

The Annual Report of
Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of
Education and Training in Wales

2002
2002
2003



Estyn

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi Dros Addysg
A Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
For Education and Training in Wales



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE
BUDDSODDWR MEWN POBL

Estyn

© Crown copyright 2004

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

This report is available in full, or as a series of mini-reports, on our website at www.estyn.gov.uk.
Further copies can also be purchased from:

TSO Bookshop,
18-19 High Street,
Cardiff CF10 1PT



Printed in the UK on paper comprising 75% post-consumer waste and 25% ECF pulp

The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales

2002-2003

Made by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales
to the National Assembly for Wales under Section 5(7)(a) of the
School Inspections Act 1996 and Section 86 of the
Learning and Skills Act 2000
and published by the National Assembly for Wales





Introduction

This annual report describes the standards that learners have achieved, and the quality of education and training in Wales, from September 2002 to August 2003. The report also comments on issues that support the Welsh Assembly Government's aim to make Wales a 'learning' country. These issues include:



- foundations for learning;
- widening learning opportunities and experiences;
- widening learners' involvement in education and training;
- lifelong learning; and
- modernising practices in education and training.

This year, across most areas of education and training, many learners are making better progress and achieving more. They have benefited from improved learning opportunities and good-quality teaching and training. Learners have received better support and guidance to help them achieve their potential. As a result, more learners are gaining the knowledge and skills they need to:

- find employment;
- act responsibly as citizens; and
- enjoy leisure activities.

Overall, children, young people and adults are becoming more confident, active members of the community. They are in a stronger position to contribute to the prosperity and economic growth of Wales.

The achievements I have reported over the past six years are due to the hard work of many people, including managers, teachers, trainers, governors, parents and learners, all trying to do better. Nevertheless, I know that alongside these undoubted successes there are too many young people and adults with low-level basic and key skills (explained in the glossary). Some of our school-age children

do not do as well as they could or as well as pupils in similar countries around the world. Many adults without qualifications still do not have enough opportunities to learn. The gap in performance between one provider and another in both education and training is too wide in many cases. There are not enough learning opportunities in the Welsh language. These barriers to learning are holding back knowledge and skills development in Wales.

It is vital that the improvements and progress made over recent years are continued. More providers now make sure that leadership at all levels is focused on promoting equal opportunities and diversity in the initiatives they introduce. More providers have also been successful in getting their staff to think how they can continuously improve services and respond to the needs of learners and other customers. We must not relax these efforts as they have made a real difference for learners. However, this work alone will not be enough to overcome all the barriers that hold learners back. There are also changes in the nature of employment and in the expectations of parents, politicians and the public at large, which mean that progress must be accelerated so that more young people can achieve high standards, become confident, active citizens and have an informed concern for other people and the environment.

The challenges posed by the 21st century mean that providers of education and training need to engage fully with the modernisation agenda. This agenda includes examining traditional ways of working, of structuring our schools, and the time learners spend in them. I believe that we must get rid of those artificial barriers that divide education and training, and make sure that learning pathways have parity of esteem. Too narrow a view of learning means that learning in the classroom is given a higher status and often valued more than learning in the workplace. Changing the view that learning takes place at certain times, in certain ways and in certain situations, will help to make sure that different learning pathways are valued equally.

Too many of our young people are not involved in education, training or employment. Around one in five of 19- to 24-year-olds and about one in eight of 16- to 18-year-olds do not take part in learning or have a job. These proportions have stayed much the same for the last five years. Young people need more opportunities to follow courses that involve and interest them, and which they see as relevant to their lives. Increasing the options available to young people can improve their capacity to become adaptable and employable.

Our education and training can be more successful if providers and their partners work more closely together. Developing an even closer relationship between schools and parents may provide more opportunities to involve parents in planning, supporting and reviewing pupils' learning, which will better serve pupils' interests. Stronger partnerships between schools and the communities they serve may help to serve the needs of young people, especially 14- to 19-year-olds. For example, in areas of mid-Wales, some courses have focused on leisure and tourism, and in south-east Wales, some courses have focused on areas where there are shortages of skilled young people, such as construction and catering. Combining the forces of partners more effectively will allow them to share their skills and expertise. Above all, it will help to make sure there are better co-ordination and joined-up working practices at all levels of education and training.

There are already some good examples of partnerships, across traditional boundaries, which are improving learning opportunities. These partnerships are giving learners better access to education and training, as well as contributing to lifelong learning. Partnerships between **further-education institutions, training providers** and businesses are helping to introduce young people to new and stimulating ways of learning. In turn, this approach is helping to improve their attendance and motivation. **Community Consortia for Education and Training** (explained in the glossary) help those who provide education and training for learners over 16 years old to work together more successfully. There are some encouraging signs that these arrangements are helping partners to work together more closely and to have an effect on plans for the future pattern of education and training. Importantly, this co-operation is helping to overcome the barriers of competition that traditionally existed between providers. As a result, partners are working more effectively with each other, which benefits the learners.

More and more **schools** are at the centre of their communities, delivering not just education and training, but also a range of other services such as family support and health services. For example, with the help of **local education authorities** (LEAs), some schools are working with youth and health services to provide community facilities for the benefit of pupils and their families. These kinds of initiatives help schools to have a positive effect on the wider culture of the communities they serve. **Family learning** programmes in schools are also successful in helping children and their parents learn together. These learning programmes help those who take part to gain confidence and self-esteem as well as valuable new skills.

Some schools are making it easier for organisations such as playgroups, after-school clubs and **community-based learning** to use their facilities. The opening up of schools and other community facilities to the wider public can provide greater access to learning and skills development for the whole community. This provision may help to bring back to learning those adults who left school feeling they had failed or could not benefit from education. As a result, it could help to prevent them passing on to their children the feeling that education is not relevant to their needs or interests.

If we raise people's expectations of learning within the community and help them to gain skills, we must also consider how these people can help other learners benefit from their newly acquired expertise. By reviewing the roles and contribution that adults (other than teachers) could make to all areas of education and training, we can bring great benefits all round. The more people in the community who contribute to teaching and training, the more opportunities learners will have to benefit from adults with different skills and experiences. Reviewing the role of teachers and other members of staff in schools, including the potential contribution of groups such as administrators and learning-support assistants, could help reduce demands on teachers' workloads and release senior staff to concentrate on raising standards and improving learning and teaching.

In the following paragraphs I have set out some of the best aspects of education and training we inspected this year. Providers have achieved the highest standards when they share a vision for improvement. These providers also have a common understanding of values and principles that help learners to achieve excellence. I have also pointed out some of the areas where work is less successful and where learners should be achieving more.

Overall, more pupils in **primary schools** and **settings for the under-fives** are achieving higher standards than ever before. Most pupils reach the level expected for pupils of their age in National Curriculum assessments. However, by the end of **key stage 2**, pupils' attainment (explained in the glossary) in mathematics and their achievement (explained in the glossary) in the key skill of writing are still too low. Pupils' knowledge and skills in mathematics and writing can have a big effect on how well they progress in these and other subjects when they transfer to key stage 3. Girls still perform much better than boys in Welsh and English.

In **key stage 3**, there are some encouraging signs that standards are starting to rise after little progress for the past five years. Schools are now closer to national

targets in mathematics and science and have already reached them in Welsh. However, pupils' performance in English is still very low and is holding them back in other subjects. In **key stage 4**, progress has been slow for several years. Schools have not yet reached the national targets for GCSE performance. There are too many pupils of average and below-average ability who do not do as well as they could. While boys have performed better this year, they are still a long way behind girls in Welsh and English. The continuing fall in the numbers choosing to study a modern foreign language to GCSE level and above, is worrying.

Standards in using information and communications technology (ICT) have improved a lot over recent years. This improvement is because most schools have invested in IT equipment. Also, teachers are making more and better use of ICT to support teaching in subjects across the curriculum. However, there is still a lot of unsatisfactory work across all key stages. In some cases, schools do not make enough use of their IT equipment. **LEAs** could do more to help schools improve the way they use these resources. Lack of skills in this area could affect pupils' future prospects because using ICT is such an important skill for learning and employment.

Since 1999, there have been fewer pupils each year who leave school at 16 with few or no qualifications. Despite this encouraging trend, about 3% of young people still have no recognised qualification when they leave full-time education, and about 7% leave school with only one GCSE qualification or its equivalent. Lack of qualifications can seriously affect young people's employment opportunities, confidence and self-esteem.

Overall, standards in **further-education institutions** are not as good this year. Part-time students have improved their performance compared with last year, but full-time students do not do so well. Usually, part-time students are well-motivated and keen to study. Most **adult learners** continue to achieve well across a wide range of courses. Importantly, more and more adult learners think that education will improve their employment prospects and their enjoyment of leisure activities. Most of the young people who take part in a range of **youth service** activities do well. In **teacher-training institutions**, the teaching of most trainees is good. By the end of their course, most trainees are well-equipped to begin their teaching careers and help schools raise standards.

Most learners on vocational courses gain practical skills. They improve their knowledge and understanding of the area they study. Many clients on **New Deal**

programmes gain skills and are better prepared to search for jobs. However, too many trainees on **work-based training** courses do not achieve high enough standards. There is still too much difference in what trainees achieve from one occupational area to another. Too few learners in **further-education** and **work-based training** gain qualifications in key skills. In these areas, the teaching of key skills has weaknesses. Good key skills are vital to learners' employment prospects and lifelong learning.

In Wales, many learners benefit from good-quality teaching and training. As a result, we have seen standards rise in all areas of education and training.

Primary, secondary and **special** schools have exceeded the Welsh Assembly Government's targets for the number of good lessons. There are few unsatisfactory lessons. In many schools, teachers are becoming more aware that pupils do not all learn in the same way. More and more schools are developing ways of helping pupils to be better thinkers and learners. Yet, there are many schools where these developments do not influence the way in which teachers plan pupils' work. In these cases, pupils do not build well enough on the progress they have made and they do not make as much progress as they should when they transfer from primary to secondary school.

More learners are benefiting from the way that teachers and trainers match work to their learning needs and employment goals. In areas such as **work-based training** and **New Deal**, many trainers work closely with partners and so are better able to provide courses that help trainees to succeed in their aims. Many **further-education institutions** have successfully expanded their community and 'outreach' provision (explained in the glossary). This expansion is in response to the Welsh Assembly Government's agenda to widen participation. Many providers have increased courses at lower levels of study and expanded their higher-education provision. However, most further-education institutions have not yet developed enough links with industry to help them plan courses. If they did this, they would be in a stronger position to provide education and training that meet the needs of the local job market.

More and more education and training providers promote racial awareness and prepare learners to live in a multicultural society. They make sure that learners have equal opportunities and are helped to reach high standards. Nearly all providers have clear policies to support this work but some do not do enough to be certain that every part of the policy is working well.

Most **schools** are making the curriculum they offer more varied. In particular, there are more opportunities for pupils over 14 years of age to follow courses out of school. These changes to the curriculum are helping to reduce the number of pupils that schools exclude. However, school managers are not doing enough to make sure that these courses are appropriate to pupils' needs and of a high quality. One in three secondary schools is not fully keeping to the law on collective worship.

Care, guidance and support for learners are priorities for education and training providers. Most learners develop good relationships with teachers and trainers. The arrangements for pupils' personal and social education are good in most **schools** and **settings for the under-fives**. In other areas of education and in training, learners are well supported by good induction courses. They are helped to overcome personal difficulties and given good advice and support so that they can succeed. As a result, they grow in confidence and independence and show more responsibility in their own learning and actions. **Careers companies** help clients of all ages to identify and plan for their career aims. Advisers tell clients more about employment prospects and how they can improve their chances of getting a job.

More and more providers are listening to and acting on learners' views about the quality of their experiences. Through school councils and other means, **schools** are showing pupils that teachers listen to their views and that pupils can influence the decisions that affect them. In the **youth service** and the **careers companies**, young people's views are often used to plan improvements and help the services to meet their users' needs. If providers in all areas of education and training did this, they would have more direct feedback from learners about their needs and find out how they can help learners to achieve more.

Across all sectors of education and training, the senior leaders and managers of the best providers have:

- vision;
- a clear sense of direction; and
- shared values about how they will work together.

These providers are good at self-evaluation, which means that they know how good they are now, where they are going and how to plan to get there. This

clarity and strength of purpose has helped them to maintain high standards and to improve their provision for learners.

This year, subject leaders in **primary** schools and middle managers in **secondary** schools are playing a bigger part in leading and managing school improvement. They know more about the strengths and weaknesses in the teaching and learning within their areas of responsibility. They are also doing more to monitor pupils' progress and help their schools to achieve their targets.

In the **youth service**, many managers have found more ways to measure how well they are doing, which is improving the quality of the service they provide. In **adult and community-based learning** and in the **teacher-training colleges** we inspected, leaders are better at working with their partners to improve the quality of teaching and training. Across all sectors, leaders and managers are more successful when they work closely with their partners. Working together helps providers plan for improvement, share resources and achieve higher outcomes for learners.

This year, in **further-education institutions, work-based training** and **New Deal** programmes, there are some strengths in leadership and management, but also some weaknesses. There is often a big difference between quality and standards in different areas of the provider's work. Many providers do not have good systems to monitor and evaluate the quality of their provision and the standards that learners achieve. Often, there is a strong link between weak management, poor teaching or training and low achievement.

The overall quality of **LEA** services is generally better this year. More services are excellent and none is poor. The good work of advisers and specialist workers is helping schools to improve what they offer learners as well as to raise standards. LEA teacher-training programmes have done a lot to help schools raise standards of literacy and numeracy. If LEAs did more to evaluate the effect of training programmes on the work of schools, they would know what is most successful so that all schools can benefit.

Most pupils behave well in school. They are sensible, polite and keep to the rules. More **schools** are becoming better at managing pupils' behaviour by helping them to take responsibility for their behaviour and become more aware of how their actions affect other people. In some schools, a small number of pupils regularly behave badly. Dealing with these pupils takes a disproportionate amount of staff time and energy. This situation is more common in secondary schools where the

number of pupils excluded varies widely. Some **LEAs** and other partners have good strategies to help them overcome poor behaviour and some pupils' dislike of school. For example, many schools are now doing more to offer a wider curriculum to appeal to young people's interests.

Most **primary** pupils attend school regularly. In a growing number of cases, parents take family holidays in term time, often because of their work commitments or the lower costs of holidays during term time. Pupils' attendance is not as good in **secondary** schools. About one-third of secondary schools have unsatisfactory attendance rates, and pupils' punctuality is unsatisfactory in about one in five schools. High levels of absence can have a bad effect on the lives of pupils and the communities in which they live. The current arrangement of the school year does not fit in easily with the patterns of many parents' work commitments, the lower costs of holidays outside term time, and the effects of changes in family circumstances. These arrangements also mean that teachers and pupils have to be on site at fixed times, with long breaks during the summer. These working practices are not linked enough to the demands of the 21st century. In addition, most secondary schools need to do more to analyse attendance rates and patterns of absence. Working more closely with their partners, including parents could help schools to find more ways to encourage all pupils to attend regularly.

Most **schools** support their pupils with special educational needs well, especially in developing their key skills (explained in the glossary). Many schools provide additional support for pupils by 'withdrawing' them from the class for teaching sessions. Usually, this means that these pupils work with a teacher or learning-support assistant out of the classroom. This work is not always well matched to the work that pupils do in class. In some schools, pupils regularly miss the same class lessons or parts of lessons. Schools need to plan these sessions carefully and make sure that pupils benefit fully from 'withdrawal' sessions. **Special** schools are generally good at meeting their pupils' special educational needs. Most pupils achieve high standards in relation to their individual abilities. However, some of these pupils do not have all the therapy they need. **LEAs** could do more to monitor the quality of education for the pupils they send to **independent special schools**.

Despite better provision for children and young people with special educational needs in general, there are still issues concerning early identification of and help to meet these learners' needs. As part of the commitment to inclusion (explained in

the glossary), more children with severe and complicated difficulties attend mainstream schools. This approach needs changes, not only in the way that schools run, but also in the provision of services such as therapy and transport. It means making buildings fully accessible, providing regular training for teachers and support assistants, and improving the ways in which agencies work together.

We inspect all **independent schools** on behalf of The Welsh Assembly Government as a condition of their registration. These reports are not published. We carry out these inspections in a similar way to our inspections of maintained schools. Fewer than 2% of pupils in Wales attend independent schools. These schools vary greatly in their size and approach to education. In most of them, pupils make good progress and do very well in public examinations. From September 2004, we will inspect and report publicly on all independent schools.

During the year, arrangements for **schools** identified as having serious weaknesses came into force. Our inspection has identified a very small number of schools in this category. In general, these schools provide an acceptable standard of education but have serious weaknesses that prevent them from progressing as much as they could. We monitor the progress of these schools.

Estyn shares and supports the Welsh Assembly Government's commitment to achieving the highest standards in education and training. In our annual plan for 2002-2003, we set out our **vision** for 'the achievement of excellence for all in education and training in Wales'. This vision is supported by the principles of:

- expecting high standards of ourselves and those we inspect;
- placing the interests of learners first;
- supporting diversity and valuing differences;
- demonstrating integrity and openness in our relationships with partners and stakeholders;
- working with partners and sharing ideas, skills and good work;
- valuing and promoting bilingualism (speaking in Welsh and English);
- overcoming barriers to improvement; and
- aiming for continuous improvement.

This year, we used our common inspection framework and new inspection arrangements to inspect **further-education** and **teacher-training** providers. From September 2004, we shall use the same arrangements to inspect almost all other education and training providers. These new arrangements will make sure that our inspections of education and training are more consistent across all sectors. The arrangements will mark out a unique approach to inspections and will help us to achieve our vision. At the same time, we shall make sure that our inspections continue to be thorough, constructive and effective in helping to improve standards. Our website at www.estyn.gov.uk has more information about our work.

These new inspection arrangements take account of the fact that providers are more skilled at evaluating their progress as part of their own measures to improve quality and raise standards. Self-evaluation has had a big effect in raising standards over the past few years. It has helped providers to celebrate success as well as identify where they need to do more. By working in partnership and using the new inspection arrangements, inspectors and providers will have a stronger basis for introducing improvements. This approach will help to fulfil our vision of excellence in education and training for all learners.

Susan Lewis
Her Majesty's Chief Inspector
of Education and Training
in Wales

Contents

Section One:

How well are learners achieving? 1

The results for pupils in Wales 1

National Curriculum assessment results in Key stages 1 and 2	1
National Curriculum assessment and examination results in key stages 3 and 4	3

The achievement of learners 5

In settings for children under-five	5
In primary schools	7
In secondary schools	9
Pupils' achievements in different secondary schools	13
Pupils' achievements in different local education authorities (LEAs)	14
In special schools	15
In further-education institutions	16
In work-based training	18
On New Deal programmes	19
In youth work	20
In adult and community-based learning	20
On teacher training courses	20
Career companies	21

Section Two:

How well do teaching, training and assessment meet learners' needs? 23

In settings for children under-five	23
In primary schools	23
In secondary schools	25
In special schools	26
In further-education institutions	27
In work-based training	28
On New Deal programmes	29
In youth work	29

In adult and community-based learning	30
On teacher training courses	30
Career companies	31

Section Three:

How well do learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community? 33

In settings for under-five	33
In primary schools	34
In secondary schools	35
In special schools	36
Using information and communications technology (ICT) in schools	37
The effect of computer-aided design and manufacture in secondary schools	37
In further-education institutions	37
Curriculum 2000	38
In work-based training	38
On New Deal programmes	39
In youth work	39
In adult and community-based learning	40
On teacher training courses	40
Career companies	41

Section Four:

How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? 43

In settings for the under-fives	43
In primary schools	43
In secondary schools	43
In special schools	44
In further-education institutions	44
In work-based training	44
On New Deal programmes	45
In youth work	45
In adult and community-based learning	45
On teacher training courses	46
Career companies	46

Section Five:**How well do leaders and managers meet the needs of learners? 47**

In settings for the under-fives	47
In primary schools	48
In secondary schools	49
In special schools	51
Improving leaders and managers in schools	52
In further-education institutions	52
In work-based training	54
On New Deal programmes	56
In youth work	56
In adult and community-based learning	57
On teacher training courses	58
Career companies	59

Section Six:**The performance of local education authorities 61**

The development of performance information to help schools set and meet targets	63
Local education authorities' use of grants for education, support and training	64

Section Seven:**Developing Wales as a 'learning' country 65****The attainment of pupils in Wales and other countries 65****Foundations for learning 66**

Behaviour	66
Attendance	68
Broadening the curriculum for older pupils	70
Using libraries and learning-resource centres	70
Family learning programmes	71
Promoting healthy lifestyles	71

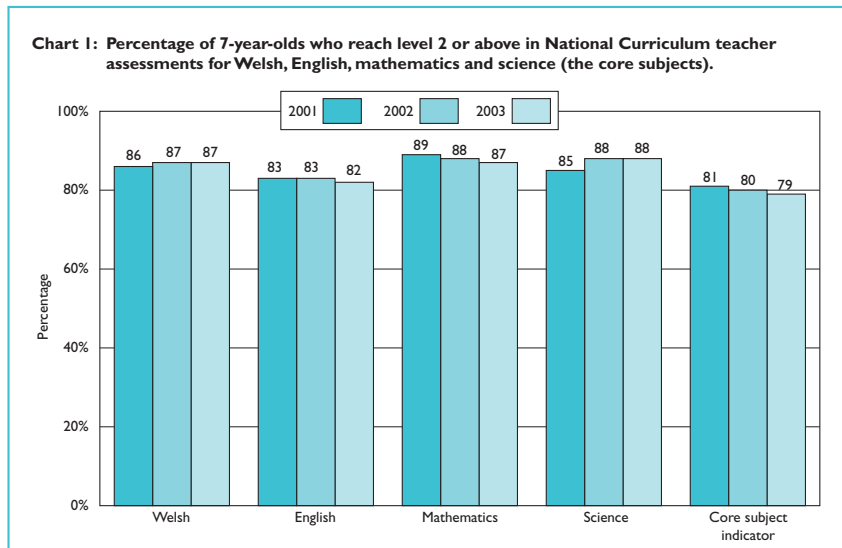
Widening learning opportunities and experiences	72
Developing Welsh and bilingualism	72
Developing the arts in key stages 2 and 3	73
Arts and creative enterprise in extra-curricular activities	73
Work-related education	74
The effect of New Opportunities Funding on out-of-school learning	74
Widening learners' involvement in education and training	75
The quality of provision for learners with special educational needs	75
Extending opportunities for learners from ethnic minority backgrounds	77
Provision for children not educated at school	79
Using youth work to support formal learning	80
The 'Skillbuild' training programme	80
Lifelong learning	81
The National Basic Skills Strategy for Wales	81
The key skills qualification	81
Helping adults to learn	82
Learning provision in response to major employment events	82
Using electronic distance learning	83
Modernising education and training	83
Improving accommodation for learners in schools	83
Extending the use of schools' facilities	83
Extending the use of learning support assistants and non-teaching personnel in schools	84
Sustainable development	85
Glossary of Terms	87
Appendices	93

Section One

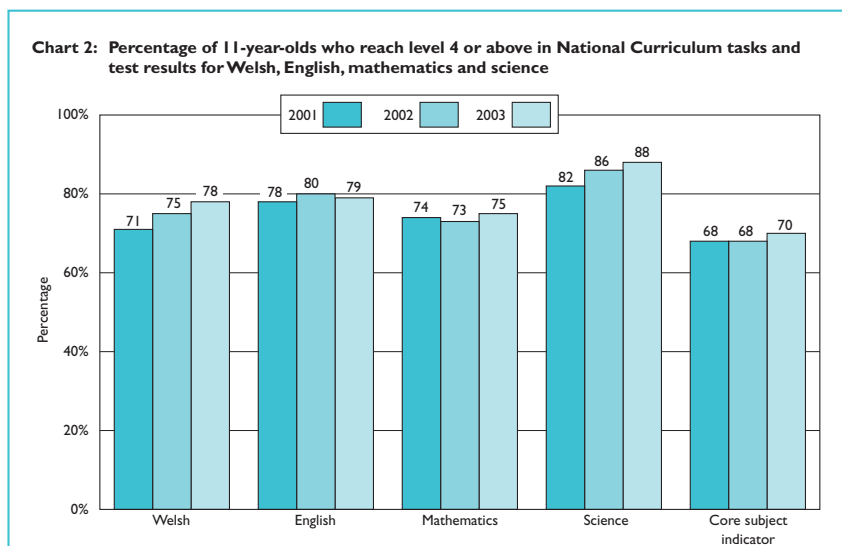
How well are learners achieving?

