
Managing Support for the Attainment of Pupils from Minority Ethnic Groups

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Preface

This report evaluates recent developments in work by LEAs and schools to promote higher achievement by minority ethnic groups. It follows up OFSTED's 1999 report, *Raising the attainment of minority ethnic pupils: school and LEA responses*.

The report is based on evidence from these sources:

- in section 1, inspections of 39 local education authorities (LEAs) carried out by OFSTED and the Audit Commission in 1999 and 2000;
- in sections 2 and 3, the findings from visits made in 1999 and 2000 to 12 local education authorities (LEAs), and schools in them, in order to evaluate the impact of the introduction of the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG);
- in section 4, full inspections of 21 Traveller education services and short visits to nine other services between 1999 and 2001.

The separate treatment in this report of provision for pupils from Traveller families reflects the grant régimes and the pattern of the inspections commissioned by the secretary of state.



Introduction

OFSTED's 1999 report

- 1 *Raising the attainment of minority ethnic pupils: school and LEA responses*,¹ concluded that, while there were pockets of sound practice, many schools and LEAs among those surveyed were not nearly as effective as they needed to be in tackling the under-achievement of many pupils from minority ethnic groups. A longstanding obstacle to progress was the reluctance of schools and LEAs to monitor pupil performance by ethnic group.
- 2 The report indicated that only a small number of LEAs had a clear strategy for raising the attainment of pupils from minority ethnic groups. In many LEAs there was uncertainty about how to improve attainment. While most were conscious of their responsibility for promoting good race relations and combating racial harassment, and had written policies and sometimes guidance for schools, few monitored the implementation of these policies or the extent of racial harassment.
- 3 Very few schools reviewed their curricular and pastoral arrangements to ensure that they were sensitive to the ethnic groups in the school population. The work of specialist staff funded by Section 11 of the Local Government Act 1966 and Section 488 of the Education Act 1996 was of crucial importance in raising the attainment of pupils from minority ethnic groups, but the impact of these staff on policy and provision in schools was variable and depended heavily on the commitment of senior managers in schools.
- 4 There was, however, good news from the survey from the way in which some schools were tackling under-achievement in a practical and systematic fashion. There were also prospects of improvement generally, for example in the impact of what were then pilot projects leading to the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, and promising opportunities, notably the requirement on LEAs to construct education development plans to combat under-achievement.²

Changing context

- 5 There have been significant changes bearing on provision for minority ethnic achievement since the 1999 report. From 1999/2000, schools have been required to set targets for achievement at the end of Key Stages 2 and 4, the expectation being that targets cover improved performance by pupils from minority ethnic groups. From 1999/2000, LEAs were required to produce

1 OFSTED 1999.

2 A subsequent research study for OFSTED, *Educational Inequality: Mapping Race, Class and Gender* (David Gillborn and Heidi Safia Mirza, OFSTED 2000), concluded that schools and LEAs required more support and encouragement in their attempts to develop and sustain good practice in addressing educational inequalities in relation to race, class and gender. A later study of Traveller education for the DfES by the Institute of Education, University of London, *Working Towards Inclusive Education: Aspects of Good Practice for Gypsy Traveller Pupils* (Kalwant Bhopal et al), detailed case studies of good practice by schools and LEAs.

education development plans setting out the action planned to support school improvement, based on an audit of the strengths and weaknesses of school performance, including the achievement of pupils from minority ethnic groups.

- 6 A third significant change was the introduction of the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) in April 1999. The EMAG aims to assist schools in their work to address under-achievement and to help to ensure that the work is firmly linked to mainstream improvement activity. The grant replaced the education element of Section 11 funding, which had been the responsibility of the Home Office. That element of the new grant, worth £154 million in 2000-02, is administered by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), formerly the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE). The key elements of the new grant were:
 - a greater focus on the attainment of pupils from minority ethnic groups in the national curriculum;
 - a concern for all under-achieving minority ethnic groups, not just those learning English as an additional language (EAL);
 - an obligation on LEAs to devolve most of the funding (85%) to schools rather than organise support through centrally managed teams, thus giving schools more discretion on how to use the money, and control over appointments;
 - a requirement that LEAs provide training for both specialist and mainstream staff.
- 7 The previously separate specific grant for services for the children of Travellers (including displaced persons) was brought within the new grant regime in April 2000, although it was removed again from April 2001.
- 8 The fourth key factor in the period was the inquiry into the murder of Stephen Lawrence. Following the publication of the inquiry report in February 1999, the government accepted most of the recommendations made.³ Among other things, this led to the passing of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act in 2000, which extended to LEAs and schools a general duty to avoid discrimination on racial grounds and to promote good race relations.

