diversity and collaboration

- 9.25.** London's best schools can help other schools to improve. Our vision of diversity is one where each school plays to its strengths – and works with other schools and colleges to foster improvement. This can range from sharing good ideas and tackling common problems to running joint staff

development courses. Students should benefit from first-class facilities at other schools or colleges, or from studying subjects not provided in their own school. Such collaboration can allow improvements in one school not only to benefit that school, but to help transform its neighbours too.

- 9.26.** Such partnerships are already being developed. Schools in the Excellence in Cities programme already work together to solve common problems. Specialist schools share good practice as a condition of their funding, a process encouraged by the Specialist Schools Trust. And two thirds of London schools will be working together to improve leadership in the weakest schools with the help of the Leadership Incentive Grant.
- 9.27.** These programmes will help good practice to be shared effectively across the city. And through the London Challenge, we will encourage schools to go further towards a 'collegiate' model, where teachers and pupils belong not only to their own school, but are part of a group of schools through which young people have access to a wider choice of subjects and facilities, and teachers have more opportunities to develop their teaching and leadership skills. A collegiate may involve maintained secondary schools working with independent schools, colleges and universities, with support from business and the wider community.

The resources of the community

- 9.28.** Secondary schools play an important role in their local communities. Since their improvement is so important to London's future, schools need the backing of the whole community. This can have mutual benefits: young people can enjoy a wider range of resources while schools can offer wider services to their community.

Using the city's assets to support schools

- 9.29.** London's enormous resources should fully support the city's schools. Many theatres, galleries and museums see education as part of their mission.

Box 9.4: Unilever East London Schools' Partnership

Unilever is working with seven schools in Tower Hamlets, in a project designed to raise standards. A formal three year programme has been established with delivery and improvement targets agreed between Unilever and the partner schools, and reviewed annually.

The programme includes:

- personal mentoring – seven senior Unilever staff work with head teachers in one-to-one coaching partnerships;
- leadership and management development through Unilever management programmes;
- work experience opportunities for pupils;
- facilitating head teachers to meet regularly to discuss common problems;
- helping schools attain the Investors in People standard; and
- encouraging Unilever staff to volunteer for programmes to help motivate and raise the aspirations of pupils, including working with them to improve their reading and maths, acting as mentors and providing them with work-shadowing opportunities.

For Unilever, the challenge of working with schools is a personal development opportunity for company employees, with as much value for the company as for the schools.

London's Education-Business Partnerships already offer mentors and work experience for students, and the chance for teachers and business people to experience each other's working environments. We need to build on such commitment.

9.30. Through the London Challenge, we will launch a Business Challenge, intended to ensure that every London school is backed by business. We will build on the good work already underway (see, for example, Box 9.4). We want every school to

benefit from the support business can offer, including coaching partnerships between school and business leaders, support for governance, and mentoring and work experience opportunities for pupils. We want to challenge every major London business to become involved in supporting schools, as many already are.

Box 9.5: Gladesmore Community School

Gladesmore Community School in Tottenham, in Haringey, offers Saturday classes for 500 children each week. Youngsters can learn dance, languages, music, mathematics, science and sport. They can also benefit from extra exam coaching and specialist computing tuition. Much of the teaching is carried out by community volunteers, though school staff run classes for GCSE students.

The classes have helped improve results. The proportion of children achieving five good GCSE passes increased from 20% in 2000 to 30% in 2002. The proportion of 14 year olds achieving level 5 in English – the expected standard in Key Stage 3 tests – rose from 38% in 2001 to 59% in 2002.

The school believes in celebrating education. Culturally-based groups run courses alongside each other. People from different ethnic minorities meet so that volunteers can be taught new skills. They in turn teach others and new understanding emerges. Not only do children willingly attend on Saturdays but they are joined by a growing number of adults for whom it is planned to develop specialised language courses.

9.31. In addition, we will:

- Build stronger links between higher education institutions and schools, so that London's major universities work closely with groups of schools, sometimes within a single collegiate.
- Bring cultural and sporting resources much more fully into the work of schools – so that every pupil has the opportunity to experience the best of what London has to offer.

Schools as an asset for the wider community

9.32. Schools can also provide services to their community. And the 'extended school' offers far more than the traditional facilities for pupils and teachers. It is often open for much of the day and evening offering a wide range of extra-curricular activities and study support for pupils. Careers advice and youth clubs may also be provided for young people, with classes for adults too. Other facilities such as crèches or health centres may also be located on site.

9.33. We will be:

- Providing funding for 21 'full service' extended schools across London, to offer the full range of services to the community.
- Providing a co-ordinator to help develop such schools in the most deprived areas.
- Working with the Government Office for London and Neighbourhood Renewal programmes to develop extended schools in the most deprived parts of London, as a way of meeting the need for a wide range of services that are currently not available on a single site.

Supporting Schools to Achieve

10.1. Since London schools face such great challenges they need strong external support. The 33 London local education authorities remain the key agency for supporting London schools to improve.¹ But the fact that there are so many LEAs, some relatively small, can make it harder for pan-London issues to be tackled easily. It can be difficult to reach a strategic view, since problems manifest themselves differently in different parts of London. Nonetheless, results have risen significantly in London – from under 11% achieving 5 good O levels in 1987 to over 40% getting equivalent GCSE results in 2002. We intend to work with the boroughs to deliver change for the good of London pupils. The London Challenge will work as a catalyst to help them to tackle pan-London issues effectively and to develop a strategic overview.