The results for pupils in Wales

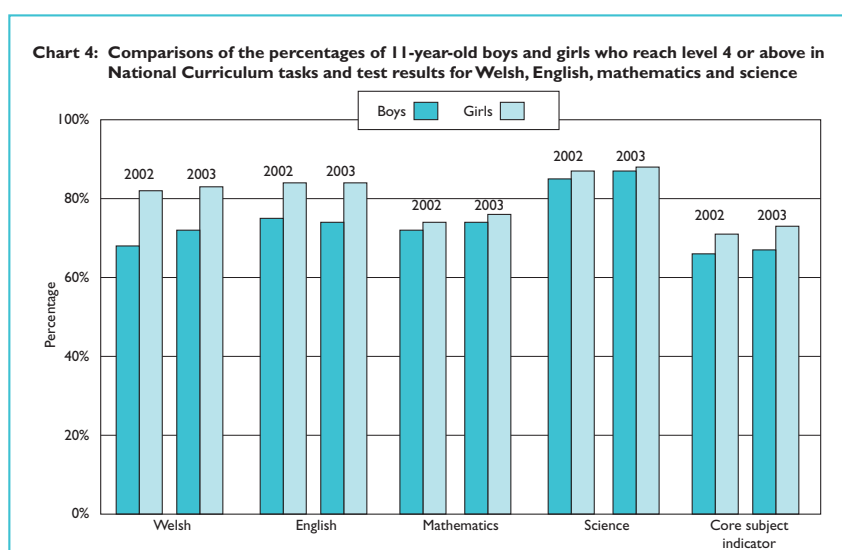
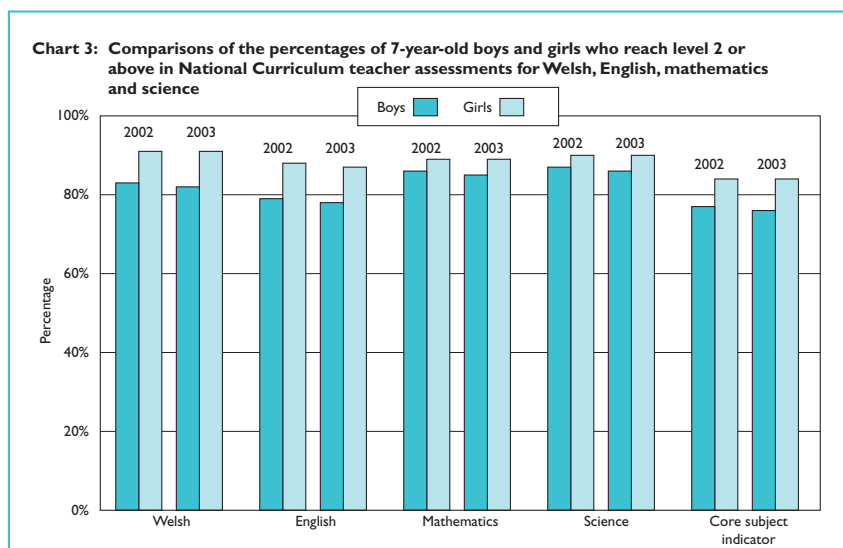
National Curriculum assessment results in key stages 1 and 2



In key stage 1, the results of the teacher assessments in Welsh and science are similar to last year. They are a little lower in English and mathematics. Almost 80% of seven-year-olds reached at least level 2 (the level expected of them) in the core subject indicator (explained in the glossary) shown in chart 1. These results mean that most young pupils are achieving well in the skills of reading, writing and number work.



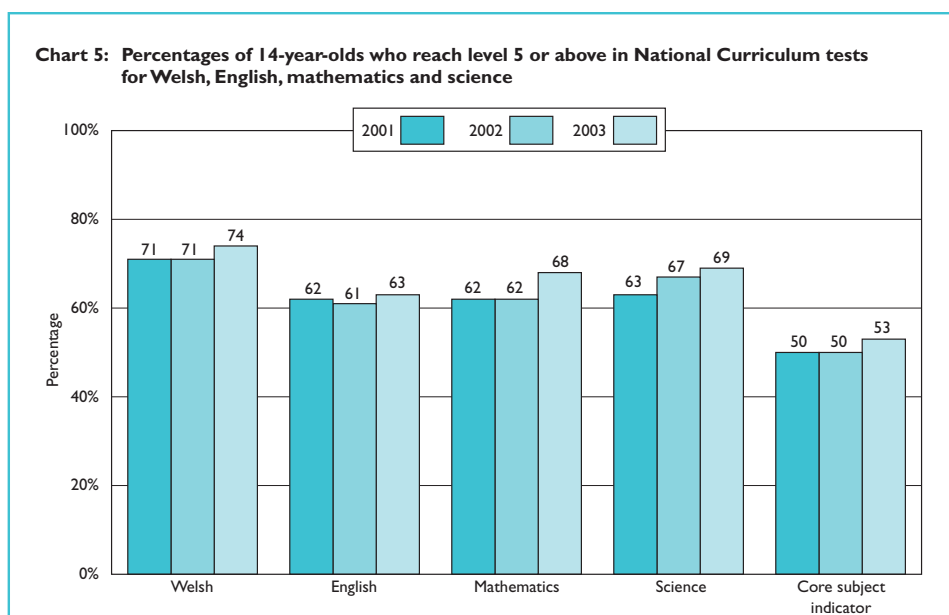
In key stage 2, pupils' attainment (explained in the glossary) in Welsh and science has improved again and is much better than two years ago. The improvement in Welsh reflects the high priority schools have given to developing pupils' oral (spoken) skills in key stages 1 and 2. This work has helped to give pupils the vocabulary they need for developing their language skills in reading and writing. Over the same period, pupils' attainment in English and mathematics has improved a little. This year, 70% of 11 year olds achieved level 4 (the level expected of them) in the core subject indicator (explained in the glossary). These results reflect a lot of improvement for some schools. However, pupils' attainment is still too low in mathematics. The rate of progress has slowed since the improvement we saw in 2001. Most schools will need to give more attention to raising standards in mathematics if they are to reach the Welsh Assembly Government's target of 80 to 85% of 11 year-olds attaining level 4 from 2004.



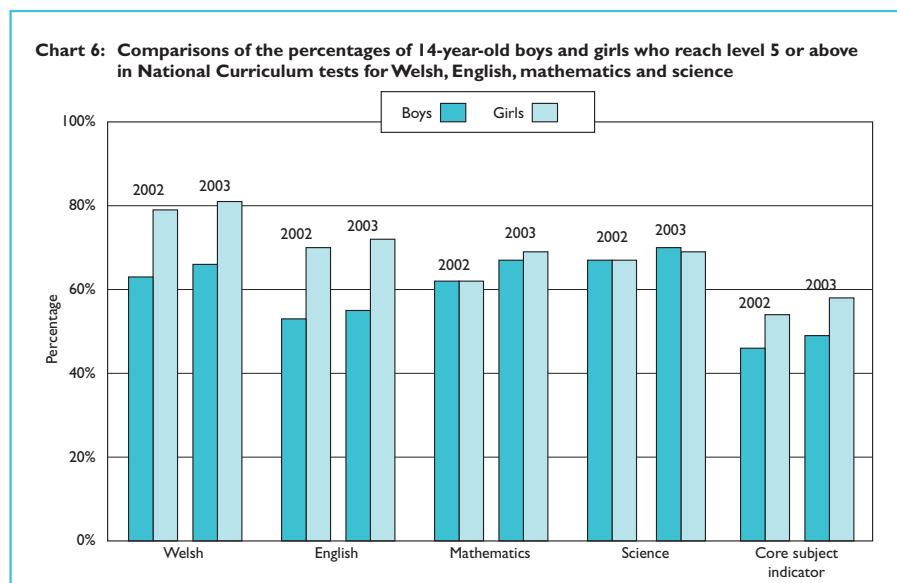
In both key stages, girls still perform much better than boys in Welsh and English and slightly better in mathematics and science. The Welsh Assembly Government's target is to halve the differences between the performance of girls and boys by 50% compared with the 1996 gap but so far, this has only been met in mathematics. Chart 4 shows that, over the past two years most of the differences between girls and boys have not changed much, despite the good efforts of many schools to raise boys' performance. Some schools have been successful in improving boys' performance because teachers encourage pupils to discuss and expand their ideas and vocabulary before they write. They plan written work that takes good account of boys' interests. These approaches are particularly helpful as they often capture boys' enthusiasm, increase their motivation and help them to succeed. To make more progress, schools need to:

- concentrate on what has worked well and make sure current work continues alongside new priorities;
- share successful approaches more widely; and
- find new and better ways of carrying out traditional activities so that areas judged to be satisfactory can be raised more quickly to good and very good. Some schools have done this because they have listened carefully to what their pupils tell them about their learning experiences and have tried to meet their needs in new and different ways.

National Curriculum assessment and examination results in key stages 3 and 4



In key stage 3, there are some encouraging signs that standards are starting to rise. The percentages of pupils who reached level 5 in English, Welsh and mathematics had stayed about the same for the past three years. However, this year, Welsh, English, mathematics and science have all improved. Despite this, there is still scope for standards to rise even higher. The national target is for between 70% and 80% of pupils to achieve at least level 5 in the key stage tests. Schools are now very close to this target in mathematics and science, and have reached it again in Welsh. There is a big improvement in pupils' mathematics test scores this year and a smaller improvement in the scores for the other core subjects. The major weakness is in English, where performance is still well below the target. However, more and more pupils reaching the end of key stage 3 have benefited from the literacy frameworks (explained in the glossary) introduced in primary schools. It is vital that all schools build on these skills so that pupils make faster progress in their language work in key stage 3. This work will also help standards to rise in all subjects.

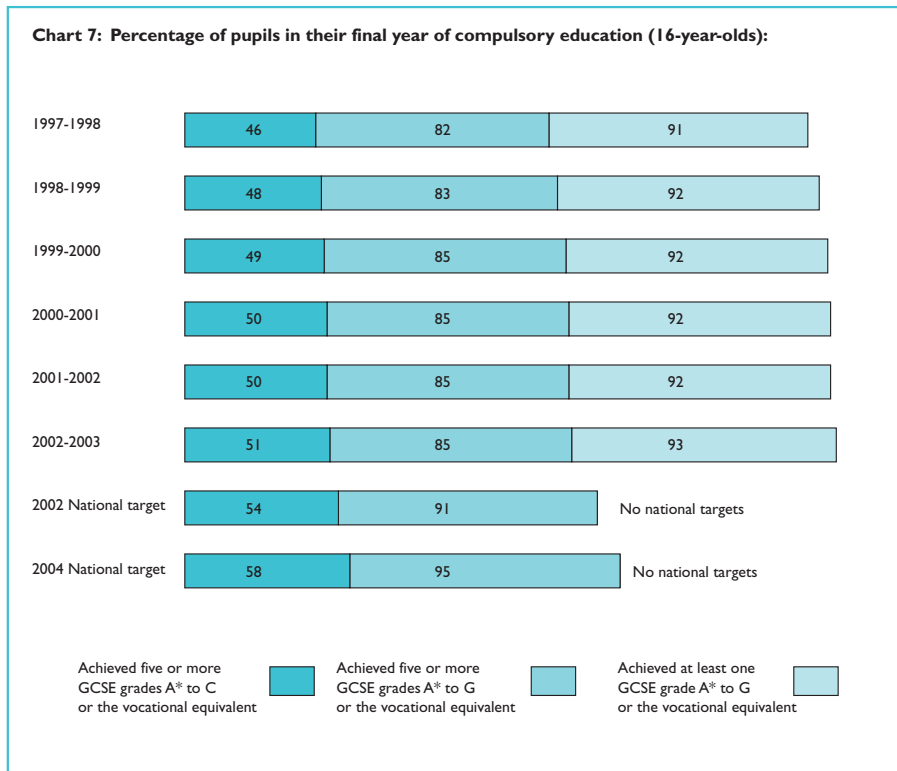


Although boys' performance improved in all subjects, they are still a long way behind girls in languages. If schools can improve boys' performance, especially in English, they will have a much better chance of reaching the national targets.

In key stage 4, improvement has been very slow for several years. Schools have not yet reached the national targets for GCSE (explained in the glossary) performance. They are slowly getting closer to the target for five grades A* to C, but are a long way from the target for the core-subject indicator (explained in the glossary). The slowest rate of progress over this time has been in mathematics.

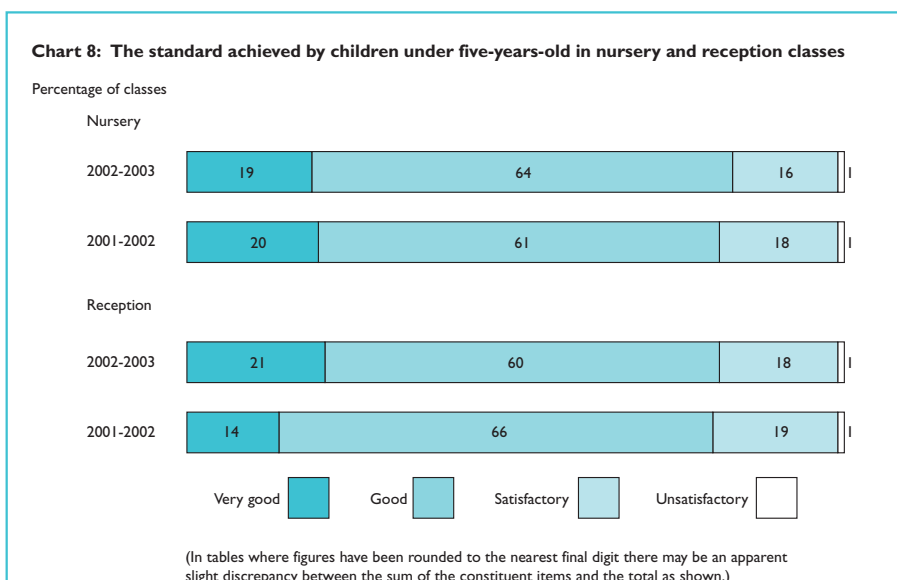
Schools could do much more to help pupils enjoy mathematics. Teaching standards are lower in this subject than in most other subjects.

Schools are also much too far away from reaching the target for five grades A* to G. There are still many pupils of average or below-average ability who do not do as well as they could. Too many pupils leave school with few or no passes at GCSE (explained in the glossary) or its vocational equivalent, such as GNVQ (explained in the glossary) intermediate qualifications.



The achievement of learners

In settings for children under-five



Section one: How well are learners achieving?

Children achieve good or very good standards in the six areas of learning (explained in the glossary) in just over 80% of nursery and reception classes in local-authority schools.

Children continue to make good progress and achieve high standards in their personal and social development. There are some weaknesses in standards in language, literacy and communication, and in mathematics.

In other settings (such as nurseries and playgroups in the independent and voluntary sectors), children's standards of achievement continue to improve in many areas of learning. Their progress in spiritual, moral, social and cultural development continues to be a strong feature, but children in most settings do not learn enough about different cultures. As in nursery and reception classes in local-authority schools, we have seen more weaknesses in children's language, literacy and communication skills, and mathematical development than last year:

Where there are weaknesses in standards of language, literacy and communication skills and mathematical development, it is usually because children's speaking and listening skills and their understanding of mathematical ideas and processes are not developed enough.

In a large number of settings, children's progress and development are affected by:

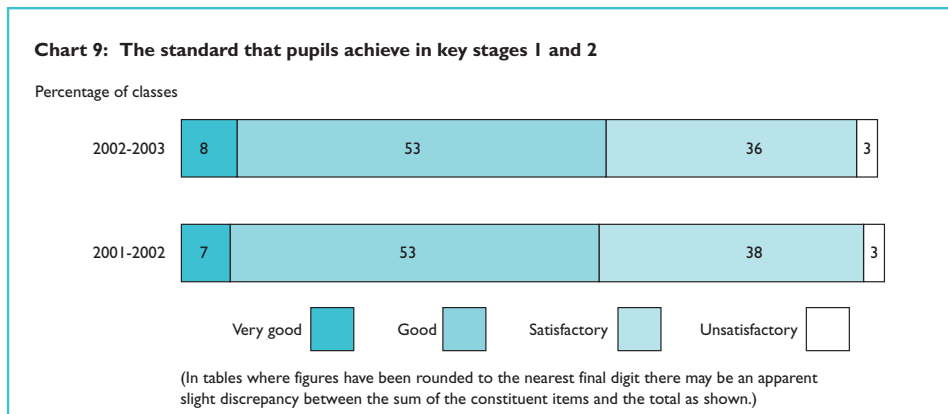
- spending too much time on simple tasks that do not challenge their thinking skills enough;
- not having enough opportunities to explore and experiment through indoor and outdoor play; and
- spending too long sitting and listening to adults, rather than taking an active part in the lesson. This happens most often in reception classes.

Children's **key skills** in speaking, listening, reading, writing, numeracy (such as using numbers) and using information communications technology (ICT), are usually satisfactory and often good. Children could achieve more if they had better opportunities to use their key skills, especially listening, speaking and numeracy, in a range of learning activities, including play.

More and more **local education authorities** (LEAs) are helping parents and their children to be better prepared for the start of formal schooling. Schemes

such as SHARE (explained in the glossary) and Surestart (explained in the glossary) help to develop children's skills and to support parents by giving them the confidence to help their children to learn.

In primary schools



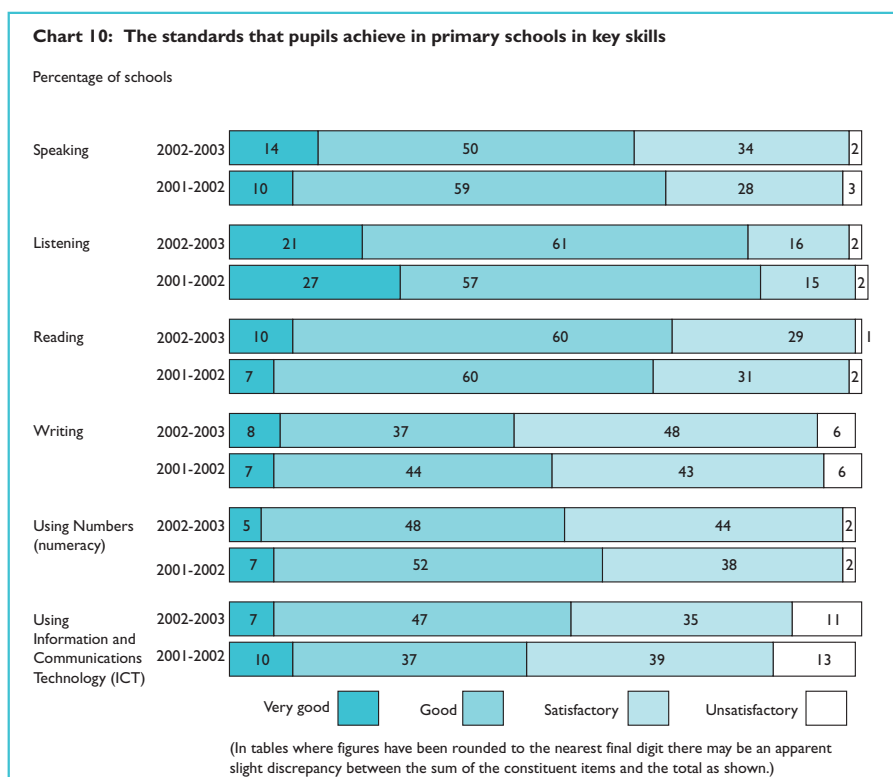
Standards in key stages 1 and 2 continue to improve. For the second year running, pupils achieved good or very good standards in just over 60% of classes. Significantly, for the first time, the percentage of unsatisfactory work is just below the 3% target set by the Welsh Assembly Government. These results suggest that most schools are within reach of the Welsh Assembly Government's target that 98% of primary class standards should be satisfactory by 2007.

There is still more very good work in Year 6 than in any other year. The best work is in English, science, physical education (PE), music and art.

In key stages 1 and 2, standards of achievement (explained in the glossary) are still lower in design and technology and information technology (IT) than in other subjects. In key stage 2, the weakest subjects are Welsh (as a first and second language) and design and technology.

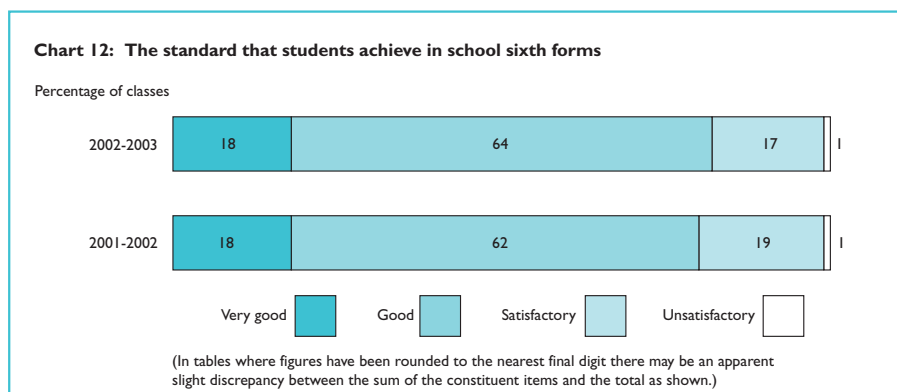
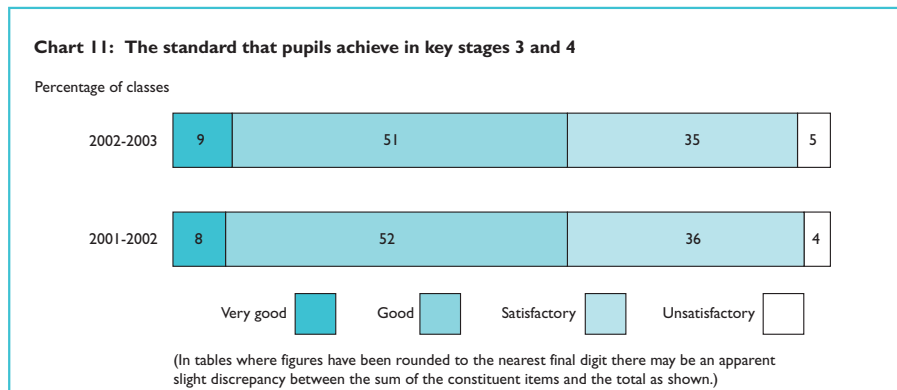
This year, there are smaller differences between primary schools in the standards that pupils achieve. There are now twice as many schools where pupils achieve good or very good standards in 90% of lessons compared with two years ago. The number of schools where standards are unsatisfactory in 10% or more of lessons has reduced to about a third. In more and more schools, this improvement reflects the good work of subject leaders in monitoring pupils' work

and helping to set targets to raise standards. Subject leaders are teachers with special responsibility for an area of the school's curriculum.