3 The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry: Macpherson Report (The Stationery Office 1999).

Main findings

Work of LEAs

- ❑ LEA support for the attainment of pupils from minority ethnic groups is still too variable, but it is improving. A considerable number of LEAs with large proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups or with small numbers of isolated pupils manage the provision for them very well. A number of important, though familiar, issues, such as the high rate of exclusion of African and Caribbean boys, are more securely on LEAs' agenda. However, the planning of provision for pupils from minority ethnic groups contained in education development plans is too often ineffective, and generally worse than that found in EMAG plans.
- ❑ The transition from Section 11 funding to the EMAG has usually been managed well. Positive developments are evident among central EMAG-funded teams. Ways of working have changed and the new strategic role has been sensitively developed. Some LEAs have relocated the central EMAG support team so that it now sits within the team responsible for school improvement and is more closely involved with mainstream work on achievement, although there is scope for closer links with advisers.
- ❑ The characteristics of effective LEA management of support for raising the attainment of pupils from minority ethnic groups are:
 - clear delineation of responsibilities;
 - genuine delegation of management responsibilities to schools;
 - a clear understanding of shared principles;
 - an acceptance by schools that support for raising the attainment of pupils from minority ethnic groups is integral to the pursuit of higher standards;
 - the use of attainment data to identify need;
 - the allocation of funding and the deployment of staff to meet need;
 - competent specialist staff, with effective arrangements for supporting their development;
 - contingency funding to cope with unpredictable influxes of pupils;
 - detailed joint planning at the LEA and school level.

Use of the EMAG: school responses

- ❑ The EMAG has brought about positive and significant change in some schools, but there is still some way to go before all schools make full use of the grant's potential. Some weaknesses in the Section 11 arrangements, such as in recruitment and training, have remained and these need to be tackled if the new grant is to have the impact desired. But there is still some way to go before all schools make full use of the grant's potential.

- ❑ The major factors accounting for the quality of work in schools continue to be the availability of expert staff and the extent to which school managers understand and facilitate effective practice.
- ❑ Headteachers have welcomed the devolution of funds and the clearer line management structure. Many have taken a closer interest in the quality and deployment of EMAG-funded staff. The great majority are using the grant for the purposes intended, although there are instances of inappropriate use in some schools.
- ❑ The requirement on schools to develop action plans in 1999-2000 and 2000-01 has been beneficial and has led to a better understanding of the work of specialist staff and closer integration with whole-school planning. The grant's focus on achievement has inspired better data collection and the monitoring of attainment by ethnicity.
- ❑ There is greater awareness of the needs of pupils other than EAL learners who are under-attaining and some new posts have been created to address those needs. However, in general, these initiatives have yet to translate into clearly thought-through strategies at school level.
- ❑ The number of pupils from minority ethnic groups, especially refugees and asylum-seekers, has increased over the period in almost all the LEAs visited. New arrivals often need considerable help with basic English, and, as a result, some schools have stopped providing regular support for more advanced bilingual learners.

Funding

- ❑ The government announced an increase in the funding when the EMAG was launched and much of it is under school control. Nevertheless, in most of the schools visited in the 12 LEAs surveyed, the allocation had in fact dropped as a result of the funding being extended to more schools and covering a wider range of work. To compensate, some schools have supported EMAG-funded work from their main school budgets or made use of the greater flexibility provided by other Standards Fund grants.
- ❑ LEAs have struggled to find formulae that reflect the stated purposes of the grant and do justice to individual schools' needs, but criteria for the allocation of funding to schools are recognised as being more transparent than before.

Teaching and learning

- ❑ In 9 of the 12 LEAs in which the use of the EMAG was inspected in detail, the overall quality of English as an Additional Language (EAL) teaching seen was good; in the others it was satisfactory. The picture remains broadly as before, although the amount of good quality support work with older pupils has increased.

- ❑ Joint working between mainstream and EAL teachers was more often the case and the quality of it had improved. However, more attention was needed to specific language needs, alongside efforts to enable pupils to gain access to the curriculum. Pupils generally responded well to the teaching, although their progress in English and achievement across the curriculum varied widely.
- ❑ Many schools - and some LEAs - are still wedded to the use of 'stages' for assessing language development, and the time spent on collecting data to assess development on this basis is often disproportionate.