The London LEA

10.2. London's LEAs vary greatly. Many are substantially smaller than the national average, and some inner London boroughs which used to be part of the Inner London Education Authority particularly so. Some cover areas of great deprivation, others areas of great affluence. Most have a very diverse population. But Ofsted has found great variability in the quality of support London LEAs provide. While some are as good as any LEA nationally and some of the areas with the fastest improving schools are in London (see Box 10.1), others have caused considerable concern. The Government has intervened to secure improvement with formal interventions in five boroughs in London –

contracting out services and creating new governance structures (such as the Learning Trust in Hackney) where necessary.

10.3. The small size of many authorities has led to great fragility. Even where they are extremely effective, changes in a small number of key personnel can have a very significant impact on the authority and on the service it offers to schools.

Developing partnerships

10.4. We believe that this fragility can be overcome, but that to do so, we need to tackle the insularity that afflicts the current structure. Collectively London has a large resource to support schools in the 33 LEAs. Were such facilities to be pooled more often, they could withstand personnel changes more readily. More effective, formal partnerships between LEAs and their external partners could provide more robust support to schools. Box 10.2 provides an example of work already underway in South West London.

10.5. We want other local education authorities to develop similar hard-edged forms of partnership that meet their needs. We will form a group of Chief Education Officers, with support from their authorities, to develop models of collaboration for London, looking particularly at school improvement services. Private sector providers can also play an important role in helping to build capacity and stability with authorities.

¹ In London, there have been 33 LEAs (the 32 London boroughs and the City of London) since the abolition of the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) in 1990.

Box 10.1: Tower Hamlets

Tower Hamlets is the fastest improving LEA in the country in terms of its GCSE results. In 2002 44% of its pupils got five good GCSE passes, up from just 8% in 1990. The LEA believes five factors made the difference:

Clarity of vision and ambition – strategic planning to clarify direction as well as widespread consultation and collaboration with key partners and local aspirations translated into ambitious targets. Benchmarking has been against national standards, not against the LEA's previous best.

A focus on what matters – concentrating on raising standards with an emphasis on *acceleration*. There has been a focus on learning from, sharing and celebrating best practice.

Strength of leadership – education has been regarded as a key priority by Council members who have made resources available to boost and sustain improvement. At LEA level, tough decisions have been made based on sound assessment including advice and support from outside. At school level, heads share high aspirations and several have national reputations for school improvement.

Support for key priorities – a School Development Team established (after extensive consultation with heads and governors) to offer support and challenge to individual schools and governors. An extensive programme of out of school hours learning in every school – homework clubs, weekend provision, and holiday revision classes.

Strong relationships and active partnerships – effective consultation across schools, a management partnership with heads and termly meetings with governors. A proactive approach to work with parents and consultation through the Parents Panel. Well established private sector partnerships, including through PFI, and new community partnerships, following the creation of the Local Strategic Partnership, including a project on attendance with the East London Mosque.

Innovating and working together to solve London's problems

10.6. Heads and Chief Education Officers from across London will work through the DfES Innovation Unit to help develop innovative solutions to London's problems, using their model for promoting innovation through collaborative working.

10.7. The issues they will seek to address include:

- The problems experienced by pupils moving from primary to secondary school.
- How our proposed 'collegiate' might work in practice.
- Special educational needs, inclusion and behaviour.
- Cross-London approaches to delivering major capital programmes, cutting costs to schools and LEAs and concentrating expertise so that London takes full advantage of our programme to transform the nation's secondary schools.
- How school admissions could be better co-ordinated – an executive board is already in place to develop pan-London arrangements including an ICT solution for co-ordinated secondary admissions. Over time it will look more widely at admissions issues in London.
- Recruitment and retention of London teachers.
- Helping to engage parents in their children's education and to develop the opportunities offered by the London Student Pledge.
- Better identifying children and young people who are not in school.

Box 10.2: Merton and Kingston School improvement services

Merton and Kingston LEAs are seeking to develop a federated approach to the delivery of LEA school improvement services. As relatively small boroughs, both LEAs see major advantages to a joint approach, including the opportunity to build capacity and offer a wider range of specialist services and staff, facilitated by the development of the London Grid for Learning making remote connections and communications much easier.

There are three key elements to the plan. First, each LEA would retain a small team of inspectors, to support, monitor and challenge schools and cover statutory responsibilities. Second, a larger joint team would work across both LEAs to cover a number of areas including: curriculum advice and support, training and professional development and research and development work. Third, a small intervention team would provide services to schools causing concern across the two boroughs and would deploy existing senior staff to support these schools.

Joining together to support schools

- 10.8.** The London Challenge will employ advisers who will work around London to ensure the programme is delivered. They will also act as a 'front office' for the Department – a single point of contact for schools to find out about DfES programmes.
- 10.9.** The London Challenge Advisers will help schools to develop their improvement strategies, and will help support them by facilitating collaboration between schools and making sure that Departmental programmes are working effectively on the ground. They will not become an additional layer of bureaucracy, but will ensure that those working with schools are building the capacity of the schools themselves to solve their problems.
- 10.10.** The Advisers will work directly with a small number of schools and their boroughs, bringing together all those already working with schools into a single team, and supporting all aspects of school improvement. The team will then help schools to diagnose their weaknesses, draw up plans for improvement and to implement those plans.
- 10.11.** This document is not intended to be exhaustive. It will be supplemented by the ideas, skill and commitment of those in schools, colleges, LEAs, the London LSCs, the wider public sector, business and the voluntary sector. Their shared efforts are making and will make London schools and colleges the places where, whatever their circumstances, pupils have the best chance of fulfilling their potential.

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