During the last three years, standards in key skills in primary schools have improved a lot. The greatest improvement in good and very good work has been in reading, and using information and communications technology (ICT). Many pupils work well with numbers and use their number skills in many subjects. However, fewer than half of pupils achieve good standards in writing. Writing is now the weakest of the key skills. Too many pupils do not do enough different kinds of writing, such as drama scripts and reports. This work would help them to improve their understanding of different kinds of writing, such as dialogue and argument. Sometimes, writing tasks are not challenging enough. While pupils' skills in using ICT have improved, there is still too much unsatisfactory work. Pupils could achieve higher standards if they were set work that is more demanding and which would help them share, exchange and combine different forms of information.

In secondary schools

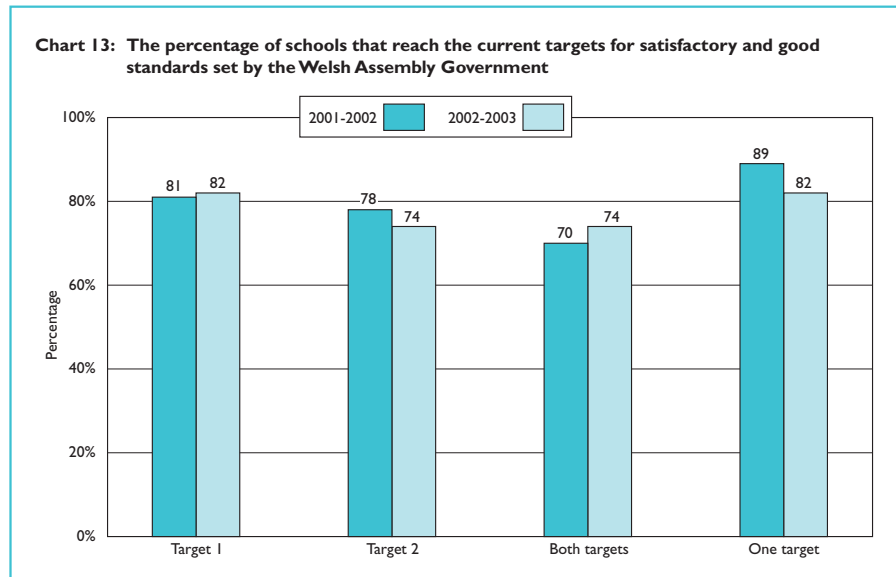


The standards that pupils have achieved are very similar to last year. The Welsh Assembly Government's current targets are that standards should be good or very good in at least 50% of classes and satisfactory or better in over 95%. A large number of the schools we inspected reached both targets. However, fewer schools than last year achieved good or very good standards in at least 50% of classes. Also, a larger percentage of schools than last year failed to achieve either target. While most of these schools come close to the targets, a few are a long way short. In these few schools, there are serious weaknesses that contribute to the low standards. On the other hand, in a small number of other schools, pupils achieve good standards in over 80% of classes.

In school sixth forms, standards continue to be good or very good in around four out of every five lessons. They are good or very good in around 82% of classes, which is 14 percentage points higher than two years ago. These students achieve high standards because:

Section one: How well are learners achieving?

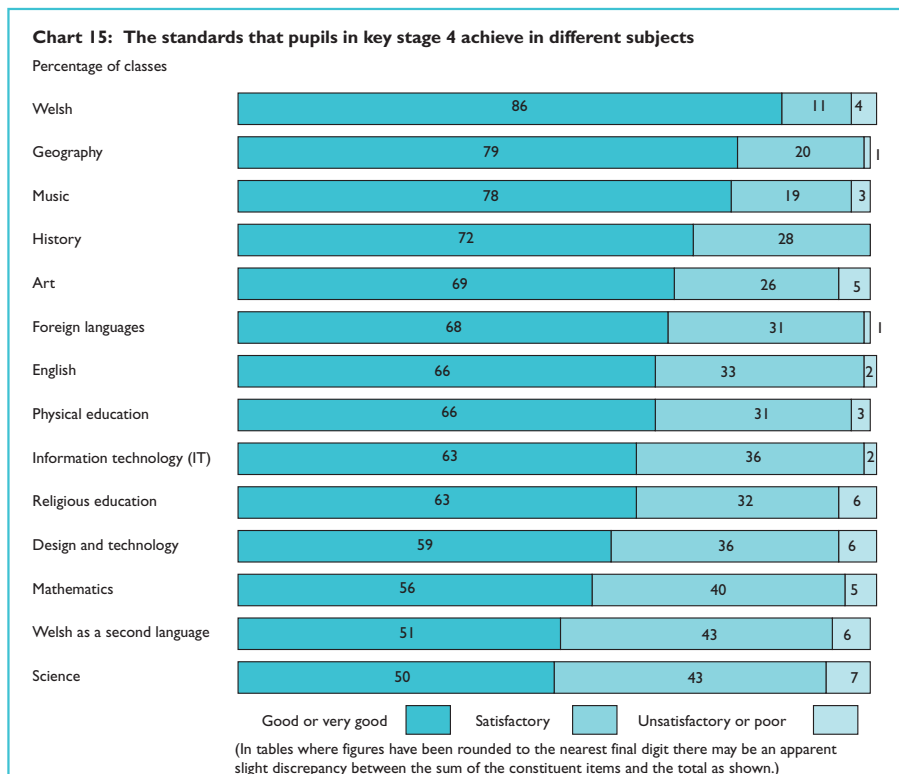
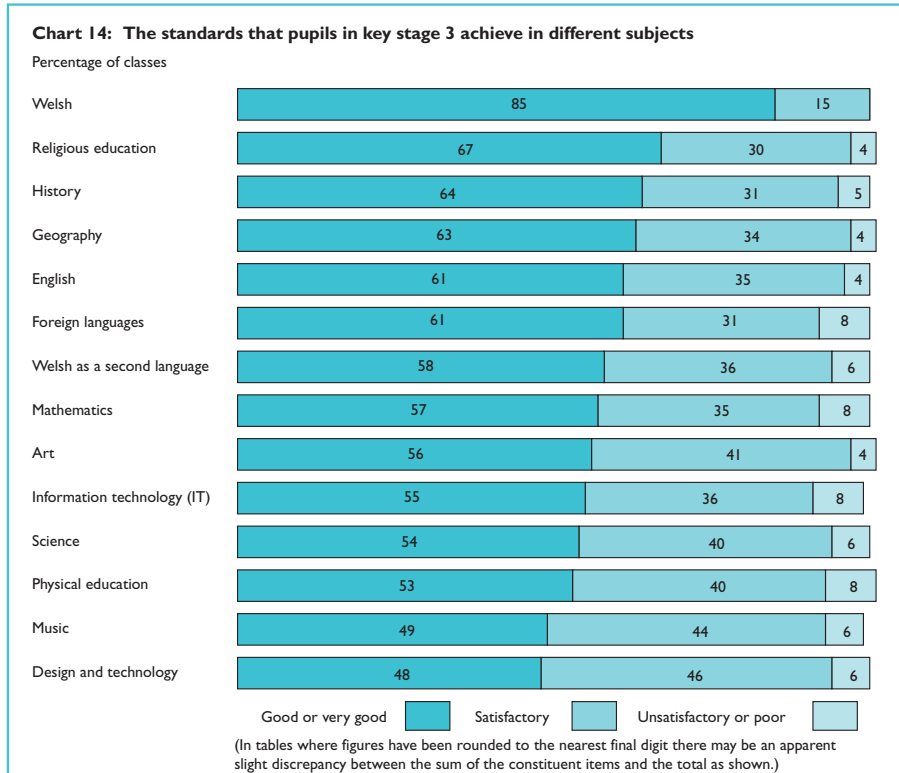
- they are studying subjects in which they have a special interest; and
- most classes have teachers who are specialists in the subject.



For 2007, the Welsh Assembly Government has set a more ambitious target that standards should be satisfactory or better in 98% of secondary school classes. Charts 11 and 13 show that some schools will have a lot to do if they are to reach this target. To improve, these schools will need to learn from those schools that have:

- found out where standards are too low;
- identified the cause of the problem; and
- worked out how to make things better.

Not all schools are doing these things effectively enough.



The weakest subjects in key stage 3, are design and technology, music and PE. They were also among the weakest last year, and this year there is even more unsatisfactory work in these subjects. Design and technology also continues to be weaker than most other subjects in key stage 4.

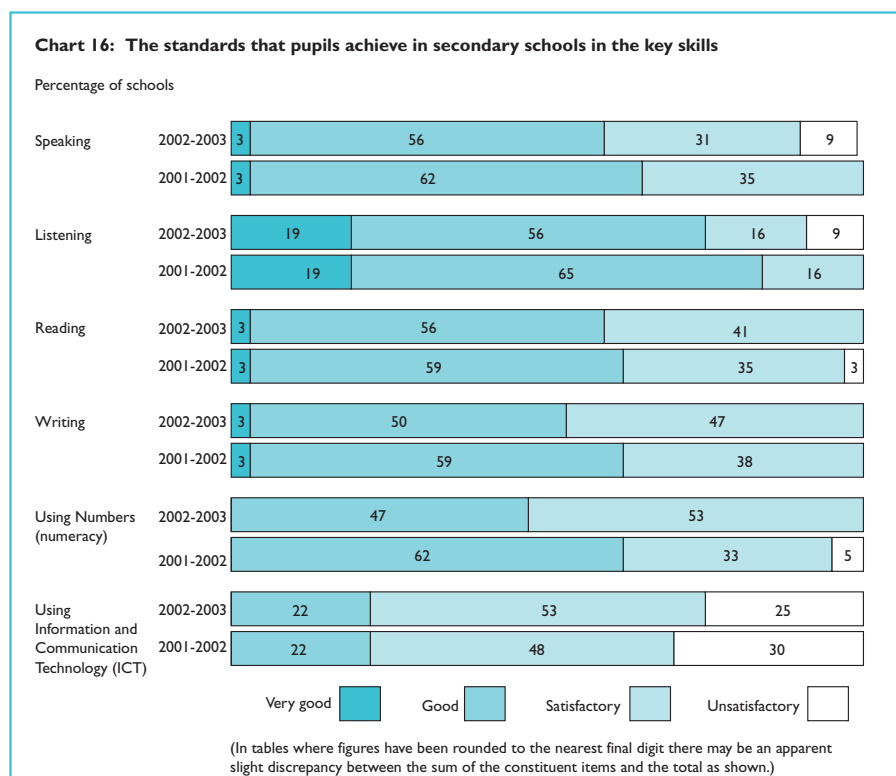
Section one: How well are learners achieving?

In key stage 3, standards in Welsh as a second language are much higher than last year. However, standards continue to be very low in this subject in key stage 4. Most pupils only study a short course. In many schools, pupils make slow progress because they spend only one hour each week learning Welsh.

In key stage 4, standards in science have been very low for several years. Science has also been weak in key stage 3. In too many cases, teachers do not encourage pupils to think hard enough about the science they study. While pupils cover all the work needed for examinations, this often takes up all the lesson time they have available. There is little time for them to do work, which would extend their knowledge and skills, such as:

- relating science to contemporary issues;
- using more ICT;
- carrying out more practical work; or
- going on fieldtrips.

In key stages 3 and 4, there is not as much good work in mathematics as last year.



The development of pupils' **key skills** in subjects across the curriculum is at least satisfactory in most schools. However, there is less good work than last year.

Where standards are good, it is often because:

- there are clear policies on teaching key skills;
- all teachers help pupils to improve their key skills; and
- senior teachers monitor and evaluate how well the work is done.

A small number of schools have unsatisfactory standards in listening and speaking. In these schools, many pupils do not pay enough attention in class.

In general, pupils have better literacy than numeracy skills. Too few schools help pupils to improve their numeracy skills in subjects across the curriculum.

Standards in using information and communications technology (ICT) have improved a lot over the last few years, but there is still too much unsatisfactory work. In too many schools, pupils do not use ICT equipment regularly enough for a broad range of purposes.

Pupils' achievements in different secondary schools

Standards of achievement (explained in the glossary) have risen in all secondary schools over the past 10 years. However, there is a big difference between pupils' achievements in different secondary schools. Schools with a high proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals generally have poorer results than schools with a low proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals. Some schools with high proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals have been more successful in raising standards than many other similar schools. The most successful schools:

- have senior teachers whose main task is to work on school improvement;
- regularly check on the quality of learning and teaching; and
- use information about pupils' achievement to plan for improvements.

To narrow the gap in the performance of different schools, and to make certain that all pupils have the best prospects for higher achievement, more schools need to do all the things noted above and improve their arrangements for:

- building on pupils' previous achievements as they move from key stage 2 to key stage 3;

- using performance data;
- teaching literacy and numeracy skills to pupils;
- encouraging better behaviour; and
- making sure all pupils attend regularly.

Pupils' attainments in different local education authorities (LEAs)

In general, there are large differences in pupils' attainments (explained in the glossary) in national tests in **LEAs**, even between those serving similar areas. In 2002, for example, the difference in the percentage of pupils achieving the core subject indicator (explained in the glossary) in key stage 4 in two LEAs serving the South Wales valleys differed by as much as 13 percentage points.

Between 1997 and 2002, pupils' performance in achieving the core-subject indicator in all four key stages improved in almost all LEAs. However, the amount of improvement varies a lot in each key stage, even between LEAs serving similar areas, as the following examples show.

- In key stage 2, one LEA serving a part of the South Wales valleys achieved an improvement of over 21 percentage points in the core-subject indicator. This improvement was nearly twice as much as another LEA in a similar area.
- In key stage 3, one LEA serving a similar mixture of urban and rural communities achieved an improvement of over 14 percentage points in the core-subject indicator, compared with another in a similar area where the increase was just below three percentage points.

Not surprisingly, in key stages 1 and 2, the improvement is often greater in LEAs that were starting from a lower baseline in 1997.

In recent years, the proportion of pupils gaining five or more GCSE grades A* to C has improved in each LEA in Wales. However, the gap in performance between LEAs serving similar areas has either increased or stayed about the same. There are greater differences than expected between LEAs serving similar areas. The most consistently good performance occurs in LEAs that serve mainly rural communities.

Some LEAs have realised that to improve certain schools, they need a wider community strategy to help tackle economic and social disadvantage. Schools are beginning to tackle the needs of pupils and their families through their role as community schools. They provide a range of initiatives, such as:

- a learning centre for ICT;
- a health centre;
- youth provision; and
- schemes to improve parents' basic skills.

There are early signs that this approach is benefiting pupils and their families.

The LEAs that have been successful in making the greatest improvement have:

- used the school improvement service effectively to raise standards in schools (by identifying strengths and weaknesses in schools across the LEA, and tackling them through training for teachers and targeting advisory support);
- intervened swiftly in schools that are not performing well; and
- introduced effective systems for sharing examples of good work between teachers.

Many LEAs do not do enough to compare the performance of their schools with the performance of similar schools in other LEAs to help set challenging targets for raising standards.

In special schools

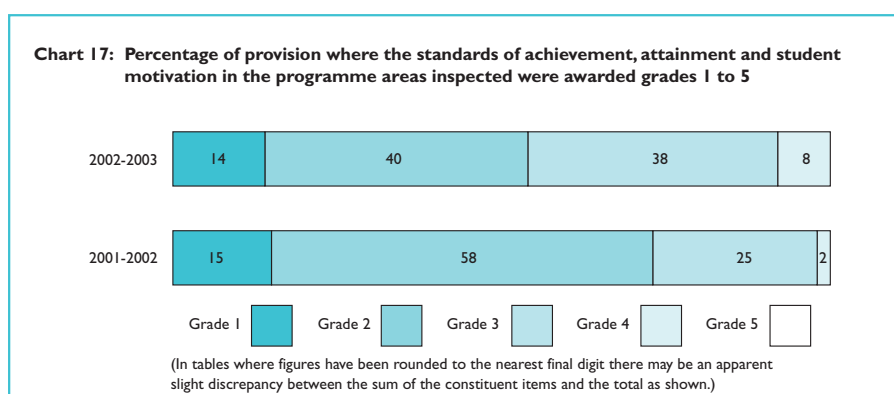
Most pupils achieve high standards in relation to their individual abilities. Pupils' work is good or very good in most subjects in over four-fifths of all classes. Almost all pupils achieve national awards at the end of key stage 4 and post-16.

In key stages 3 and 4, a small number of pupils in some schools do not achieve satisfactory standards in history, geography and religious education. In these schools, these subjects do not have enough teaching time.

Many pupils who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties learn to behave well and take pride in their work. For most pupils, this is a major achievement and it helps them to learn more successfully.

Pupils achieve good or very good standards in most **key skills** and there is very little unsatisfactory work. In some independent special schools, a small number of pupils do not achieve satisfactory standards in writing or in using information and communications technology (ICT). They often do not learn to use these skills in a range of subjects.

In further-education institutions



- Grade 1 Good with some outstanding feature
- Grade 2 Good features with no important shortcomings
- Grade 3 Good features outweigh shortcomings
- Grade 4 Some good features but shortcomings in important areas
- Grade 5 Many important shortcomings

Overall, standards in further-education institutions are not as good as we reported last year. Standards are good or very good in about a half of institutions but were good or very good in nearly three-quarters of institutions last year. Colleges have not met the Welsh Assembly Government's target for 15% of further-education provision to reach grade 1, and 70% to reach grade 1 or grade 2 by 2003.

There have been improvements in the levels of attainment (explained in the glossary) of students on full-time courses in:

- computing;
- tourism and leisure;

- engineering;
- hairdressing and beauty therapy; and
- adult basic education.

However, standards have fallen in applied science and independent living skills. Attainment is still low on full-time courses in computing and construction.

Overall, standards of attainment are better on part-time courses than on full-time courses. On part-time courses, students' attainment has improved in construction, landbased studies and access (courses which prepare students for other courses in further-education or higher-education). The highest standards on part-time courses are in applied science, and travel and leisure. Part-time students who complete their courses generally achieve high standards and have good levels of vocational knowledge and skills. Most part-time students are adults who are well-motivated and keen to study. They have often returned to learning because they know that education is important and may help them to get a better job.

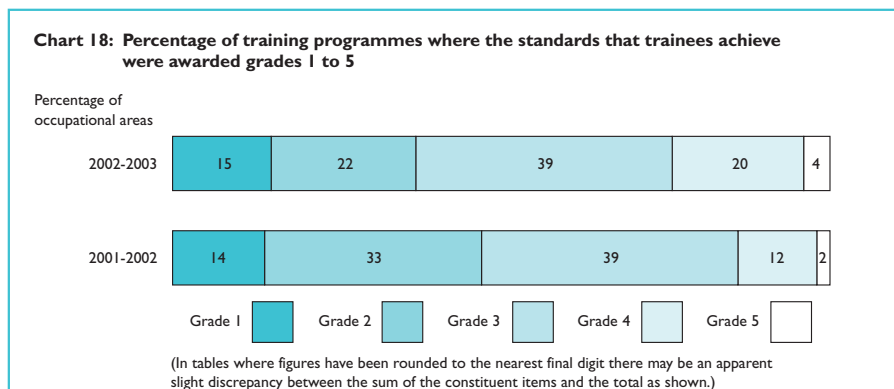
Students on many vocational courses gain good practical skills and extra qualifications that help them to get jobs. Many full-time students progress successfully to higher levels of education and training. The percentage of students who complete their studies is generally higher on part-time courses than on full-time courses. Many institutions do not give enough support early in the course to students who are likely to drop out.

In most further-education institutions, too few students gain qualifications in the core **key skills** (explained in the glossary). Students' attainments are very poor at level 3 (explained in the glossary), particularly on courses for using ICT and application of number. Fewer than 10% of the students who complete level 3 courses on using ICT and application of number gain the award. The best achievement is in communication, at level 1, where just over a third of students gain the award.

More students are registering for key skills qualifications at levels 1 and 2, but fewer students are registering for the level 3 qualifications in communication, application of number and using ICT. Institutions and employers need to do more to show students how valuable key skills can be to their employment prospects.

Students develop better key skills and respond with greater motivation when they develop them in their main programme of study. However, most key skills classes are still not linked closely enough to students' areas of study. Students' attendance at key skills classes is often very poor, and they do not get enough planned opportunities to develop wider skills, such as working with others and problem-solving.

In work-based training



- Grade 1 Good with outstanding feature
- Grade 2 Good features with no important shortcomings
- Grade 3 Good features outweigh shortcomings
- Grade 4 Important shortcomings outweigh good features
- Grade 5 Many important shortcomings

Learners on work-based training programmes are called trainees. The standards that trainees achieve are not as good as we have reported for the past two years. In almost a quarter of the occupational areas inspected, trainees do not achieve satisfactory standards. There is a big difference in the standards that trainees achieve, from one occupational area to another.

Trainees continue to reach high standards in engineering, media and design, and foundation for work. In these areas they:

- develop good practical skills;
- improve their knowledge and understanding;
- acquire key skills at a more challenging level; and
- complete their National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs).

This year, standards have improved a little in business administration, and in retailing and customer services. However, standards are still poor in the occupational areas of health, care and public services and hospitality. Most trainees have to achieve the relevant **key skills** (explained in the glossary) qualifications associated with their vocational qualifications for them to complete a full 'qualification framework' (explained in the glossary). While more trainees are completing their key skills qualifications, the majority still do not. As a result, they do not gain all the qualifications required in the full 'qualification framework'. Trainees are more likely to achieve the full 'qualification framework' when they are helped to improve their key skills as part of their vocational training.

We inspect programmes again, usually within a year, if we find that the quality and standards are low. Standards have improved in all the programmes we inspected for a second time.

On New Deal programmes

Learners on New Deal programmes are called clients and the purpose of New Deal is to support clients in finding work. New Deal is a compulsory programme for people aged between 18 and 24 who have been unemployed for at least six months and for people over 25 years of age who have been unemployed for more than 18 months. The success of the programme is measured by the number of clients who find employment.

Most clients, many of whom have experienced considerable disadvantages, gain skills through the New Deal programme by becoming more confident and ready to search for jobs. Some also gain qualifications, such as food hygiene certificates, which are useful to them in getting a job.