Staffing

- ❑ Many schools have decided to employ staff from the LEA pool on the same basis as before, at least for an initial period. However, the picture is constantly changing with some schools, for example, reverting to buy-back after opting initially to manage the funding themselves.
- ❑ Opportunities have been taken under the EMAG to redefine staff roles and in some cases this has led to improved status and closer liaison with the mainstream. An example at school level is joint working in the literacy hour. Some headteachers would still welcome more guidance on the roles and deployment of staff.
- ❑ Most schools are keen to retain a balanced programme of support for pupils using English as an additional language, including both specialist teachers and bilingual assistants. The work of bilingual assistants is highly valued, but funding pressures have led some headteachers to employ more of them on a part-time basis. The percentage of temporary contracts has increased for all categories of staff.
- ❑ Recruitment problems have worsened. The number of teachers moving out of the area of work has increased, with a few instances of weaker staff being moved out of EMAG work as the opportunity arises. Career opportunities in the field are still perceived to be limited.
- ❑ While LEAs still offer valuable training opportunities, provision overall has reduced and become more ad hoc for both mainstream and specialist staff. The range of short courses on offer has broadened to encompass the EMAG priorities, but sustained high-quality training for specialist staff is hard to find. In particular, some EMAG co-ordinators need more training for their changed role, with its stronger focus on achievement. The lack of a nationally recognised qualification for this specialist work is a related problem.

Traveller education

- ❑ Between April 1999 and April 2001, the funding of Gypsy Traveller education underwent a series of changes, but these changes have not had much impact on the management and quality of service provision at local level.

- ❑ In the great majority of the Traveller education services inspected, the quality of service management and delivery to schools and pupils is very good and the services provide good value for money.
- ❑ Although there were many examples of good practice in the schools visited, resulting in higher levels of achievement, some schools are too dependent on Traveller education services and do not do enough to consolidate provision for their pupils from Traveller families. These schools need to take more responsibility for forming relationships with parents, arranging in-service training, purchasing appropriate books and resources, and developing the use of distance-learning materials.
- ❑ Despite an improving profile, the attainment of pupils from Gypsy Traveller families at each phase, and attendance in the secondary phase, remain matters of serious concern. Two main factors continue to militate against access for pupils from Gypsy Traveller families to schools and their regular attendance: a lack of clarity in national policy and local inconsistencies in relation to education at home.

1. LEA support for the attainment of pupils from minority ethnic groups

- 9 This section draws on the 34 inspections and 5 reinspections of LEAs conducted by OFSTED and the Audit Commission during autumn 1999 and spring 2000. Judgements in these inspections took account of the range of LEA activities in respect of pupils from minority ethnic groups. They covered the work of dedicated central services, arrangements for data analysis, support for school improvement, services on behaviour, and action on the monitoring and prevention of racially motivated incidents.⁴
- 10 Overall, the findings of these 39 inspections show that there has been an improvement in the quality of LEA support for minority ethnic achievement compared with the picture seen in previous inspections, but the quality of it is still too variable.

LEAs

- 11 The 39 LEAs included 7 shire authorities, 10 London boroughs and the Corporation of London, 13 metropolitan districts and 8 new unitary authorities. The socio-economic range was wide and all parts of England were represented, with the exception of north-east England. The LEAs had a higher proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups than is true of the nation as a whole, but in variability they reflect the full range of English authorities, with the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups ranging from below 1% to well over 50%.
- 12 The bare statistics for the overall proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups give, however, an inadequate idea of the complexity of the position, and not only in the LEAs with very high proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups. A shire county, for example, may have a low proportion, but significant concentrations in a small number of areas. These authorities have the task of supporting both isolated individuals and concentrations of pupils from minority ethnic groups in a few schools. That pattern of uneven distribution is equally evident in some of the large metropolitan LEAs, where a high proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups attend only a handful of schools.
- 13 The complexity of the task is, predictably, greatest in the London LEAs. In one London LEA, for example, half of the pupils are from minority groups, 121 languages are spoken, and the population is highly mobile, with regular arrivals of asylum-seekers and refugees adding to the range of needs to be met. In such LEAs, the challenges posed by cultural and ethnic diversity cannot be considered separately from language needs, socio-economic disadvantage and pupil mobility.

4 Changes in the duties and powers of LEAs and in the funding of support for pupils from minority ethnic groups were reflected in the revision of the framework for inspection of LEAs in summer 1999. The revised framework requires inspectors to comment on the provision made for pupils from minority ethnic groups; including Traveller children; and on measures taken by LEAs to combat racism in schools.