Overall, about 40% of the clients, on programmes for those aged between 18 and 24, go into employment. This figure is the target set by Jobcentre Plus for providers (organisations that provide work-based training). However, there are still 60% of New Deal clients who do not meet the programme's aims. Fewer clients aged 25 or over find a job. This is usually because older clients have been out of work for longer. Many of them need more support to overcome a range of what are often serious personal and social problems before they can get a job. A small number of clients do not receive this support.

In youth work

Most of the young people who take part in a range of youth activities do well. They develop useful skills in arts, sports and outdoor activities. They learn how to make decisions and to take part in community life.

More young people are gaining certificates and formal recognition for their achievements. As a result, they feel more positive about learning. Many also think more about the consequences of their actions and begin to help and support other young people. As a result, these young people begin to mature as responsible members of society.

Young people develop more skills when they take part in planned project work. Dropping into a youth centre often occupies their time but does not always help them to progress in their learning.

In adult and community-based learning

We inspect most of the adult and community-based learning provided by **local education authorities** (LEAs) working with **further-education institutions**.

Adult learners perform well across a wide range of courses. Learners achieve the best standards on courses for using information and communications technology (ICT), craft, arts and language. Many adult learners gain qualifications for the first time and so are able to move on to higher levels of study. Courses that aim to bring people back to learning are usually successful in attracting new learners. These courses often deal with everyday things, such as how to complete forms and how to apply for benefits. From this useful starting-point, adults see that they can gain valuable skills and begin to feel better about learning. Teachers could do more to record the skills and knowledge learners have gained in these situations so that they can provide better support when learners take up courses that are more formal.

On teacher-training courses

The quality of the work of trainee teachers is improving. Of about 65% of trainees on the courses, we inspected this year; the teaching standard is good or very good. Most trainees:

- use an appropriate range of teaching methods;
- manage their classes well;

- are keen to succeed; and
- listen to advice and understand what they need to do to improve.

Most trainees have a good grasp of what they will be expected to do when they begin their teaching careers. Many trainees look forward to the prospect of teaching and managing their own class of pupils.

Where there are weaknesses, trainees do not make enough use of what they know about their pupils in order to plan their next lessons. Some trainees have gaps in their knowledge of the subjects they teach.

Careers companies

Learners in careers companies are called 'clients'. With the support of careers company advisers, clients of all ages can identify and plan their career aims. With support, clients learn to be realistic and practical about their career choices as well as aiming to do the best they can. The Youth Gateway Programme has been effective in helping clients improve their key skills. Clients who have benefited most from careers advice have:

- understood the value of filling in their application forms carefully and preparing for job interviews;
- thought carefully about the practicalities of their career choices; and
- developed a range of job-search skills including knowing where to find job adverts and how to get careers information and advice (for example, by searching newspapers or the Internet).

Section Two

How well do teaching, training and assessment meet learners' needs?

In settings for the under-fives

The quality of teaching continues to be good in over 80% of all settings for children under-five. Almost all teachers give good attention to children's personal and social skills. The best teachers combine new and challenging learning activities with interesting and familiar tasks. In this way, they help build children's confidence and make sure they make the best possible progress.

The most common weaknesses in teaching means that children:

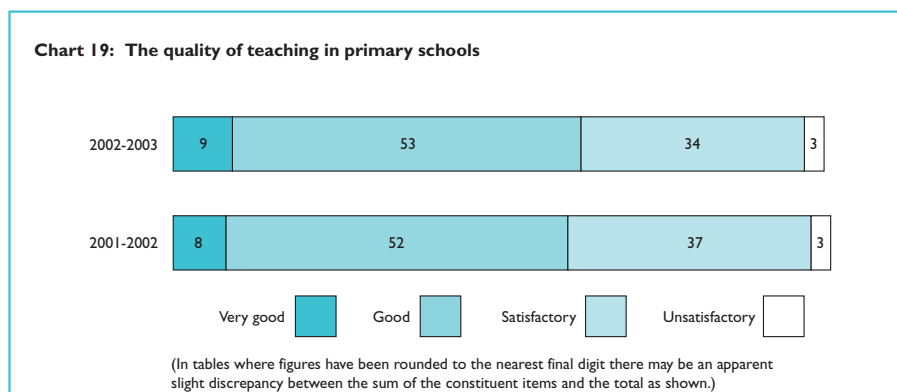
- are not able to learn for themselves;
- do not have enough support as they explore and play;
- do not have learning activities that closely match their stage of development; and
- do not learn enough across all six areas of learning (explained in the glossary).

There are some weaknesses in teaching physical development. This is often because there is not enough challenge and variety in children's physical activities. In most settings, there are too few dance and movement activities.

In many school settings, teachers are good at assessing children's progress. In reception classes, teachers make good use of assessment information from the nursery. In some other settings, not maintained by local education authorities (LEAs), teachers do not observe children enough or record their findings in ways that are helpful to plan new work.

In primary schools

The quality of teaching is good or very good in about 60% of lessons, which is about the same as last year. The percentage of lessons where teaching is unsatisfactory is below the Welsh Assembly Government target of no more than 5%.



Teaching is often good or better, where teachers:

- have clear aims for learning and share these with the pupils;
- use varied and interesting teaching methods;
- have good knowledge of the subjects they teach;
- have high expectations of what pupils can achieve; and
- set work to match pupils' different needs and abilities.

Nearly three-quarters of lessons in English and mathematics are good or very good. However, in information technology in key stage 1, and in design and technology and Welsh as a second language in key stage 2, teaching is good or better in only half the lessons. Schools need to do more to share good work so that teaching reaches the highest standards in all subjects.

The quality of assessment, recording and reporting has improved. The accuracy and consistency of teachers' assessments are much better than several years ago. Most schools are also better at analysing assessment information. In the best cases, they use this information to help with school self-evaluation and to set challenging targets for their pupils. However, almost half the schools do not use information on pupils' achievements well enough to promote higher standards.

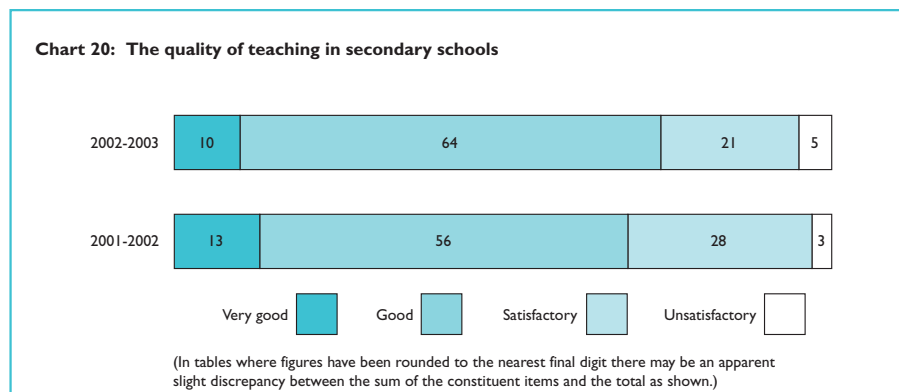
Almost three-quarters of schools write informative reports for parents. The quality of these reports is satisfactory rather than good when:

- the reports concentrate on what pupils have done rather than on the progress they have made; and

- targets for improvement are too general and do not say what pupils can do to improve.

In secondary schools

The overall quality of teaching in secondary schools is continuing to improve. There are many more good lessons than last year. However, fewer lessons were very good. The percentage of lessons where teaching is unsatisfactory has increased a little, but is still within the Welsh Assembly Government target of no more than 5%.



In the lessons with good or very good features, teachers:

- make sure the lesson has a strong sense of purpose and direction;
- help pupils to improve their key skills;
- plan well for pupils with different needs and abilities;
- check that learning aims have been met;
- use a variety of teaching methods to develop pupils' learning skills; and
- ask open-ended questions that encourage pupils to think for themselves.

More and more teachers are trying to encourage pupils' thinking skills in the classroom. Often, teachers use resources such as 'cognitive acceleration through science education' (explained in the glossary), or 'thinking through geography' (explained in the glossary). In these lessons, teachers encourage pupils to think carefully about how they have arrived at answers and to explain it to the rest of the class.

The quality of assessment, recording and reporting is not as good as in the schools we inspected last year. It is good or very good in just over half the schools. That is well below the figure of 65% for last year. There are far fewer schools where the accuracy of assessment is good and where the recording of assessment information is thorough. Some schools do not make enough use of assessment data on pupils' performance in key stage 2.

More schools are trying to promote pupils' self-assessment skills. Also, more schools are using computerised systems to track individual pupils' progress from the start of Year 7. Overall, however, fewer schools are using assessment information fully to help pupils improve.

The quality of reporting to parents is improving. This year, there are fewer schools where it is unsatisfactory. The best reports contain comments that are clear and tell parents what pupils need to do to improve their performance.

In special schools

The quality of teaching in special schools continues to be good or very good in almost all lessons. It is well above the targets set by the Welsh Assembly Government for the percentage of satisfactory and good lessons.

Lessons are often good or very good because teachers:

- use their knowledge of the subjects they teach to help pupils learn effectively;
- match the teaching activities to the age and special needs of the pupils;
- help pupils to develop their key skills;
- use ICT to support learning and help pupils to communicate;
- expect pupils to achieve high standards;
- encourage, reward and praise pupils; and
- supervise the work of classroom assistants effectively.

The quality of assessment, recording and reporting is good or very good in about 30% of special and independent special schools. This year, fewer schools have assessment procedures of high quality.

Where there are weaknesses, teachers often need to:

- make better use of assessment information to plan learning opportunities for pupils;
- mark pupils' work in a way that shows them how they can improve;
- make better use of information from specialists who know pupils well; and
- write reports that contain more information about pupils' progress.

Some **independent special schools** take too long to assess the learning needs of new pupils. These schools should do more to get information from pupils' previous schools, the **local education authority** (LEA) and parents or carers.

In further-education institutions

The quality of teaching and training in further-education institutions is often good. Teachers use a wide range of strategies to extend students' learning. These strategies include visits to centres of vocational interest and project work in groups. Many teachers of vocational subjects use their own industrial experience to stimulate students' interest.

In the best work, teachers:

- plan sessions carefully and share learning aims with students;
- have high expectations of students and challenge them to extend their skills and knowledge;
- plan assignments that involve students using information and communication technology (ICT); and
- use the experiences students gain through work experience to develop their understanding of the subject.

In poorer sessions, teachers do not:

- involve students enough in their learning;
- provide work that challenges more able students; nor
- give enough support to students who lack confidence.

The quality of teaching key skills varies too much. Not enough teachers plan effectively to develop students' key skills through the subjects they teach. Overall, teachers do not make enough use of ICT to support and extend learners' skills, knowledge and understanding.

Most teachers are good at assessing students' work and giving them regular and constructive feedback. In a few cases, teachers do not provide enough written feedback and as a result, students do not know how they can improve their work. A small number of teachers either do not monitor students' progress closely enough or do not set targets for improvement.

In work-based training

The quality of training and assessment has improved this year. In over three-quarters of provision it is now good or very good and is rarely poor. Given this improvement, the low standards reached by many trainees are disappointing. Where provision is good, providers:

- work closely with employers to deliver good quality training and assessment;
- set challenging targets with high expectations of success;
- motivate trainees by making training interesting and varied; and
- help trainees to fully understand their training and to know what they need to do to achieve their qualifications.

Where the quality of training has weaknesses, it is often because trainers miss valuable opportunities to help trainees improve their key skills. Trainers need to do more to help trainees understand how improving their key skills can help with their learning.

We inspect programmes again, usually within a year, if we find that the quality and standards are low. The quality of training and assessment is satisfactory or better in almost all providers that we inspected for a second time.

On New Deal programmes

The majority of training and assessment is good. Most training and assessment for New Deal takes place in the workplace, often where trainees on other work-based training courses are completing similar training and assessments. This arrangement usually works well. However, a few clients often need extra support to develop their basic skills and they do not always get this support when they are working alongside learners on other training courses.

All New Deal clients must complete job-search activities outside the workplace. Some work-based training providers offer clients interesting and challenging activities that help them to develop the skills they need to find a job. However, a few providers set job-search activities that are boring and repetitive so they do not help clients enough to find a job.

In youth work

Most youth workers are very good at gaining young people's respect and cooperation. Good relationships make it possible for them to help young people to do well in different types of activities. Youth work is most effective when workers:

- have a good knowledge of young people and the communities in which they live;
- involve young people in planning and providing activities; and
- work well with others to offer services to young people.

Youth workers who work with young people in outdoor locations achieve the best results when:

- they find out what young people need;
- offer informal advice and support; and
- encourage them to take part in activities that will help them learn new skills.

Most youth workers are good at helping young people to discuss issues and make decisions. This approach helps to develop young people's leadership skills. They are also good at helping young people to feel more positive about formal learning.

In adult and community-based learning

Most of the teaching in adult and community-based learning is good and, on a small number of courses, it is very good. Teachers generally use a wide range of teaching methods to meet the needs of learners in both formal and informal settings. Most learners and teachers get on well with each other. The best teachers:

- successfully match the aims of the course to the goals of individual learners;
- show learners what to do and encourage them to try things for themselves; and
- evaluate the success of their teaching and adapt it where necessary.

Teachers assess most learners' work well and tell them how they are doing after each stage of the course. However, some of this feedback is too general to be useful. More teachers are encouraging learners to play a bigger part in assessing their own progress. In formal learning programmes, teachers keep good records of learners' assessments.

On teacher-training courses

Overall, the quality of training in college and school is good.

In college, the training ranges from satisfactory to very good. It is much better in some subjects than in others. For example, it is very good in physical education in both the colleges we inspected this year. Where the college training is very good, trainees get a chance to see teaching at its best. Where training is only satisfactory, tutors do not plan sessions thoroughly enough to make the best use of time.

In schools, teachers and tutors generally give trainees good feedback on their teaching. They question trainees skilfully and get them to think about how they can improve their teaching. In the best cases, teachers and tutors discuss pupils' progress with trainees. A few teachers and tutors do not pay enough attention to trainees' teaching files.

Overall, the assessment of trainees' work is good. Teachers and tutors regularly discuss the quality of the trainees' work. Teachers and tutors also set targets to help trainees improve their teaching. However, these targets are often too general. They do not always link closely enough with the standards that the trainees must meet. In a few cases, tutors grade trainees' teaching and written work too generously.

Careers companies

Careers advisers give clients good-quality advice and guidance. The standard of career action plans is satisfactory for adults and generally good for younger clients. Most clients with additional or special needs receive good support.

Generally, careers companies provide a good service for unemployed clients with Youth Gateway. Clients receive a well-planned, focused programme. However, the endorsement certificates, which the careers companies use to decide which training routes clients should follow, vary too much in quality and usefulness. Too many do not give enough detail about the client's achievements, or clear recommendations that help training providers supply what the client needs.

Section Three

How well do learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?

In settings for the under-fives

Children continue to have good or very good learning experiences in around 80% of settings maintained by LEAs. They experience a broad range of activities that promote the six areas of learning (explained in the glossary). In the best settings:

- planning includes clear learning aims that help children to progress in each of the six areas of learning;
- learning develops from a wide range of interesting experiences, including tasks that children do in school and at home; and
- learning is enjoyable and rewarding, helping children to become confident and independent.

In most other settings, learning promotes children's personal and social development well. In around one-third of the settings, there are not enough opportunities for children to play, carry out practical work and talk about their experiences. This, in turn, holds back their language and mathematical development.

In all types of settings, children become more aware of Wales as a country through the use of national traditions, customs and stories and, for children who do not speak Welsh as a first language, through learning simple words and phrases in Welsh. Generally, most settings need to do more to help children learn about different cultures and backgrounds.

Over the next four years, a new curriculum for children aged three to seven years will be introduced in Wales. This curriculum known as 'the foundation phase' (explained in the glossary) will have seven areas of learning. The focus of children's learning will be on:

- well-planned play;
- working with their classmates and adults; and
- solving real-life problems.

Senior managers will need to plan how they will provide better opportunities for children to explore and experiment through play and to take part more actively in their learning. We shall report on the introduction of the foundation phase over the next few years.

In primary schools

Almost all primary schools provide a broad and balanced curriculum. The quality of planning is good or very good in just over 70% of schools. There are some weaknesses in about a quarter of schools where planning does not cover all the common requirements (explained in the glossary) of the National Curriculum.

Nearly all schools provide pupils with a good range of cultural and sporting activities. These activities help to improve pupils' achievement, confidence and self-esteem. Most schools provide homework tasks and, in the best cases, give guidance to parents about how long pupils should spend on their homework.

In just over half the schools, there are good or very good partnerships with local businesses, which help pupils to gain an understanding of the world of work. Visits by health visitors and the police add to pupils' understanding of health and safety issues, including sex education and the dangers of misusing drugs and other substances.

More and more schools are listening to, and acting on, pupils' views about the quality of their experiences inside and outside the classroom. Many schools have set up a school's council so pupils can influence the decisions that affect them. Arrangements for pupils' personal and social development continue to be good or very good in just over 70% of primary schools. From September 2003, all schools have to teach personal and social education as part of the National Curriculum. In a recent survey, we found that most schools have prepared well for this.

In 80% of schools, pupils' spiritual, moral and social development continues to be good or very good. Many schools successfully create an ethos, which respects the beliefs and traditions of others. About a quarter of schools could do more to help pupils improve their learning about cultures and traditions around the world, including Wales.

Some pupils are benefiting from stronger links between local primary and secondary schools. As a result, these pupils transfer more easily to their new school, and they also make better use of their time in the last year in the primary

school and the first year in the secondary school. For example, in year 7, pupils do not waste time repeating work they studied in year 6. More schools need to improve curricular links with their partner schools to make sure that all pupils make the best possible progress when they change schools.

In secondary schools

Around three-quarters of the schools provide a broad and balanced curriculum. However, in key stage 3, fewer schools than last year offer a second modern foreign language or allow enough time for some subjects such as design and technology, and religious education. In key stage 4, more schools work with **further-education institutions** or **work-based training** companies. As a result, they can provide a wider choice of courses, many of which are vocational. Many of the pupils who are not interested in a mainly academic curriculum respond well to this wider choice. All schools offer a good range of sporting and cultural activities, which enrich the lives and experiences of many pupils.

Overall, curriculum planning is good or very good in only four out of ten schools. In too many schools, there is good planning in some subjects but not in others. Weaknesses in subject planning include:

- not enough detail and guidance for teachers; and
- no clear learning aims for pupils.

More schools are giving pupils interesting, varied and regular homework tasks that support their class work. However, the quality and value of the tasks often differs too much between subjects. In the best examples, homework is well planned, challenging and worthwhile, and it helps pupils to develop good study habits and to extend their skills. At worst, it is trivial and wastes the time of both teachers and pupils.

Nearly three-quarters of schools make good arrangements for pupils' personal and social education (PSE). This proportion is lower than last year. Just over a third of schools teach PSE as a separate subject. Others use form-tutor sessions for this work. As a whole, there is little difference in the quality of PSE regardless of the type of teaching arrangement. However, the greatest benefit comes when all subjects contribute fully to pupils' personal and social development.

Over 60% of schools have set up a school council. These arrangements make it possible for pupils to give their views on a range of issues that affect them, both inside and outside the classroom. More and more pupils now feel that teachers listen to their views and take them into account when making important decisions.

Only six out of 10 schools do a good job in developing pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural awareness. About half the schools, have weaknesses in the quality of their provision for pupils' spiritual development. Collective worship does not do enough to promote pupils' spiritual development. Many schools do not meet the legal requirement to hold a daily act of collective worship.

Most schools need to do more to help pupils improve their learning about cultures and traditions in countries around the world, including Wales.

In special schools

Local authority special schools plan for all National Curriculum subjects and provide opportunities for pupils to develop key skills. Teachers adapt the curriculum to suit pupils' special educational needs.

Most **independent special schools** teach key skills well. They often cannot provide teaching for all pupils in subjects such as a modern foreign language or music. In some independent special schools, there is an over-emphasis on teaching the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. As a result, pupils do not have enough opportunities to study other areas of the curriculum, such as history, geography and religious education.

All special schools support pupils' personal and social development well. A wide range of activities, including residential programmes, offers valuable opportunities for pupils to develop their confidence and social skills. Most teachers help pupils to become independent. They give them responsibility for their own work and for daily classroom activities. In many special schools, the Cwricwlwm Cymreig (explained in the glossary) makes an important contribution to all subjects.

Those pupils that take part in learning activities in mainstream schools often respond well to the social and educational experiences that this arrangement provides. However, few schools provide pupils with enough of these experiences.

Using information and communications technology (ICT) in schools

This year, there is more and better use of ICT to support teaching in subjects across the curriculum. In most schools, using interactive whiteboards (explained in the glossary), ICT suites (explained in the glossary) and the Internet have improved the quality of teaching and learning. However, many schools could do more to share their good work with other schools, or between teachers in their own school.

Local education authorities (LEAs) are gradually installing broadband access in schools to provide teachers and pupils with faster and better access to e-mail and the Internet. However, this installation is proving difficult for schools in remote rural locations.

The effect of computer-aided design and manufacture in secondary schools

In most secondary schools, pupils use a range of computer-aided design software and computer-aided manufacturing machine tools to study art, and design and technology. These resources help pupils to improve the presentation of their work and to produce articles of good quality. The standard of this work is generally good. In about a quarter of schools, pupils in key stage 4 achieve very good standards. Most post-16 students on courses in art, and design and technology use these facilities well.

In further-education institutions

Most institutions provide a wide range of courses and many of them now have more courses at lower levels of study as well as at advanced levels. Overall, institutions have been successful in attracting more people from a wider range of backgrounds onto their courses.

Some courses have excellent links with industry, which helps with course planning and makes sure that courses meet the needs of the local job market. However, this work is not developed enough in many institutions.

Institutions help learners develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. In many institutions, some courses have a curriculum that reflects the life and culture of Wales, but progress in this area is slow.

A minority of institutions have formal partnerships with **schools** for students over 16 years of age. Where these partnerships exist, they offer learners opportunities

to study a wider range of courses. Many institutions also work with schools to provide an alternative curriculum for some pupils under 16 years of age. Often, these arrangements help pupils to continue in education and training, although these courses are not always vocational enough.

All full-time students follow courses in key skills. In a few institutions, students' achievements in key skills are good because teachers have involved key skills within their teaching of subjects or vocational studies. Currently, 12 institutions are extending students' learning experiences in key skills by introducing the Welsh Baccalaureate (explained in the glossary). However, the quality of key skills provision is often unsatisfactory.

Curriculum 2000

In general, the 'Curriculum 2000' initiative aims to:

- encourage young people to study a broader range of subjects;
- help them to study a mixture of academic and vocational courses; and
- develop students' key skills to support their future learning and employment.

These aims are now well in place in **school** sixth forms and **further-education institutions**. Overall, post-16 learners now study more subjects in their first year than they did before the curriculum changes. Students' attainments (explained in the glossary) at Advanced Supplementary (AS) level are good. However, few students study a broad range of subjects, or combine academic and vocational courses. Many students do not see key skills sessions as useful for their learning or employment aims, and this happens most often when key skills are not taught as part of the students' main course of study.

In work-based training

Most providers work well with employers. Together, they help trainees complete National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) and short additional courses. The best providers also organise activities that help to develop trainees' personal and social skills.

Many providers still do not do enough to help trainees develop their basic (explained in the glossary) and key skills (explained in the glossary) and to complete their full training programme. Providers need to do much more to

improve opportunities to equip trainees to meet the shortage of skills in some occupational areas. There are not enough opportunities for trainees to learn in Welsh.

On New Deal programmes

Overall, the quality of learning experiences for clients on New Deal is good. However, more needs to be done to increase the numbers who leave New Deal to start work. Most providers take care to find placements that will interest clients as well as meet their needs. If more employers hired clients, on New Deal placements, as permanent employees, they would increase the numbers who leave the programme and start work. However, in many cases, either the employer does not have a permanent job available or at the end of trainee's placement, a new trainee takes up the work placement.

Most providers place clients alongside learners on other work-based training courses. This arrangement helps clients to learn from each other and share experiences. The best providers make sure that clients have good opportunities to develop their basic skills through work activities in their placement. Learning is generally less effective when clients develop their basic skills in classroom settings.

In youth work

Many youth workers use the Youth Work Curriculum Statement for Wales (explained in the glossary) to plan good work. They provide activities that challenge young people and help them to see more possibilities in life. These activities include:

- information and advice;
- performing arts;
- health education;
- international exchanges; and
- outdoor education.

Youth services are generally good at giving young people the chance to have new learning experiences. They are also successful in helping young people feel at ease. Many young people have more opportunities to make their views known about youth work and suggest sensible ways to make their learning experiences

better. These opportunities help them to influence directly the decisions that affect them. It also helps them to develop as citizens by taking part in planning and decision-making.

There are not enough opportunities for young people to take part in youth work in the Welsh language.

In adult and community-based learning

Most adults without any qualifications still do not have enough opportunities to learn because:

- too many providers do not offer enough of the right type of course to interest learners and meet their needs; and
- learners do not always have enough suitable courses locally.

In this case, 'providers' are organisations that provide education or training. The best providers work out what will interest learners. They work well with others to put on suitable courses that provide good learning experiences for adults.

On teacher-training courses

Colleges and **schools** are now working together more effectively. They give trainee teachers valuable experiences of teaching when they are in school. However, schools do not give all trainees a chance to teach pupils from across the whole age-range for which they are training.

In general, tutors do not plan the college part of the course carefully enough. One course did not meet the requirements for teacher-training. Tutors usually make sure that what trainees do in college links well to what happens in schools but they do not always check how much trainees know about the subjects they teach. This situation is most common in subjects where tutors do not have to check trainees' knowledge as part of the Welsh Assembly Government's requirements for trainee teachers. Tutors still do not give trainees enough guidance on how to assess pupils' progress, such as using National Curriculum levels of attainment.

Across Wales, a few colleges are developing courses at different levels to meet the learning needs of serving (qualified) teachers. They are also improving the ways in which they help trainee teachers to prepare for further learning in their careers.

However, the number of serving teachers who take up courses at higher degree level is quite low. Most colleges do not do enough to find out:

- how these courses help teachers to improve their teaching; and
- what courses teachers will need in the future.

Careers companies

Careers companies produce a range of information of good-quality about careers and the job market. Some companies have useful publications that promote the use of Welsh in the workplace.

Section Four

How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?

In settings for the under-fives

Teachers in settings for the under-fives give high priority to children's care, welfare and protection. They get to know the children well and build good relationships with them.

Teachers and other adults make sure that children are well supervised both indoors and outdoors. They provide clear guidelines and routines that help children to play, work safely, and grow in confidence and independence.

In primary schools

The quality of care, guidance and support for pupils is good or very good in almost all schools. There are well-planned policies and procedures to protect the pupils' welfare, health and safety. Many schools involve pupils in thinking about their own rules. Almost all schools have effective measures in place to help prevent bullying and teachers take prompt and appropriate action where it does occur.

In most schools, pupils have very good relationships with teachers and other adults. Teachers help pupils to become independent, take responsibility, and develop confidence. Child-protection procedures are good or better in 90% of schools, and satisfactory in almost all others.

In secondary schools

Almost all secondary schools care for and support pupils well in their learning. Most schools have good strategies for dealing with bullying and helping to prevent it happening in the first place.

Form tutors play an important part in many schools. Many of these tutors work well with their pupils to set targets for improvement. Although many schools set aside time for this work, too many schools do not give tutors enough time to do their work properly. A few schools do not have clear links between pastoral and academic support.

Local education authorities (LEAs) education welfare officers provide good support for those schools and pupils with attendance problems. However, where

there are serious attendance problems, most officers do not have enough time to work with schools and pupils. More and more schools use the **youth service** well to help pupils with behavioural problems fit into normal school life.

In special schools

Almost all schools continue to give high priority to the quality of care, guidance and support of pupils. They work very well with specialists from other agencies, but there is still not enough speech and language therapy for pupils.

Teachers and pupils have good relationships and most pupils feel valued, happy and secure. In most schools, teachers and other adults work well together to make sure that individual education and care plans meet pupils' needs. However, in some residential schools, teachers and care workers do not always deal with pupils' behaviour consistently.

In further-education institutions

Further-education institutions guide, support and care for students well. Most have clear policies and a wide range of services to support the students' welfare. However, managers need to do more to monitor and evaluate the effect these services have on students' achievement, so that they can offer the best kind of support, particularly for those students who need help with learning skills.

Most institutions have good arrangements to deal with applications and enrolments. Most students have an appropriate introduction to their programme to help them settle in quickly. Support for students' learning skills is generally good, especially where it forms part of students' main course of study.

Managers and teachers often get to know their students well. However, they do not always use their services effectively to help students who are at the greatest risk of dropping out of courses.

In work-based training

Generally, trainees have good personal support and guidance and as a result, most trainees become more confident. Most follow a good induction programme that includes an assessment of their basic (explained in the glossary) and key skills (explained in the glossary). However, trainers do not always use this information well enough in trainees' individual learning plans. As a result, the quality of the training suffers. Trainers review trainees' progress well, but they do not involve employers and work-based supervisors enough in this activity.

Many providers are good at putting young people in touch with organisations that can give them support or advice. As a result, young people find out more about issues such as drug abuse and alcoholism, which may be affecting their lives and their ability to learn effectively.

On New Deal programmes

Most providers have good partnerships with other organisations. As a result, they are better at supporting the needs of clients on New Deal programmes.

However, many clients often have poor basic skills as well as a range of personal, social and behavioural problems. Dealing with these problems takes up a lot of time and effort that could otherwise be spent on training and learning. Most providers have good systems and effective strategies to identify these needs, but they often find it difficult to deliver the full range of support required.

In youth work

Youth workers support young people well. They build up good relationships with them and help young people to feel confident about making their views known.

When youth workers work well with local partners, they are good at putting young people in touch with specialist workers who help them with issues such as health, homelessness and career choices.

There are not always enough support services to provide practical help for young people on issues such as drug abuse and mental health, and to which youth workers can refer young people. Some young people cannot find help when and where they need it, most often in rural areas.

In adult and community-based learning

Most teachers continue to provide good support for adult learners. This support helps learners to do as well as possible on their course. In the best examples, learners are given good advice on which course would be best for them before they start their classes. Teachers encourage most adult learners to go on to other courses and see learning as a way of gaining skills for leisure and employment. The weaknesses we reported last year still remain. Some learners do not have enough help to:

- improve their learning skills; and
- learn in Welsh.

On teacher-training courses

Tutors and teachers provide good care, guidance and support for trainee teachers. They are developing better ways of helping trainees from a wider range of backgrounds. Tutors and teachers listen carefully to trainees and when trainees have personal difficulties, tutors find ways to help them to stay on the course. Colleges provide good advice and support for the few trainees who decide that teaching is not for them.

Careers companies

Careers companies work well with partners from other organisations. As a result, they are able to provide a good range of activities to help young people understand more about business and industry.

In the best cases, careers companies help schools organise and manage work experience for pupils very well. Recently, careers companies have provided advisers who act as a mentor for pupils on work experience. In some placements, this arrangement has worked very well and the mentor's support is highly valued by teachers and pupils. However, there is too much variation in the quality of the service provided by careers companies, in both work placements and mentoring.

Section Five

How well do leaders and managers meet the needs of learners?

In settings for the under-fives

In those local education authorities (LEAs) schools with classes for children under five, many senior managers are good at evaluating the work and planning for improvement. The best leaders and managers:

- have clear policies and plans for the under-fives;
- make sure that teachers, parents and (where appropriate) governors work well together;
- have good contacts with other settings that children may attend to share information;
- monitor and evaluate children's progress and achievements; and
- have high expectations of children's success.

In many other settings, senior managers often find it difficult to plan for improvement because they do not know enough about the strengths and weaknesses of their setting or how to make improvements. Often, senior managers have no specific training or qualification in management skills. Some settings could make better use of the support available from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships (explained in the glossary).

Most settings have a high ratio of adults to children. In many places, children also benefit from the support of volunteers and trainee teachers, who work with teachers and assistants.

In many settings, there are problems with the quality of accommodation (the buildings and outdoor play areas). Senior managers try hard to overcome difficulties created by inadequate teaching areas but many children do not have enough opportunities to explore and experiment through play, both indoors and outdoors. In some settings, particularly those that are not maintained by LEAs, the premises are old, shared with others or suffer from vandalism. In these settings, managers face an added responsibility for children's safety and security.

In primary schools

The quality of leadership and management has improved a little this year. Leadership is good or very good in three-quarters of schools. Most headteachers, senior managers and governors provide clear direction for improvement.

The work of subject leaders shows the biggest improvement this year. Subject leaders are teachers with a special responsibility for an area of the school's curriculum. In almost half of the schools we inspected their work is good or very good. Schools that do well:

- provide non-teaching time for subject leaders to carry out their tasks;
- help subject leaders to improve through training; and
- use subject leaders to help improve teaching and learning and to drive up standards.

Effective subject leaders:

- have good knowledge of the subject for which they are responsible;
- know the strengths and weaknesses of the way the subject is learnt and taught in the school;
- monitor pupils' progress and standards and help to set targets for improvement; and
- help and support their colleagues well.

Overall, the quality of schools' self-evaluation and planning for improvement is not as good as last year. A slightly larger proportion of schools have some weaknesses in this area of their work and they need to improve how they:

- collect and use information about learners' achievements;
- put development plans into practice; and
- monitor and evaluate outcomes.

Generally, schools have enough teachers and support workers with relevant qualifications and experience to meet pupils' needs. In around 70% of schools, induction, appraisal and training for teachers are good or very good. In many schools, evaluating the standards and the quality of teaching is helping to identify teachers' training needs.

The way that governors and senior managers evaluate major spending decisions has improved slightly. In almost three-quarters of schools, it is good or very good. Most schools could do more to help governors be more questioning about the standards pupils achieve and the quality of education they receive.

The quality of school accommodation is slightly better in the schools we inspected this year. Just over 60% of the schools have good accommodation. Fewer than 7% have unsatisfactory accommodation. The main problems are:

- some buildings are in a poor state of repair;
- limited space for indoor and outdoor play for children under five;
- not enough space for physical education and for the whole school to meet; and
- poor access for pupils with physical disabilities.

Most schools have enough good-quality learning resources (such as books), which they use well. Many schools have invested well in a range of IT equipment. This investment has helped pupils to learn more and has raised standards.

In secondary schools

Most head teachers lead their schools well. They have a clear vision of what their school should provide and what their pupils should achieve. They make sure that this vision is shared and all teachers work with a common purpose. In two-thirds of schools, middle managers lead their departments with drive and enthusiasm. This year, there are also many more schools where middle managers' work is of consistently good quality.

The quality of self-evaluation has improved. In the best examples:

- teachers help to plan, introduce and monitor improvement projects;

- improvement planning is rigorous and departmental plans more clearly support the main school plan; and
- managers monitor how well strategies are working and, when necessary, take action to bring about improvements.

Several schools have asked pupils and their parents for their opinions about the school. This information has often raised important issues that other monitoring systems have not brought to light.

In about 10% of schools, self-evaluation is weak, usually because leaders are ineffective. In other words, they do not deal with the weaknesses they find. In some cases, middle managers do not show in their work that they share the headteacher's vision of improvement. In these schools, self-evaluation procedures are not good enough. Other schools are in difficulties because a few members of staff have been absent for long periods. Often, senior managers spend a lot of their time managing day-to-day problems at the expense of time spent on improvement strategies. Over time, this slows the school's long-term development. About 5% of schools are facing this sort of crisis and their performance is falling further and further behind that of the most effective schools.

Overall, governors are taking a stronger lead in school management. They make better use of information from self-evaluation reviews to monitor the school's progress. Some governors work with a department or a manager so they can have a better understanding of the challenges the school is facing.

Schools generally manage their budgets carefully. Managers focus their spending on the priorities in the development plan and make sure that the school gets good value for money. Overall, the quality of learning resources is much the same as last year. However, in about a quarter of schools, pupils do not have regular opportunities to use information and communications technology (ICT).

Headteachers and governors plan carefully to improve the quality of accommodation. Overall, the accommodation is slightly better than in the schools we inspected last year. However, we still see:

- classrooms that are too small for the number of pupils;
- shabby classrooms that let in rainwater;

- poor-quality temporary buildings;
- unsatisfactory facilities for physical education;
- not enough specialist accommodation, particularly for practical subjects; and
- unpleasant toilets for pupils.

In special schools

The quality of leadership and management continues to be good or very good in most special schools. In 30% of schools, it is very good. In these schools, headteachers and governors have clear aims and high expectations of pupils.

Where leadership and management are very good, senior managers:

- make sure the work of teachers and support workers meets pupils' individual learning, care and health needs;
- arrange for teachers to share their knowledge and skills and learn from each other;
- regularly visit classrooms to see how well pupils are doing;
- make sure pupils have opportunities to take part in activities with the local community and mainstream schools;
- find ways to involve teachers, parents and pupils in the school's plans for school improvement; and
- make sure that financial planning is linked to the school's priorities for improvement.

Where leadership and management have some weaknesses, senior managers do not:

- use assessment information effectively to set targets for school improvement;
- use the work of subject leaders to help monitor and evaluate pupils' standards and help set targets for improvement;

- make sure that financial planning gives good value for money; and
- set up good links between teachers and care workers in residential schools in order to raise standards and improve pupils' personal and social development.

The quality of residential accommodation in special schools is better than we reported last year. However, about a half of special schools, still have some problems with their accommodation. There is not enough indoor or outdoor space or specialist accommodation, particularly for practical subjects. In particular, physical education facilities are often unsatisfactory.

Improving leaders and managers in schools

The National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) and the Leadership Programme for Serving Head Teachers (LPSH) are professional courses aimed at helping senior managers to improve their leadership and management skills. Both programmes do this well.

The NPQH programme helps teachers to get to grips with the demands of their first headship. The activities give them a firm foundation on which they can build. However, the quality of support that they get during the training varies too much across **schools** and **local education authorities** (LEAs).

The LPSH helps headteachers to learn about different styles of leadership and to become more skilled at working with others and leading school improvement.

In further-education institutions

The quality of leadership and management is good or very good in only about a quarter of institutions. In two-thirds of institutions, there are strengths but also weaknesses. In one of the institutions we inspected, leadership and management are unsatisfactory.

In the best examples, leaders and managers:

- have clear aims and take close account of local and national priorities;
- make sure there is good teamwork;
- plan well for improvement;

- set targets for faculties and courses;
- manage changes well and make sure teachers are clear about their roles;
- provide strong leadership by taking forward improvements; and
- make sure learners achieve high standards.

Weaknesses in leadership and management arise because:

- there is not enough analysis of learners' performance compared with their previous attainments (explained in the glossary);
- information on learners' performance is not used enough to set targets for improvement;
- there is too much difference between quality and standards in different areas of the institution; and
- middle managers are unclear about their roles or have responsibilities that are too wide-ranging to manage successfully.

Our inspections show that there are strong links between weak management, poor teaching and learners' low achievement (explained in the glossary).

A small number of institutions face financial difficulties that may affect their future. In these cases, senior managers are finding it difficult to concentrate on improving their educational provision and raising standards.

Governors support their institutions well. In about half the institutions, they are involved with senior managers in evaluating the quality of provision. In other institutions, governors do not know enough about the curriculum and what learners achieve. Learners' views are not represented enough on many governing bodies.

Institutions often have suitable systems to appraise senior managers. Many principals have personal targets that are linked to putting institutional plans into practice. However, appraisal does not extend enough to middle managers and other teaching staff.

Systems to monitor and improve quality and standards are good or better in about a third of institutions and satisfactory in nearly all the rest. About half of the institutions thoroughly revised and improved their arrangements during the year. However, many of them do not put the systems fully into practice. Senior managers need to make sure that they take into account general areas of provision, such as learning-resource centres (explained in the glossary), learning support and student services, when they monitor and improve their provisions for learners.

Institutions generally have enough suitably qualified teachers, but recruiting teachers who can teach in Welsh is often difficult. Training for teachers is generally good, but too few teachers are updating their work experience of industry. The quality of resources for learning is better this year. Many institutions have excellent learning resource centres and good information and communications technology (ICT) systems. More middle managers now know the costs of courses and resources than previously, and this information helps them to plan more efficiently. More institutions have joined purchasing consortia (explained in the glossary) to reduce their costs.

Most institutions have invested heavily to improve their accommodation and resources, and the results of this spending are often very good. However, in almost all institutions, there is at least a small amount of unsatisfactory accommodation. While many institutions are working hard to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act, wheelchair access is still limited in a minority of buildings. About two-thirds of institutions achieve good value for money. There are important weaknesses in the remainder, especially where learners do not attain good results.

In work-based training

The quality of leadership and management in work-based training remains a serious concern. Only about a third of providers plan and manage the training well and quality assure their work effectively. One in seven providers has important weaknesses in planning and managing the training. One in three providers has important weaknesses in managing the quality of their training. This is worse than last year.

Nearly three-quarters of providers do not make enough use of information about what trainees achieve or the numbers of trainees who complete their course. This information would help providers find out which part of their work they need to

improve. Self-assessment reports do not refer enough to the quality of training and do not provide a good enough starting point for improvement.

Too many providers do not match their training to the requirements of the jobs that trainees will be applying for. In the worst cases, trainees repeat tasks they have already mastered. More than a third of providers do not set challenging targets for learners or monitor their progress towards achieving them. Almost all providers have some weaknesses in their systems of monitoring and improving the quality of training. Training providers are sometimes business rivals, which makes it difficult for them to share good work. Nevertheless, there are not enough opportunities for providers to learn enough from good work elsewhere in the sector:

Many of the serious weaknesses in leadership and management relate to poor quality control. To improve, providers should:

- carefully assess trainees' needs and progress;
- set more challenging targets to improve trainees' achievements;
- use monitoring information more effectively;
- use employers' and trainees' views to improve training;
- produce good-quality action plans to improve training;
- work more closely with employers to help develop the local economy; and
- evaluate all areas of the training more thoroughly.

Most trainers are well qualified and have good industrial experience, and some training providers offer them opportunities to improve their skills. In the best cases, training providers offer:

- good initial induction for new trainers;
- appraisal of trainers' work;
- work shadowing (explained in the glossary);

- industrial work placements; and
- regular team meetings.

There is a strong link between effective mentoring support and trainees achieving high standards. However, there are too few opportunities for trainers to improve their professional skills in mentoring trainees in work-based training.

Overall, the workplace and training centres provide good accommodation for trainees.

On New Deal programmes

The quality of leadership and management on New Deal programmes shows a little improvement, but it is still poor in 20% of the providers. This year, Jobcentre Plus asked all providers to carry out a self-assessment. In some cases, the reports are weak because there are usually poor systems for judging and improving the quality of New Deal programmes. Most of the larger providers include the self-assessment of their New Deal programmes with the self-assessment of their other work-based training. In these cases, systems for monitoring and improving quality are sometimes good. However, this is the first time that many of the smaller providers have completed a self-assessment exercise and their self-assessment reports are often weak.

Trainers are usually well qualified. They work well together, in small teams, to meet learners' needs. A few trainers have been on New Deal programmes themselves in the past and this experience helps them to understand and motivate learners.

Accommodation and other training resources are mostly good. Most of the training takes place in the workplace, where providers make sure that learners are safe. In other areas of the New Deal programme, such as job search, many providers use the same buildings that they use for other training courses. This accommodation is usually good. However, a few providers use rooms that are too small for the number of learners present.

In youth work

This year we inspected three youth-service providers. The quality of leadership and management varies among providers but overall, this area has improved in recent years. Most youth service managers are now doing more to improve the

quality of their service. Many have found suitable ways to assess their progress and this work is beginning to make a difference. The best managers:

- set goals for improvement;
- take account of the needs of young people in different communities;
- collect information about how well their service is doing and use it to make improvements;
- work well with other partners to offer projects that give young people a more flexible choice of service; and
- make sure that youth workers are clear about how they can help the service reach its goals.

Most managers need to do more to attract young people from under-represented groups to take part in the youth service. For example, not many young people with disabilities take part in the full range of youth work. Managers do not take enough account of the needs of these groups, or make provision for them.

More managers are developing ways to take youth work into the places where young people live. However, there are still not enough opportunities for young people living in rural areas to take part in youth work.

There has been little improvement in the quality of the buildings used for youth work. Many of the buildings are in a poor state of repair and often do not provide suitable places for young people. There is not enough long-term planning of resources to maintain and improve accommodation for youth work.

Youth service managers provide good support and training for their teams. The majority of youth workers are qualified and well trained but even though there are more people training as youth workers than ever before, managers often find it difficult to recruit enough workers to fill new posts.

In adult and community-based learning

Most senior managers provide good leadership. The best managers work closely with partners to plan together and share resources. This arrangement helps to make sure that the courses meet learners' and local needs as well as national priorities. In some cases, where **local education authorities** (LEAs) and

further-education institutions work well together; there are plenty of resources for providers to build for the future as well as meet immediate priorities.

However, many providers have to work with limited financial resources and many managers spend large amounts of time seeking extra funding. This can limit the time that managers spend on improving the quality of their provision.

A few managers have good plans for improvement with challenging targets to help them provide better services to all learners. However, in most providers, planning has not improved since last year. Most managers need to make more use of information on:

- where learners live in order to see how well they are enrolling learners from all parts of the community;
- the skills needed by people locally in order to meet local skill shortages; and
- learners' views in order to improve the quality of the service they provide.

On teacher-training courses

The quality of leadership and management of initial teacher-training is satisfactory overall. It was good in only one of the two colleges we inspected this year. Senior managers have dealt with some areas of the training that needed to be improved but not all. They have developed effective ways to judge the quality of training in schools but have been slow to improve the college-based part of the training. More teachers from **schools** help to plan courses, but they are not involved enough in evaluating them. Managers are now better at finding out what trainees and examiners think about the training.

Every year, managers review their courses. They also draw up action plans to improve them. These reports and action plans help managers to make improvements. However, the reports are not critical enough of weaknesses and the action plans are not specific enough. Tutors need more training in how to write effective action plans.

For the first time this year, we began our inspections of colleges with their self-evaluation reports. These reports clearly identify many of the strengths and

weaknesses in the college training. However, they miss several important matters and are sometimes too generous in their evaluations.

Managers use resources (such as accommodation and staff) effectively. Tutors are usually well qualified and experienced. Visiting lecturers contribute well to the college part of courses. Managers take care choosing the schools where they place trainees. Guidance documents clearly set out the different roles of teachers and tutors. As a result, teachers and tutors understand their duties and carry out their work effectively. For example, there is now more joint observation of trainees' teaching by teachers and college tutors. This joint observation allows them to compare notes and make better judgements. College tutors watch each other teaching. They use these opportunities well to share good work but it does not happen often enough.

Careers companies

The quality of leadership and management is good in the companies we inspected this year. Company directors provide clear leadership and are committed to improving the quality of services to clients. They use clients' views and consult advisers well on how to plan improvements to services. However, when companies analyse the feedback from clients they do not always focus enough on the benefits clients get from the service.

Many companies are struggling to find enough suitably qualified advisers. One company is overcoming this problem by training local people. Some companies have used the principles of 'Investors in People' (explained in the glossary) to develop the expertise of their advisers.

Section Six

The performance of local education authorities

This year, with the help of the Audit Commission, we inspected education services in 18 local authorities. In all, this involved 27 educational service areas, including four services for pupils with special educational needs and eight school-improvement services.

We judge the quality of each service and its prospects for improvement. Chart 21 summarises our assessment of the services we inspected from September 2002 to July 2003.

Chart 21: The quality of services provided by local education authorities

How good is the service?

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
Excellent	2				2
Promising	4	7	2		13
Uncertain		5	5		10
Poor					
No judgement		1	1		2
Total	6	13	8		27

What are its prospects for improvement?

The quality of the services we inspected this year are generally better than last year. More services are excellent and none is poor. The services' improvement prospects are similar to last year, but more services have uncertain prospects for improvement.

Only one of the special educational needs services is of good quality. The other three are fair. The strongest features are:

- the commitment and high levels of specialist expertise of advisers and other workers within the service;
- effective consultation and good communication with teachers in schools;

- fewer pupils needing statements of special educational need in line with inclusion (explained in the glossary) policies; and
- more pupils with special educational needs who are included in mainstream classes in their local school.

The most common areas that need attention are:

- important weaknesses in strategic planning to support pupils with special educational needs; and
- unclear arrangements for allocating resources to schools.

School-improvement services are excellent in three authorities and good in four others. The other service is fair. The most common strengths are:

- the clear direction that the LEA has set for the service, which fits well with the wider authority aims and the education strategic plan;
- suitable challenge and support for schools, especially those that are not performing well;
- users' high levels of satisfaction with the service;
- clear evidence that the service has had a positive effect on the performance of schools; and
- effective use of advisers and other workers to meet schools' needs.

In some LEAs, areas of the school-improvement service that need attention include:

- the service's ability to meet the individual needs of the authority's schools';
- weak performance management; and
- funding arrangements that are not clear enough to allow service users to judge cost-effectiveness.

In authorities where prospects for improvement are good:

- councillors and senior officers are fully and actively committed to improving education services;
- there is effective leadership and management of the services;
- the processes for reviewing services are thorough;
- there are sound arrangements for monitoring and evaluating service provision; and
- there is a good record of continuous improvement.

Where prospects for improvement are uncertain, this is usually because:

- there are important weaknesses in the service's improvement plan;
- the service's financial arrangements are unclear; and
- progress in making the improvements is slow or uneven.

The development of performance information to help schools set and meet targets

Local education authorities (LEAs) generally do a lot to help schools set targets for pupils' performance. LEAs share information with senior staff about advisers' visits to schools and they provide analyses of pupils' performance in tests and examinations. LEA officers also discuss schools' performance with governors and senior managers. However, many LEAs still need to make sure that schools:

- have enough information to compare their performance with similar schools; and
- make better use of information, including published data on comparative schools (these are schools with similar proportions of pupils who are entitled to free school meals).

More and more LEAs are using performance information, including our school inspection reports and schools' own reports on their performance. This information helps LEAs to decide what support they will offer each school. In the best cases, LEAs use clear criteria to decide how much support they will give each school and they share this information with the schools involved.

LEAs have done a lot to help schools raise standards in key stage 3 and to improve pupils' learning when they move from primary to secondary school. This work has contributed to the improvements in standards in key stage 3 that we have reported this year. However, LEAs should do more to help secondary schools make better use of information on pupils' performance in key stage 2. Many LEAs are still not doing enough to challenge and support secondary schools to raise standards in their weaker departments.

Local education authorities' use of grants for education, support and training

LEAs use grants for education, support and training (GEST) to pay for specialist teachers, classroom assistants and other workers, materials and teachers' training. LEAs consult well with governors, senior managers and teachers to set up a wide range of training courses. These courses take account of the Welsh Assembly Government's priorities and are generally of good quality. The training programmes have been particularly effective in helping schools to raise literacy and numeracy standards. Most LEAs could do more to assess the effect this training has on the work of schools. If they did this, it would help them to know what is most successful so that all schools can benefit.

Training courses help governors to carry out their duties, but LEAs need to encourage governors to be more questioning about the standards pupils achieve and the quality of their education. Most LEAs need to do more to make sure that more governors receive regular training.

Section Seven

Developing Wales as a 'learning' country

In 2001, the Welsh Assembly Government published 'The Learning Country', which set out their plans for making Wales a 'learning' country. In this section, we report on a range of issues that support this aim.

The attainment of pupils in Wales and other countries

There is no first-hand evidence that allows us to compare the recent performance of primary school pupils in Wales with those of countries outside the United Kingdom. However, over recent years, pupils in key stage 1 in Wales and England have reached similar standards in national assessment tasks and tests. Over the same period, in key stage 2, pupils in Wales have reached standards in national assessment tasks and tests that are generally slightly better than those reached by pupils in England. In 2002, pupils in Wales performed better in English than pupils in Northern Ireland and in all nine regions in England (see note 1 below). Wales falls behind Northern Ireland in the achievements of pupils in mathematics, but the gap has closed in recent years.

In 2003, the proportion of pupils in key stage 1 in Wales reaching the expected level in teacher assessments in English, mathematics and science was slightly lower than in England but was within three percentage points in each case. In teacher assessments and tasks in 2003, a greater proportion of pupils in key stage 2 in Wales reached the expected level in each of English, mathematics and science than those in England.

This year, a report by the National Foundation for Educational Research examined the performance of Year 5 pupils in England (see note 2 below). Pupils in Wales did not take part in the study but, given their broadly similar performance in national tasks and tests, it is reasonable to assume that pupils in Wales would have performed similarly to pupils in England. The study found that at about the age of 10, pupils in England are, on average, among the most able readers compared with pupils of the same age in other countries. English pupils were ranked third, in terms of reading achievement, out of the 35 countries that took part in the study. The study also shows that pupils in England, like pupils in Wales, have a wide span

Note 1 The English Government Office Regions are: East Midlands, East of England, London, North East, North West, South East, South West, West Midlands and Yorkshire and The Humber.

Note 2 Reading all over the world, a national report for England, Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS 2001), carried out by the National Foundation for Educational Research and Department for Education and Skills 2003.

of reading attainment. The most able English pupils were among the highest achievers of all the pupils in the study. However, the low-achieving English pupils were among the lowest in the whole study.

In key stage 3, pupils in Wales do not generally perform as well in National Curriculum assessments as pupils in England. In English and mathematics, fewer pupils in Wales reached the expected level in the 2002 tests than in any region in England and Northern Ireland. Science results for pupils in Wales are similar to results for pupils in England, and several percentage points better than those for pupils in Northern Ireland.

The proportion of 15-year-olds in Wales gaining five or more GCSE grades A* to C, or their equivalent, fell two percentage points below that of England in 2002, after having matched the England figure for several years. The proportion continues to lag behind that for Northern Ireland by several percentage points. The proportion of pupils gaining five or more grades A* to G, or their equivalent, continues to be lower than that in England or Northern Ireland and it was again lower in Wales than in all English regions.

From 1999 to 2003, the proportion of pupils in Wales who left school without a single GCSE or GNVQ qualification reduced by about 20%. This progress and achievement is encouraging, however, many schools will need to increase their efforts to help pupils gain qualifications in order to meet the Welsh Assembly Government's target for 2004.

Schools in Wales vary a lot in the extent to which they are able to motivate the least able pupils. Schools need to do more to make sure that all pupils benefit fully from their time in education.

Foundations for learning

Behaviour

Good behaviour helps create the right environment for learning. Pupils will progress and achieve more when their own behaviour, and that of the pupils around them, is good. When pupils behave well, teachers can concentrate on their learning aims for pupils. As a result, teachers and pupils can make the best use of their time.

Pupils' behaviour is good or very good in almost all **primary** and **special** schools and in nearly three-quarters of **secondary** schools. In all schools, the great

majority of pupils are sensible, polite and keep to the rules. They work well with each other and with their teachers.

In schools where pupils' behaviour is good, this is usually because teachers make sure:

- the learning and teaching are interesting and challenging; and
- everyone follows the rules.

In some lessons, a few pupils lose interest quickly and distract others. In a small number of schools, many pupils behave in this way. This poor behaviour happens relatively rarely in primary classrooms, but in at least a few classes in nearly every secondary school.

A small number of pupils regularly behave badly. Most schools have good procedures to deal with them. There are not many exclusions in primary and most special schools. Exclusion is when a pupil must stay away from the school for a temporary period or cannot return to the school, as a punishment for their behaviour. In the secondary schools we inspected this year, the number of exclusions varies widely depending on how good each school's arrangements are for managing pupils' behaviour. Schools are four times more likely to exclude pupils who have statements of special educational needs than other pupils.

When excluded pupils return to school, teachers generally manage the process well. Most schools do not follow any standard procedures but deal with each pupil individually. In key stage 3, they successfully help many pupils to return to school. However, pupils in key stage 4 rarely settle back into school. Many have missed too much work and find it difficult to catch up. Schools often achieve more success with these pupils when they offer them a choice of courses, including vocational studies. In these cases, pupils spend part of the week in school and are at college or in the workplace for the rest of the week. This arrangement can give pupils the opportunity for a fresh start as well as help them to see the value of continuing education and training.

Overall, many schools are becoming better at managing pupils' behaviour. Most teachers take more care to plan work that will motivate all pupils. Many skilfully encourage good behaviour and deal successfully with bad behaviour.

Most **local education authorities** (LEAs) have well-established and effective behaviour-support teams (explained in the glossary) that link well with schools and pupils. LEAs work well with other partners to form longer-term strategies to overcome some pupils' dislike of school, and to improve their attendance and behaviour.

In key stage 4, schools and LEAs are doing more to offer a wider curriculum. They are developing partnerships with local **further-education institutions, training providers** and businesses to introduce new and stimulating subjects into young people's learning. Several LEAs have introduced new projects that are beginning to have a good effect on pupils' attendance and behaviour.

Attendance

There is a close link between pupils' attendance and their performance at school. Pupils achieve higher standards when they attend school regularly.

As we reported last year, high levels of absence can have a bad effect on the lives of individual pupils and on the communities in which they live.

Most **schools** need to do more to analyse poor attendance rates and find more ways to encourage all pupils to attend school regularly. Poor and irregular attendance has a big effect on the learning and opportunities of a large number of pupils. With the support of **local education authorities** (LEAs) and parents, secondary schools will need to do much more to tackle poor attendance if absence is to fall below the Welsh Assembly Government's target of not more than 8% for next year.

Pupils in **primary** schools are usually keen to attend and most arrive on time. Rates of attendance are at least satisfactory in 96% of the schools we inspected. They are good or very good in around 30% of schools, which is 10 percentage points lower than last year. More and more parents are taking family holidays in term time. This is often because the school year does not fit in easily with the pattern of many parents' work commitments, the lower costs of holidays outside term time, and the effects of changes in family circumstances. Most schools work hard to keep up good rates of attendance by offering rewards and certificates to pupils. When schools set themselves targets for higher attendance, almost half of them meet their targets within a year or so.

About 5% of pupils have unsatisfactory attendance records. Around one school in 10 does not meet some of the legal requirements for recording and reporting pupils' attendance.

In about one in 10 **secondary** schools, attendance rates are good or very good. They are unsatisfactory in about one-third of schools inspected this year. Pupils' punctuality is unsatisfactory in about one in five schools. This year, one in six schools reached the Welsh Assembly Government's target for 2004 of 92% attendance. This is worse than last year when one in four schools reached the target.

Schools are most successful at improving their attendance rates when they:

- contact parents on the first day a pupil is absent;
- reward pupils for improved, as well as very good, attendance;
- work closely with educational welfare officers;
- use the Youth Access Scheme (explained in the glossary); and
- make sure that senior managers and other staff are involved in improving attendance rates.

Some schools are successful because they are finding creative ways of encouraging good attendance. For example, one school, analysed its attendance figures and found that attendance fell in the last four or five weeks of the summer term. They offered a range of activities in the first week of the summer holidays for those pupils who achieved 100% attendance in the last weeks of term. This persuaded more pupils to attend regularly and as a result of the better habits developed in pupils, the school has raised its attendance levels by 15 percentage points in the past five years through this and other initiatives.

In **further-education institutions**, part-time students generally attend classes regularly and are highly motivated. However, some younger full-time students are often late for classes and have poor attendance records. Students often miss their key skills classes, particularly when these classes are separate from their main course of study. Some institutions have set up projects to improve students' attendance. These projects are often effective for a few weeks, but rarely work over a longer period. Teachers and managers need to do more to analyse

students' patterns of attendance so that they can spot problems quickly, and set targets for improvement.

In **adult and community-based learning**, most learners' attendance is good. Where it is not, or when it is due to personal or other difficulties, tutors usually work well with learners to help them improve their attendance and make progress with their learning.

Broadening the curriculum for older pupils

More **secondary** schools are looking at ways to maintain and improve pupils' interest in learning and overcome boredom or disinterest. Three-quarters of secondary schools have broadened the curriculum for pupils in key stage 4 and the sixth form. Most of these schools are working with **further- education institutions** or other agencies to provide new opportunities for learning out of school. This work is helping to broaden pupils' learning opportunities and increase their involvement in education. Core subjects are usually taught at the school with other courses taught at a further-education institution or **training provider**. In most schools, these changes have meant an improvement in the behaviour and attendance of pupils who take part.

More and more young people of school age (age 14-18) have opportunities to attend college. Often, these students have not been successful in school and have behavioural problems. They sometimes join college courses for students with special educational needs and have too few chances to take up other opportunities. Colleges do not always have enough information about these young people to be able to support them effectively.

Using school libraries and learning-resource centres

School libraries and learning-resource centres (explained in the glossary) can help pupils become better learners because they offer them the opportunity to develop responsibility and independence and to improve their learning skills. The best school libraries stimulate pupils so that they are eager to learn. (Any reference to school libraries also includes learning-resource centres.)

Around half of **primary** and **secondary** schools have good library facilities. In some schools, teachers and senior managers have clear expectations of how the library can support learning. In these schools, the library helps pupils to become enthusiastic readers, discover information and learn research skills.

Schools could do more to raise standards, by making sure that they:

- include the library in development planning;
- use the library to support activities, such as out-of-hours homework clubs; and
- recognise the library's role in helping to improve pupils' key skills, including using ICT.

Very few schools find out how well the library contributes to pupils' learning, which means they cannot judge its effectiveness or improve how it is used.

Family learning programmes

Family learning programmes include a wide range of activities to help people of all ages improve their learning skills. These programmes are particularly successful in **schools** by helping children and their parents learn together. They also encourage families and schools to work together better.

Family literacy and numeracy (reading, writing and number) programmes help many pupils to improve their language and number skills, and to become better learners. They also help many adults to gain a qualification in literacy or numeracy. As a result, these parents are often better able to support their children's learning. In some cases, the programmes encourage adults to go on to further study.

All **local education authorities** (LEAs) include some family learning programmes in their strategic plans. However, some LEAs have a limited range of learning programmes so not all families can benefit. Few schools include family learning programmes in their development planning. LEAs and schools need to do more to monitor and evaluate how the programmes affect pupils' learning.

Promoting healthy lifestyles

Many pupils in **primary** schools are enjoying and benefiting from the national 'Class Moves' initiative. This initiative involves pupils having short exercise sessions at regular intervals during the day. The exercises make pupils more active, develop their movement skills and keep them alert.

Medical research shows that, in Wales, the number of children who suffer from conditions, such as obesity, asthma and diabetes, has increased over recent years. Many schools are adopting 'Healthy and Active Lifestyles' policies that help pupils

understand how important diet and exercise are to their immediate and long-term health and welfare.

The work of the 14 pilot development centres, set up following the Physical Education and School Sport Action Plan has improved physical education (PE) experiences for some primary and secondary pupils. In schools with development centres, pupils are taking part in more high quality PE and sport, in and out of school hours. These activities have given pupils more confidence.

However, a few of these development centres are not part of local 'Healthy Schools' schemes, which hinders the development of partnerships between health promotion and PE and School Sport.

Widening learning opportunities and experiences

Developing Welsh and bilingualism

More and more English-speaking parents choose Welsh-speaking schools for their children. More **settings for the under-fives, primary** and **secondary** schools now offer Welsh-medium education (teaching in Welsh). Welsh-language centres provide excellent support for pupils who want to start Welsh-medium education at key stage 2. Some secondary schools, with the help of **local education authorities** (LEAs), are increasing the numbers of pupils who continue with Welsh-medium or bilingual education (Welsh and English). Overall, however, there is not enough support for pupils who want to start Welsh-medium education at secondary school. Very few schools have begun to introduce schemes that support pupils at key stage 3.

Some **further-education institutions, teacher-training colleges and work-based training** programmes have improved opportunities for learners to continue their studies in Welsh or as bilingual learners. The number of learners who are assessed in Welsh has increased slowly over recent years.

In **schools, further-education institutions and teacher-training colleges** progress in developing Welsh as a second language and bilingual skills, varies a great deal. Most schools have a long way to go in raising standards in Welsh as a second language. Very few pupils become fluent in Welsh by the time they leave school. Fewer than half the pupils who study Welsh as a second language in secondary schools follow a full GCSE course in the subject. Schools often do not do enough

to help pupils, who are learning Welsh as a second language, to use it outside their Welsh classes.

Some schools have improved pupils' language skills by:

- teaching some subjects in both Welsh and English; and
- building on the way pupils have learnt a language in key stages 1 and 2, by making language learning part of the work in every subject in key stage 3.

Overall, few schools do enough to help pupils transfer what they already know and can do in one language to another language.

Developing the arts in key stages 2 and 3

Since the National Curriculum was introduced, the quality of provision and standards in art, music and dance has risen consistently in key stages 2 and 3. Standards have also improved in schools that teach drama in key stage 3.

Where provision is good, pupils have a broad and balanced arts curriculum that supports all areas of their learning and personal development. In some schools, this provision has helped pupils to understand more about the Welsh language and the social and cultural heritage of Wales.

In arts subjects, curriculum links between **primary** and **secondary** schools are rarely good, which leads to a loss of continuity and progression in pupils' learning.

Arts and creative enterprise in extra-curricular activities

In 'creative enterprise', pupils take part in activities where they design, make and sell a product. In **secondary** schools in particular, this is sometimes based on extra-curricular arts activities. These activities can widen pupils' learning opportunities and help them to develop their interests and talents. Pupils also benefit from the extra support they get from teachers, other professionals and members of the community.

In the best examples of creative enterprise, pupils gain valuable skills and develop stronger links with the community and the world of work. The work contributes to pupils' personal and social skills and it can also help pupils to see the importance of sustainable development. Sustainable development is about improving the quality of life **now** without putting it at risk in the future.

Work-related education

Around half the **schools** and **further-education institutions** provide well-managed, work-related education programmes. These programmes work best when schools, and **careers companies** work closely together to make sure that young people have the right work placement. Careers companies support schools and colleges in making sure pupils are placed in a safe working environment. Schools and colleges have found that preparing for the Careers Wales Quality Award (explained in the glossary) has been of advantage in helping them to raise the quality of work-related education. However, about half of the schools and colleges do not meet the recommendations for work-related education within the framework set by the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (known as ACCAC).

Many young people are able to make the right choice about their work placement because they have good-quality careers guidance interviews and careers education lessons. Within the Gorwelion project (explained in the glossary), two careers companies have worked very well to identify placements where young people can use Welsh in the workplace. By recording their work experiences, these young people have been able to provide the evidence they need to claim qualifications.

Overall, however, recognition of young people's achievements in work-related education is poor. In a few cases, schools expect pupils to arrange their own work placements and when this happens, the quality of the programme suffers. The lack of co-ordination in work placements also makes it difficult for some employers to meet pupils' requests.

The effect of New Opportunities Funding on out-of-school learning

The New Opportunities Fund has helped **schools** to offer more activities outside school hours by giving them money to buy more resources and to employ adults who have specific skills and expertise. Pupils have benefited by having more opportunities to take part in a variety of cultural, sporting and outdoor projects.

Not enough schools make out-of-school learning activities a priority in their improvement plans. More could be done to monitor and evaluate the effects of these activities on pupils' attitudes and achievements. Many schools and **local education authorities** (LEAs) find it difficult to keep activities going once the grant has stopped, as there are competing priorities for funding.

Widening learners' involvement in education and training

The quality of provision for learners with special educational needs

Children who have special educational needs make good progress in **settings for the under-fives**. In these settings, teachers make sure that children:

- are fully involved in all activities;
- try to reach high standards;
- do tasks that match their individual learning needs;
- have individual help; and
- are carefully observed and assessed.

Most **primary** and **secondary** schools continue to provide well for pupils with special educational needs. About three-quarters of schools give good or very good support. In almost all schools, pupils with special educational needs are able to study all National Curriculum subjects, as well as taking part in a range of other learning opportunities, such as extra-curricular activities. Most of the special needs co-ordinators work well with other members of staff to:

- write individual plans for pupils that describe the type of work they should be doing;
- adapt classwork to meet the needs of individual pupils; and
- advise classteachers about how they can best meet pupils' needs.

As in previous years, teachers still sometimes find it difficult to provide work that is suitable for the wide range of needs of pupils in some classes. Sometimes, when pupils are 'withdrawn' from class lessons they miss important work. Usually, this means that these pupils work with a teacher or learning support assistant out of the classroom. Also, the work pupils do in withdrawn sessions is not always well matched to their work in class. Schools need to plan carefully to make sure that pupils with special educational needs do not always miss the same lesson or parts of lesson when they are taken out from class.

Three-quarters of all pupils who have statements of special educational needs attend mainstream primary or secondary schools. Most of these pupils make good or very good progress. In the best examples, schools provide pupils with:

- teaching in all subjects that takes full account of their individual learning needs;
- support from teachers and classroom assistants who understand their needs; and
- opportunities to take part in school activities with other pupils.

A few schools do not give pupils enough opportunities to fully take part in school life. In these schools, pupils:

- spend too much time in separate special classes;
- often miss subject lessons to have individual teaching; and
- often are not taught Welsh or a modern foreign language in key stage 3.

Further-education institutions give good support to students with special educational needs. The students make good progress in their knowledge and skills, and can apply them in the workplace. Further-education institutions work with local employers to help provide students with good support systems. A small number of students do not have enough advice about suitable careers.

Local education authorities (LEAs) are making good progress in their work to develop better provision for pupils with special educational needs. The best LEAs:

- have clear strategic plans that include all learners;
- take account of what pupils, parents and local schools say; and
- work closely with other services to plan and pay for new provision.

LEAs, including those outside Wales that use Welsh schools, need to do more for the pupils they place in **independent special schools**. Many of these pupils are 'looked-after' children who have serious social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. LEAs need to continue developing plans to improve the quality of life

for looked-after children. If these pupils are to have the most suitable support and educational provision, LEAs need to find out more about these children's progress, and work more closely with their social workers.

Despite better provision for children and young people with special educational needs in general, there are still issues concerning early identification and help to meet learners' needs. Early intervention is a matter of taking prompt action, whatever the age of the child or young person, in order to obtain the right specialist advice, equipment and support for the child or young person, for the family and for the educational setting. Increasingly, as part of the commitment to inclusion, more children with severe and complicated difficulties attend mainstream schools. This approach needs changes, not only in the way that schools run, but also in:

- providing services such as therapy and transport;
- making buildings fully accessible;
- providing regular training for teachers and support assistants; and
- improving the ways in which agencies work together.

Extending opportunities for learners from ethnic minority backgrounds

Public authorities have a duty to promote race equality. More and more education and training providers are also promoting racial awareness. They are making sure that all learners have the same opportunities to use resources, take part in courses and activities, and reach high standards. However, not enough providers:

- check how well their race equality policies work;
- plan to make the policy work better; and
- make sure all learners from ethnic minority backgrounds achieve their full potential.

In some areas of education and training, providers are doing more to encourage diversity by increasing the number of ethnic minority learners. For example, all **teacher-training colleges** are trying to increase the numbers of trainees from a

wide range of backgrounds. At present, the numbers of trainees from ethnic minority backgrounds in teacher-training colleges are low.

The Welsh Assembly Government provides an ethnic minority achievement grant (EMAG) to improve the equality of educational opportunities for all ethnic minority pupils. We are carrying out a survey into the use of this grant. So far, our findings show that:

- schools try hard to meet the needs of ethnic minority pupils;
- senior managers value the support of **local education authorities'** (LEAs) ethnic minority services;
- few mainstream teachers have enough skills to meet the needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language;
- EMAG teachers and mainstream teachers need to work together to meet the needs of ethnic minority pupils;
- promoting racial awareness and harmony in schools needs to continue; and
- LEAs have different ways of collecting figures about the use of the grant, which makes it difficult to judge how well the grant is being used across Wales.

During 2002-2003, the Welsh Assembly Government commissioned a research study into the achievement of ethnic minority pupils. This study is called 'The achievement of ethnic minority pupils in Wales' – A report by the English as an Additional Language Association of Wales, 2003. Before this study, there was no information about the performance of ethnic minority pupils in National Curriculum assessments and public examinations in Wales. The research found that there are high-achieving pupils and low-achieving pupils in all ethnic groups, but there are wide variations in pupils' attainments between ethnic groups. While some ethnic minority pupils tend to achieve well, many could generally do much better. The research findings highlight a difference in performance between boys and girls, which is similar to the overall national picture we have reported before.

There is some encouraging evidence that the gap between the attainment of key stage 4 ethnic minority pupils and the performance of all pupils in Wales has

narrowed in recent years. However, **LEAs** and **schools** need to continue to do more to raise the achievements of ethnic minority pupils.

Provision for children not educated at school

There are a number of reasons why pupils may be educated outside a mainstream school. This may be because of illness or injury, teenage pregnancy, exclusion from school or parents' wishes to educate their children themselves, at home.

The majority of pupils have been temporarily or permanently excluded from school for behavioural reasons. In these cases, all **local education authorities** (LEAs) fulfil their responsibilities to provide education for pupils. The most effective LEAs work closely with **schools** and a range of agencies. They link their behaviour support plans to other local plans, such as the Youth Justice Plan (explained in the glossary) and the Children's Services Plan (explained in the glossary). In the best practice, the use of early intervention strategies where behaviour support teachers work with pupils, families and schools have resulted in substantial reductions in exclusions from schools in areas of high social deprivation.

It is becoming more common to find agencies, such as the Education and Social Work Service and the local health authority, working together. This co-operation has helped schools to become more aware of child protection responsibilities as well as manage pupils' disruptive behaviour more successfully.

Most pupil referral units (PRUs) (explained in the glossary) are successful in helping pupils improve their behaviour and self-esteem. They help pupils to establish routines that support their reintegration into school or their preparation for training. However, their links with schools and **further-education colleges** are often not developed enough.

A few LEAs have set up schemes to help young people get back to school or to move on to suitable education or training. These schemes have been successful with those who have dropped out or are at risk of dropping out of mainstream education. LEAs also provide education for pregnant teenagers and young mothers of school age. Not all of these young people can benefit from this provision. Sometimes schools do not do enough to encourage these young people to continue their studies. On other occasions, there are difficulties with transport and care arrangements for the children of young people, while they study.

All LEAs have procedures for parents to follow if they wish to educate their children at home. Some LEAs provide parents with guidance on an appropriate curriculum, although there is no statutory requirement for parents to follow this. Most LEAs monitor the provision made by parents through LEA officers' visits to the homes of these children.

Using youth work to support formal learning

Youth work projects do a lot to help young people who are having difficulties in school. Young people benefit most, and make the greatest progress, when they are encouraged to stay in touch with the **school** or **college** while they are on the project. The best youth workers:

- support young people by responding to their needs;
- give them the chance to have their skills recognised; and
- help them to see the value of learning.

Youth workers often provide activities, such as challenging outdoor experiences and give individual support and counselling that helps to motivate young people, so that they can achieve more in formal education. Youth service providers are beginning to plan together better. They are finding more ways to give young people the support they need.

The 'Skillbuild' training programme

Skillbuild is a training programme for young people. It is aimed mainly at those who have a learning need or disability, or those who are not sure which vocational route they would like to follow.

The success of the Skillbuild programme varies. Where it works well, clients get good support from work placements and training providers and they grow in confidence. Most leave the training programme well prepared for work or with enough skills to help them move on to other training programmes. In cases, where clients gain little, it is usually because the training does not match their needs.

Some providers do not know enough about why young people leave the programme before the end of their training, or where they go when they finish.

As a result, it is difficult for providers to improve the programme and to find out if it gives good value for money.

Lifelong learning

The National Basic Skills Strategy for Wales

The National Basic Skills Strategy for Wales began in April 2001 and runs until March 2004. It aims to make children more ready to learn when they start school. It is also designed to reduce the number of people in Wales, young and old, who have poor reading, writing and number skills.

After a slow start, many activities are now in place. The Welsh Assembly Government's target, for 2300 parents and children to be involved in family literacy and numeracy projects, has already been exceeded. Very many primary and secondary schools are using funding from the Basic Skills Agency for projects to improve pupils' basic skills. However, there are not enough projects where learners can improve their number skills. These schemes are not yet attracting enough people from the most deprived communities to take part in a wider range of activities.

The national support projects for learners over 16 years of age also made a slow start but are now making good progress. However, project planning does not focus enough on finding out how well projects work or how they can be improved.

The key skills qualification

Overall, the effect of the new key skills qualification in **schools** and **further-education institutions** has been limited. More schools are including key skills in their curriculum plans, but too many teachers are not committed enough to teaching key skills in all subjects. Some colleges have worked hard to put on extra classes and to help students improve their key skills in all their work, but standards of students' key skills are still too low.

In **work-based training**, many providers continue to find it difficult to arrange for trainees to achieve key skills qualifications. While many trainees often develop good key skills in their day-to-day work, providers do not make enough use of their knowledge of what trainees achieve. Not enough providers plan teaching sessions to develop key skills or link key skills to vocational work. Too few employers understand and value key skills qualifications.

Helping adults to learn

Helping adults of working age to gain qualifications is a central part of the Welsh Assembly Government's strategy to improve the life and employment opportunities for people in Wales.

In a few **local education authorities** (LEAs), some **adult and community-based learning** providers have worked well together to attract new learners and provide for their needs. Overall, however, there is not as much provision for adult learners this year and there are fewer adult learners than two years ago. Since 1996, funding for this work has almost halved. These factors could limit the efforts across Wales to widen adult involvement in learning.

Learning provision in response to major employment events

When there are major redundancies in an area, or the possibility of new industries being established, ELWa (explained in the glossary), the Welsh Assembly Government, **Careers Wales companies** and Jobcentre Plus work together to offer training for people in the community. The training aims to help participants gain skills for employment as well as acquire the specific skills required by new employers. We inspected some of this work this year.

Generally, this training supports the needs of the local economy. Most trainers are experienced and give learners good support. Many participants, on programmes linked to redundancy and inward investment, gain new skills and qualifications. As a result, they are better prepared and qualified to apply for jobs. Most participants get a job in the short term. However, training does not always help them enough to gain long-term employment or contribute enough to their personal development. In many cases, participants do not complete courses because they are anxious to find a job quickly. Some participants complete short courses that do not lead to qualifications.

It is often difficult for providers to know, in advance, what training will be required. Sometimes, they have short notice of new employers' labour force needs. This lack of information limits providers' effectiveness in planning provision so that participants can gain long-term employment. Providers do not know enough about how well the training helps participants gain employment. This makes it difficult for them to analyse the effects of the training and judge if it provides value for money.

Using electronic distance learning

Electronic distance learning can include a variety of learning systems such as the Internet, e-mail, video-conferencing and digital television.

We have begun to carry out a survey into how well electronic distance learning meets learners' needs. So far, our findings show that this type of learning provision is not fully developed in Wales. There are many different providers and each one produces information on the range of distance learning packages they offer. However, without a central point of contact, learners do not know how to find out what is available.

Modernising education and training

Improving accommodation for learners in schools

The Welsh Assembly Government aims to have good-quality accommodation in all **schools** by 2010. We have already reported on some improvements, particularly in secondary schools. More schools have invested in new IT suites (explained in the glossary) and in learning-resource centres (explained in the glossary).

Local education authorities (LEAs) are working towards producing asset-management plans to help manage the condition of school buildings. Some schools are being completely rebuilt using funds from the Private Finance Initiative schemes (explained in the glossary). These and other measures are improving some school buildings but, overall, a great deal still needs to be done to improve the worst accommodation.

Extending the use of schools' facilities

A few **schools** are making their facilities available for longer to members of the local community as well as their own pupils. Crèches and playgroups use spare rooms in primary schools. Breakfast clubs are helping more pupils to start the day well fed so that they can concentrate better and learn more effectively.

Homework clubs are providing a suitably quiet atmosphere where pupils can work. After-school clubs are offering safe and worthwhile activities for pupils, some of whom might otherwise go home to an empty house. Extending these facilities is proving more difficult for schools in remote rural areas or when pupils live some distance away from the school because pupils in these schools cannot rely on transport home.

A growing number of schools share their information and communications technology equipment (ICT) with the local community, including youth clubs. This extra use of the computers has made it possible to gain extra funding and provide better equipment for pupils and the community alike.

Extending the use of learning support assistants and non-teaching personnel in schools

More **schools** and **local educational authorities** (LEAs) are beginning to realise that improving standards depends on the combined efforts of a wide range of people with different skills and experiences. Most primary, secondary and special schools recognise the valuable help that teachers get from good-quality learning-support assistants and are using them effectively to support learners. Learning-support assistants may include:

- nursery nurses;
- library assistants;
- school technicians; and
- modern foreign language assistants.

In most schools, learning-support assistants work well with teachers and improve learning opportunities for pupils. In the best examples, learning-support assistants:

- have clearly-defined roles;
- receive specific training for their job; and
- work as part of the school's teaching team.

However, in most schools, senior managers do not monitor how learning-support assistants help improve the quality of teaching and learning for pupils. As a result, senior managers do not know enough about how effective these assistants are or how well they contribute to raising standards.

Most primary and secondary schools employ administrative and clerical personnel for a range of duties such as managing finance, ordering resources (such as stationery and teaching materials) and helping teachers to prepare for lessons. In

more and more schools, senior managers reduce teachers' workloads by using assistants to deal with their administrative tasks.

Sustainable development

One of the Welsh Assembly Government's main aims is to promote 'sustainable development' in everything it does. As we saw on page 73, sustainable development is about improving the quality of life now without putting it at risk in the future.

Across Wales, more education and training providers, particularly **schools**, are developing good work on sustainable development. For example, a few **local education authorities** (LEAs) have set up schemes to help pupils find out how their actions can affect the environment and other people. As a result, more schools are looking at how they use materials and how they can help to recycle waste. Work has also begun in **teacher-training** colleges, where tutors are helping trainees to understand how to teach about sustainable development.

Overall, however, too many providers do not value the importance of sustainable development enough and they do not give enough attention to it. Providers need to do more to:

- plan for sustainable development;
- identify leaders to take those priorities forward;
- make sure learners understand the effects they have on the environment and other people;
- use their own resources better, (for example, in recycling, cutting down waste and saving energy); and
- work more closely with the local community and its partners, (such as LEAs, industry and voluntary organisations) to make more rapid progress in sustainable development.

Glossary of Terms

Achievement	Inspectors judge achievement by how well learners are doing in relation to their ability and the progress they make.
Attainment	Attainment means how well learners are doing, as measured in national tests and examinations.
Basic skills	The ability to speak, read and write in Welsh or English and to use mathematics at a level necessary to function at work and in society.
Behaviour support teams	Behaviour support teams are groups of people who work together to help pupils improve their behaviour.
Careers Wales Quality Award	An award, issued by Careers Wales, to educational institutions that meet a range of good practice criteria related to careers education and guidance or work-related education.
Children's Service Plan	Each local authority social services department produces a five-year children's services plan. The plan describes what will be done in a range of policy areas for children. The social services department must consult with other agencies in drawing up their plan.
Cognitive Acceleration through Science Education (CASE)	A method of teaching science that improves pupils' thinking and scientific understanding. Pupils are encouraged to share and give reasons for their views, comment on one another's suggestions and build on each other's ideas.
Common requirements of the National Curriculum	The common requirements include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cwricwlwm Cymreig; • communication skills; • mathematical skills; • information technology skills; • problem-solving skills; • creative skills; and • personal and social education

Community Consortia for Education and Training (CCET)	These are local groups of providers of education and training for learners over 16 years-of-age. Each CCET meets regularly to discuss and help plan local provision.
Core subject indicator	The core subject indicator is when pupils attain the expected level in each of mathematics, science and either English or Welsh (first language).
Cwricwlwm Cymreig	The Cwricwlwm Cymreig is part of the National Curriculum that helps pupils to develop and apply knowledge and understanding of the cultural, economic, environmental, historical and linguistic characteristics of Wales.
Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships (EYDCP)	This is a statutory body set up in each local education authority to co-ordinate provision for children under-five. This includes school settings for the under-fives as well as playgroups and nurseries in the independent and voluntary sectors.
ELWa	The joint brand name of the National Council for Education and Training for Wales and the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales.
Foundation curriculum	The foundation curriculum will include seven areas of learning for children of 3 to 7 years-of-age, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personal and social development and well-being; • language, literacy and communication; • mathematical development; • bilingual and multicultural understanding; • knowledge and understanding of the world; • physical development; and • creative development.
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GNVQ	General National Vocational Qualification
Gorwelion project	A project where young people are encouraged and supported to make use of Welsh in a work setting.

Inclusion	Inclusion is an on-going process in education concerned with breaking down barriers to learning and increasing the participation of all children and young people in their local schools.
Interactive whiteboards	An interactive whiteboard is like a large computer screen that all the class can see. It is sensitive to touch and allows the teacher to operate all the controls of a computer. A teacher or pupil can write on it using an electronic pen.
Investors in people (IIP)	This national award provides a framework for action and continuous improvement in the way organisations develop their people. Organisations can be accredited with IIP status if they meet certain standards and re-accreditation reviews are carried out on a regular basis to make sure there is continuous improvement.
IT suites	Rooms or areas with computers and other information and communications technology.
Key skills	The core key skills are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communication; • application of number; and • using information and communications technology (ICT).
Key stages	There are four key stages in the school life of any pupil: <p>key stage 1 for pupils aged 5 to 7 years-old;</p> <p>key stage 2 for pupils aged 7 to 11 years-old;</p> <p>key stage 3 for pupils aged 11 to 14 years-old; and</p> <p>key stage 4 for pupils aged 14 to 16 years-old.</p>
Learning-resource centres	Learning-resource centres provide books and a wide range of learning materials, including information and communications technology (ICT).
Literacy frameworks	The government's framework for improving standards of teaching and learning of literacy within primary schools in Wales published as part of the Building Excellent Schools Together (BEST) programme.
Outreach	Teaching and training that takes place off the main premises of further-education institutions.

Qualification framework	The achievement of one or more key skills qualification in addition to a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) to satisfy the requirements of the skills council for each sector of training.
Pupil Referral Unit (PRU)	Pupil referral units are schools, established and maintained by a local education authority, for pupils of compulsory school age. Pupils usually attend PRUs because they have been absent or excluded from their school, or because they might otherwise not receive suitable education.
Private Finance Initiative schemes	Private Finance Initiative schemes involve a commercial partnership in which a local education authority buys assets from the private sector. These may include school buildings, facilities such as sports halls or specific services such as catering equipment.
Purchasing consortia	Combinations of further-education institutions who cooperate to reduce their purchasing costs, such as buying in greater bulk than any one institution could buy alone.
SHARE	This stands for skills, homework, awareness, reinforce and educate. Projects are designed to help children and their families learn together.
Six areas of children's learning	The six areas of learning are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • language, literacy and communication; • personal and social development; • mathematical development; • knowledge and understanding of the world; • physical development; and • creative development.
Surestart	These projects support very young children and their families. They aim to give children a better start in life. Projects usually involve local education authorities, social services, health and organisations in the voluntary section working together.
Thinking through geography	A method of teaching geography that improves pupils' knowledge and understanding through challenging them to think in new ways often through solving practical problems.

Welsh Baccalaureate	This is a new qualification for learners over 16 years-of-age in Wales. The qualification blends existing qualifications, such as A-levels (advanced level study) with compulsory core studies, including key skills, personal and social education (PSE), work experience, a language module and study of Wales, Europe and the world.
Work shadowing	This activity usually involves working alongside a colleague to learn new skills and develop a greater understanding of their work.
Youth Access Scheme	This three-year scheme, which began in 1998, was designed to help young people of school age who either had dropped out of mainstream education or were in danger of doing so. It was also aimed at helping young people above school leaving age to get back into education or training or find a job. The initiative has now been integrated into Cymorth, the children and youth support fund.
Youth Justice Plan	This plan is for local youth justice services, which are led by youth offending teams. The aim of the plan is to prevent young people breaking the law or help them not to do it again. The plan sets out what will be provided, how it will be funded and who is to do what.
Youth Work Curriculum Statement for Wales	This statement sets out the main purposes of youth work in Wales. It also provides a framework for the development of practice and the determining of priorities for youth work in Wales.

Appendices

Commentary

The Welsh Assembly Government outcomes for learners

In appendix 1, we show the Welsh Assembly Government's outcomes for learners as described in the 'Learning Country' (pages 61-65).

Standards of achievement in schools

In appendix 2, we show the standards that pupils in primary and secondary schools achieved this year in the subjects of the National Curriculum and in religious education. We also show last year's figures. Inspectors judge these standards in each class in the sample of schools we inspect each year.

This year, in each key stage and in the sixth form, standards are higher than last year in many subjects. The increase in the amount of good or very good work in each subject varies widely but is typically around 5 percentage points. This is not such a big increase as last year when it was 10 percentage points.

In primary schools, there has been a big increase in the amount of good or very good work in physical education. This improvement shows that the extra attention that many primary schools have given to this subject has been effective. Despite an increase in the amount of good work in information technology this year, there are still large amounts of unsatisfactory work in this subject.

In secondary schools, some of the highest standards are found in Welsh (first language), history and geography. This is the same as last year. There are larger amounts of unsatisfactory work in science than any other subject.

We show the percentage of classes in which standards are judged to be:

- very good;
- good;
- satisfactory; and
- unsatisfactory or poor.

Key for appendix 2:

			
Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory or poor

Standards of achievement in further-education institutions

In appendix 3, we show the number of further-education colleges gaining each grade in the programme areas inspected during the year 2002-2003. We also show last year's figures. This year, just over half of all grades we awarded are the higher levels (grade 1 and 2). This is not as good as last year when just over two-thirds were judged grade 1 or 2. The amount of very good work has remained the same as last year but the amount of work with shortcomings in important areas has increased by seven percentage points.

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Grade 4: Some good features but shortcomings in important areas

Grade 5: Many important shortcomings

Standards of achievement in work-based training

In appendix 4, we show the number of work-based training providers gaining each grade in the programme areas inspected during the year 2002-2003. We also show last year's figures. The percentage of providers where trainees' standards are good or very good has fallen by 14 percentage points this year. This figure is four percentage points lower than two years ago. The standards attained by trainees in almost a quarter of providers are unsatisfactory.

Grade 1: Good with some outstanding features

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Grade 4: Important shortcomings outweigh good features

Grade 5: Many important shortcomings

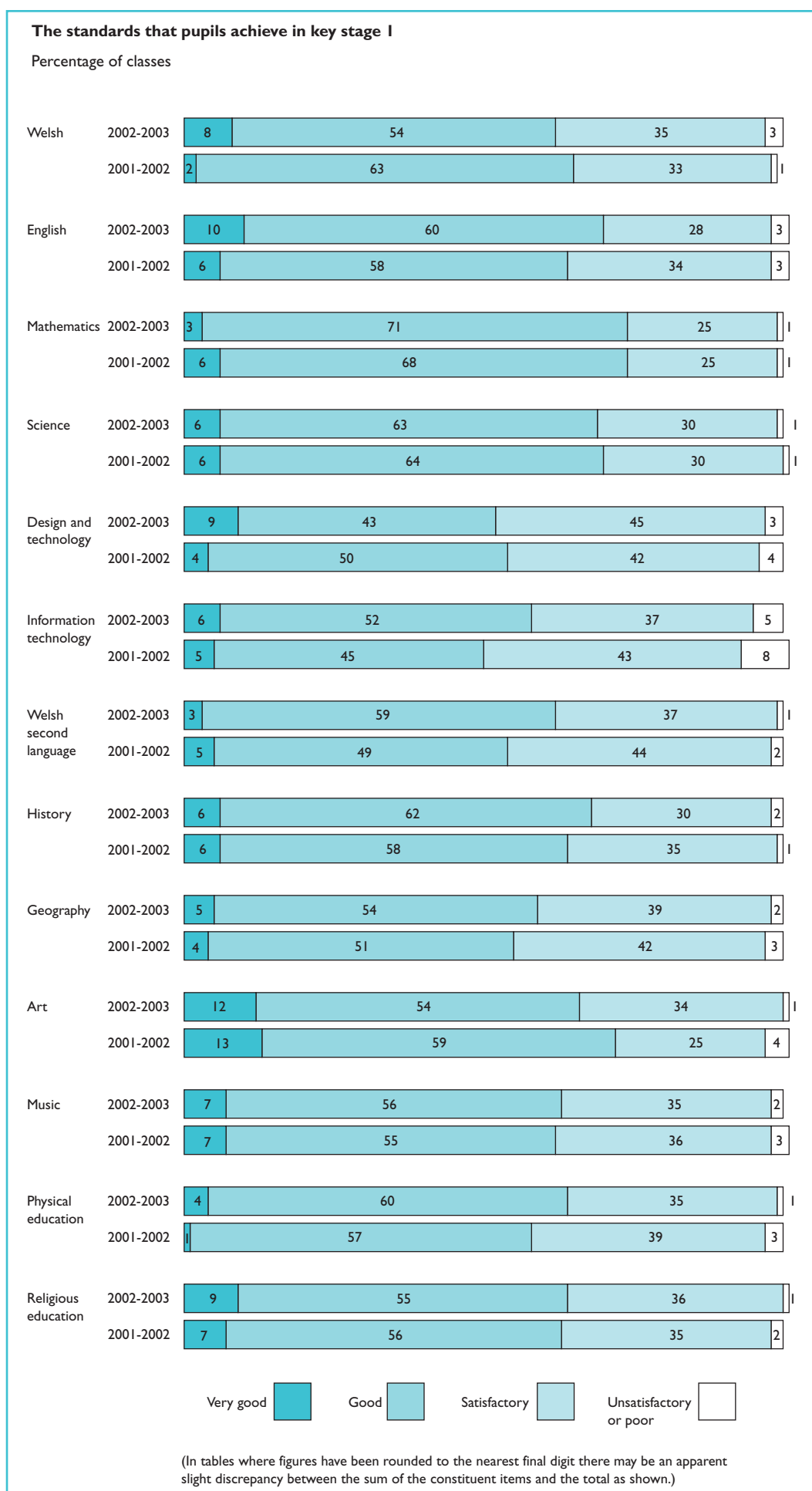
Appendix I

The Welsh Assembly Government outcomes for learners

Learners	Standard	Outcomes
Classes for pupils of all ages	The standards of achievement are at least satisfactory in classes inspected by Estyn	95% or more of classes by 2002
		98% of classes by 2007
	The standards of achievement are good or very good in classes inspected by Estyn	50% or more of classes by 2002
		65% of classes by 2007
Key stage 2	Pupils attain at least level 4 in each of the separate subjects of English or Welsh, mathematics and science	70-80% of pupils by 2002
		80-85% of pupils by 2004-2007
Key stage 3	Pupils attain at least level 5 in each of the separate subjects of English or Welsh, mathematics and science	70-80% of pupils by 2002
		80-85% of pupils by 2004-2007
Key stage 4	Pupils attain GCSE grades A* to C or equivalent in each of the separate subjects of English or Welsh, mathematics and science	Should exceed the mid-point in the range of 40-60% of pupils by 2004
		54% of pupils by 2002
		58% of pupils by 2004
	Pupils gain at least 5 GCSE grades A* to G or equivalent (explained in the glossary)	91% of pupils by 2002
		95% of pupils by 2004

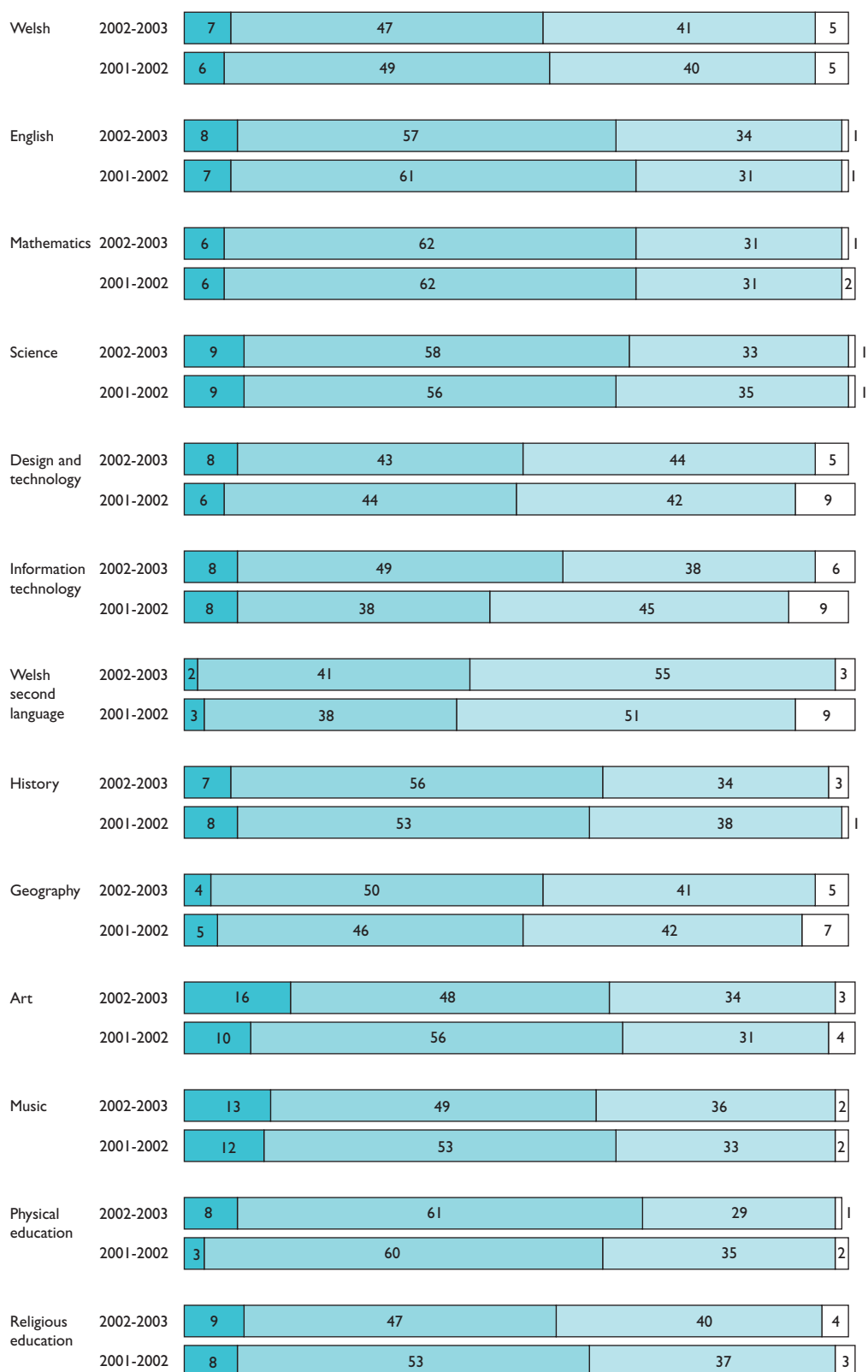
Learners	Standard	Outcomes
	The number of pupils who leave full-time education without a recognised qualification	15% lower than 1999 by 2002 25% lower than 1999 by 2004
	Schools with fewer than 25% of 15 year-old pupils who gain at least 5 GCSE grades A* to C or equivalent	None having less than 25% by 2002 None having less than 30% by 2004
Boys and girls	The difference between the performance of boys and girls	Reduce the difference by 50% by 2002 against the 1996 gap Reduce the difference by 55% by 2004 against the 1996 gap
Secondary pupils	Reduction in absenteeism in secondary schools	Below 8% by 2004
Other learners	The number of further-education courses to reach the highest standard	15% to reach the grade 1 and 70% to reach grade 1 and 2 by 2003

Appendix 2



The standards that pupils achieve in key stage 2

Percentage of classes

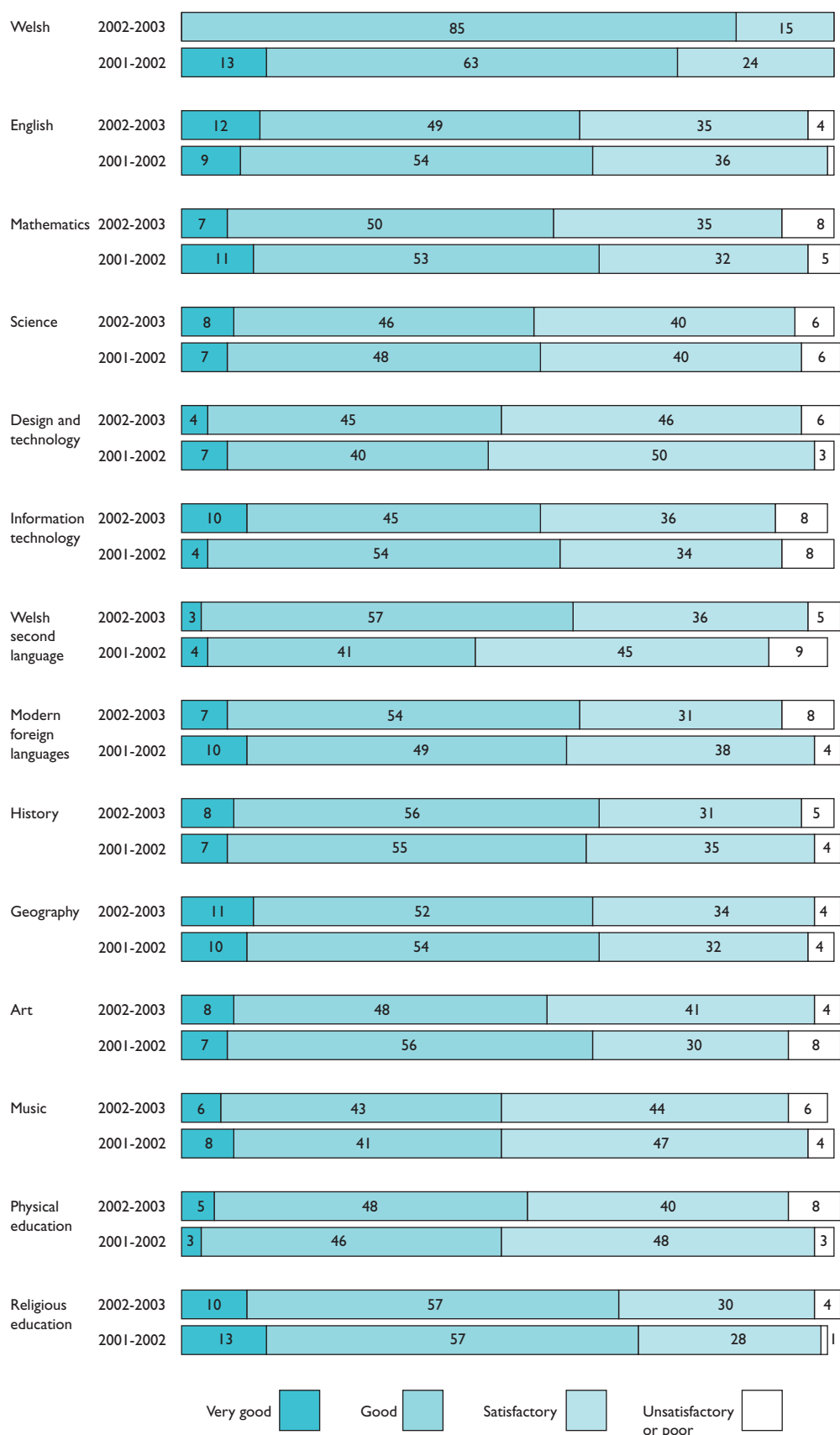


Very good Good Satisfactory Unsatisfactory or poor

(In tables where figures have been rounded to the nearest final digit there may be an apparent slight discrepancy between the sum of the constituent items and the total as shown.)

The standards that pupils achieve in key stage 3

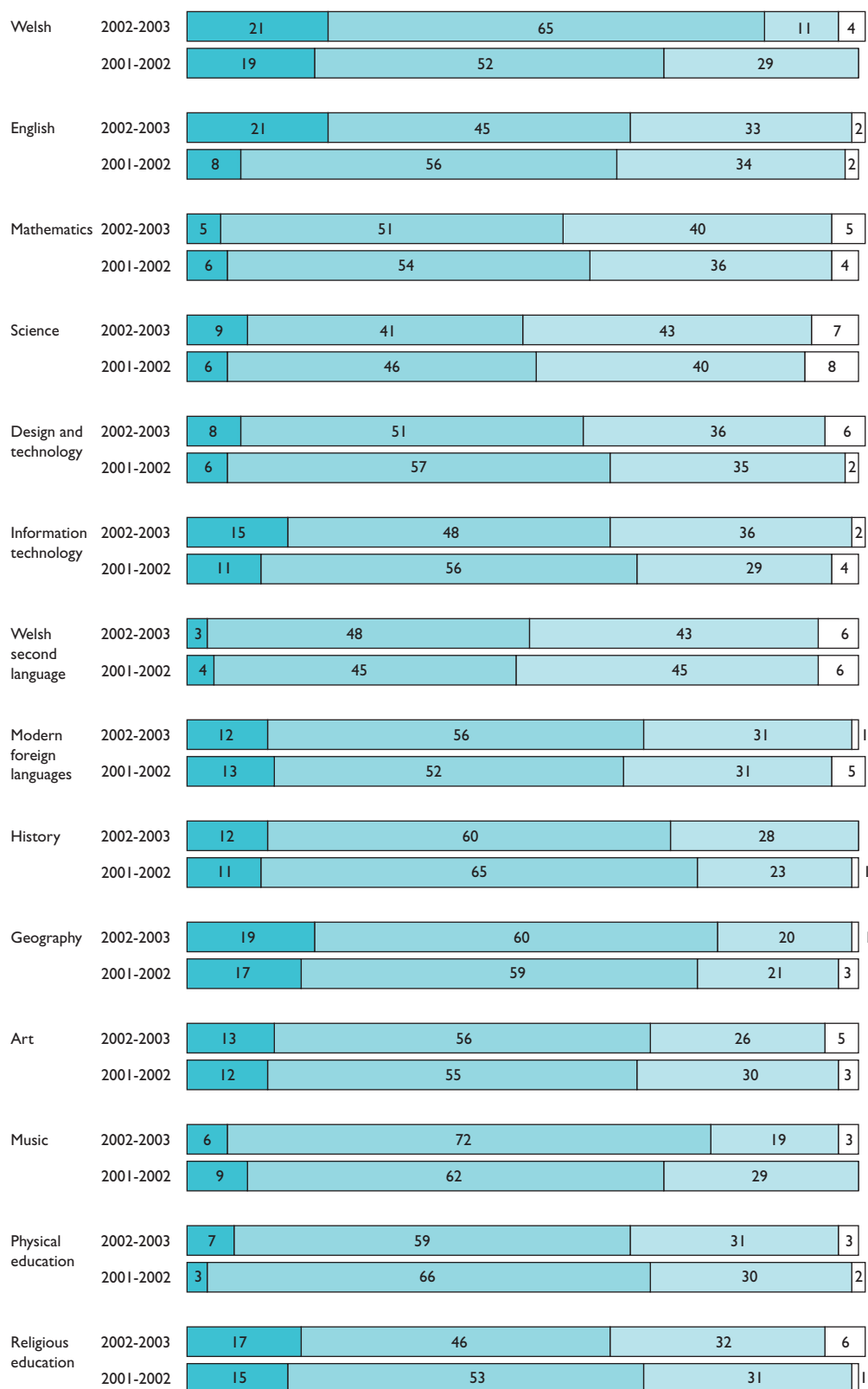
Percentage of classes



(In tables where figures have been rounded to the nearest final digit there may be an apparent slight discrepancy between the sum of the constituent items and the total as shown.)

The standards that pupils achieve in key stage 4

Percentage of classes

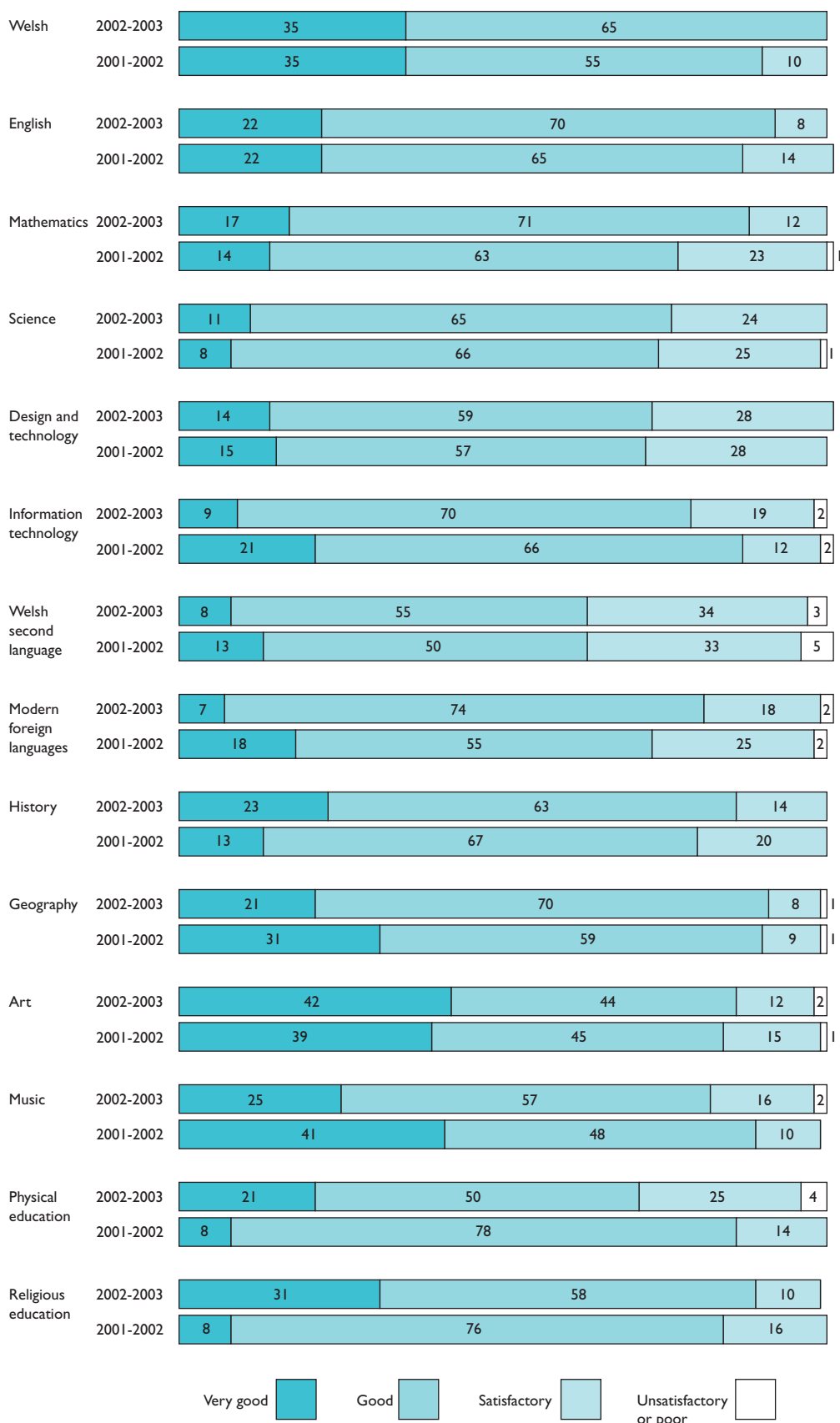


Very good Good Satisfactory Unsatisfactory or poor

(In tables where figures have been rounded to the nearest final digit there may be an apparent slight discrepancy between the sum of the constituent items and the total as shown.)

The standards that pupils achieve in the sixth form

Percentage of classes



(In tables where figures have been rounded to the nearest final digit there may be an apparent slight discrepancy between the sum of the constituent items and the total as shown.)

Appendix 3

The number of further-education colleges gaining each grade in the programme area inspected in the years 2001-2002 and 2002-2003

Programme area	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Total
Access studies					
2002-2003	0	1	1	0	2
2001-2002	0	3	1	0	4
Art and design					
2002-2003	0	1	1	1	3
2001-2002	2	4	1	0	7
Performing arts					
2002-2003	1	1	0	0	2
2001-2002	0	6	0	0	6
Applied science					
2002-2003	1	1	1	0	3
2001-2002	1	1	1	0	3
Business and management					
2002-2003	0	1	2	1	4
2001-2002	0	2	1	0	3
Catering					
2002-2003	1	1	1	0	3
2001-2002	0	2	4	0	6
Caring & health					
2002-2003	1	0	3	0	4
2001-2002	0	3	3	0	6
Computing					
2002-2003	0	1	1	1	3
2001-2002	0	0	1	0	1
Construction					
2002-2003	0	1	1	1	3
2001-2002	0	1	0	0	1

Programme area	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Total
Engineering					
2002-2003	0	1	2	0	3
2001-2002	1	0	1	0	2
General education					
2002-2003	2	1	3	0	6
2001-2002	0	1	3	1	5
Hairdressing and beauty					
2002-2003	0	2	0	0	2
2001-2002	1	3	1	0	5
Land based studies (for example, agriculture)					
2002-2003	0	1	0	0	1
2001-2002	2	2	0	0	4
Secretarial and office technology					
2002-2003	0	1	1	0	2
2001-2002	0	0	0	0	0
Tourism and leisure					
2002-2003	0	1	2	0	3
2001-2002	1	4	2	0	7
Independent living skills					
2002-2003	1	1	0	0	2
2001-2002	1	4	0	0	5
Adult basic education and English as an additional language					
2002-2003	0	3	0	0	3
2001-2002	0	3	3	0	6

Programme area	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Total
Welsh for adults					
2002-2003	0	2	0	0	2
2001-2002	1	1	3	0	5
Other general education					
2002-2003	0	1	0	0	1
2001-2002	1	5	1	0	7
TOTAL					
2002-2003	7	22	19	4	52
2001-2002	11	45	26	1	83

Appendix 4

The number of training providers gaining each grade in the occupational areas inspected in the years 2001-2002 and 2002-2003

Occupational Area	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Total
Agriculture						
2002-2003	0	1	0	0	0	1
2001-2002	1	1	0	0	0	2
Business						
Administration						
2002-2003	0	2	6	0	0	8
2001-2002	1	0	7	4	0	12
Construction						
2002-2003	1	0	2	2	0	5
2001-2002	0	0	2	0	1	3
Engineering						
2002-2003	1	3	4	1	0	9
2001-2002	4	5	4	0	0	13
Foundation for work						
2002-2003	3	2	1	0	0	6
2001-2002	2	4	3	0	0	9
Hair and Beauty						
2002-2003	1	0	1	1	0	3
2001-2002	0	1	1	0	0	2
Health, Care and Public Services						
2002-2003	0	1	2	2	2	7
2001-2002	0	1	1	2	0	4
Hospitality						
2002-2003	0	0	1	2	0	3
2001-2002	0	0	2	0	0	2
Leisure, Sport and Travel						
2002-2003	1	1	0	1	0	3
2001-2002	0	1	0	0	0	1

Occupational Area	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Total
Manufacturing						
2002-2003	0	1	2	1	0	4
2001-2002	0	4	1	1	0	6
Media and Design						
2002-2003	1	0	0	0	0	1
2001-2002	0	0	0	0	0	0
Retailing and Customer Service						
2002-2003	0	1	2	1	0	4
2001-2002	0	2	2	0	0	4
Totals						
2002-2003	8	12	21	11	2	54
2001-2002	8	19	23	7	1	58