Quality of LEA support

- 14 In their overall performance as organisations these 39 LEAs reflected the range in the country as a whole, though there was a higher proportion of good or very good performance than is true of England generally. Several of the London LEAs included in this summary were among the best of all English LEAs. The same was true of some of the shire counties. Other LEAs, by contrast, were ineffective across a range of their functions.
- 15 The quality of LEA support for raising the attainment of pupils from minority ethnic groups and the efficacy of measures taken to combat racism were both very variable. In both areas, weak provision was encountered about as often as that which was good or very good. However, there were signs of improved provision for raising attainment, due partly to the introduction of the EMAG, increased activity designed to monitor and prevent racist incidents, and renewed focus on familiar issues such as the vulnerability of some minority ethnic groups to under-attainment or exclusion from school.
- 16 The quality of support for raising the attainment of pupils from minority ethnic groups was evaluated in 72% of the reports published between 1996 and 2000. In 15% of the reports it was good or very good, in 40% it was satisfactory and in 17% it was unsatisfactory, though very poor work in this area was confined to a handful of LEAs. The LEAs inspected in autumn 1999 and spring 2000 were doing rather better than this.
- 17 The inspection reports make it clear that there is a difficult job of leadership for LEAs to do if they are to engender effective provision for children from minority ethnic groups. They must first of all take, and share with schools, a sufficiently broad view of the issue. In order to be effective, provision for children from minority ethnic groups must be fully integrated with schools' overall drive to raise standards, not seen as a separate, specialist concern largely focused on support for those learning English as an additional language. At the same time, the LEA needs to protect the integrity of EAL teaching as a specialism by retaining a capacity to support and train the specialist teachers. This requires not only a clear vision and principles, but hard decisions and clear guidance on the management and deployment of staff and the allocation and use of funding.
- 18 The transition from Section 11 funding has not caused the chaos predicted in some quarters. Very few LEAs were criticised for their handling of the transition; the majority managed it well or very well. The experience of Portsmouth, which had used the transition to improve management of this area of work, was typical.

'The transition from Section 11 to the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) has been well managed. The EMAG Action Plan is a sensible, well-conceived document which clearly identifies needs and appropriate strategies. Currently 6.9% of the school population comprise the target group for EMTAG support; of whom 3.7% are bilingual learners. Support to schools is provided via a service level agreement and is directed to those pupils under-achieving against national curriculum age-related norms.'

- 19 The change in the funding regime was moving LEAs' provision in this area in the desired direction. The requirement to monitor attainment by ethnicity had greatly improved the management information available to LEAs, and that information was being much better used. At the same time, there were clear signs of a broadening of focus, from concentration on language acquisition to increased attention to attainment across the curriculum. The requirement to delegate necessitated clearer delineation of the respective role of LEA and schools, and shifted the onus for raising attainment to the schools.
- 20 Much - though by no means all - of the best practice was located in the London LEAs. What inspectors wrote about one of them, Lewisham, was typical of several.

'Support for children from ethnic minority groups is good. Its effectiveness is dependent in part upon the shared values and ethos between the LEA and the schools and in part upon the clear and appropriate division of responsibilities between the schools and the LEA. Under previous Section 11 arrangements, the management of specialist staff was devolved to schools from 1995 and headteachers recruited their own Section 11 staff. The small central specialist team supported heads in monitoring the work, but it was owned by the schools. Ethnic minority achievement was thus clearly identified as being the responsibility of the school as a whole. Consensus on this has been built up over the years.

The LEA analyses achievement by ethnic group and identifies under-achieving groups. In the light of this, and building on past arrangements, the LEA has developed a new strategy for the use of the EMAG expressed in new funding arrangements. The new grant is divided three ways, with 45% targeted to EAL children, 45% to African-Caribbean under-achievement and 10% to new arrivals. A new, improved formula has been used to assess levels of English and the grant allocated with all the allocations made public to everyone. Consultation with stakeholders has marked every stage of the process.

Some schools lost out through the changes, but even these acknowledge the transparency of the transition process. Some extra money was secured from the priority redirection fund to cushion a shortfall and the central team was reduced in order to protect the work in schools. An under-spend was recycled to fund urgent work with new arrivals. Former S11 teachers from 10 of the schools are currently receiving African-Caribbean achievement training to equip them for their changed roles.

Current work in schools is an integral and effective part of the literacy strategy. The central Ethnic Minority Achievement Strategy (EMAS) co-ordinator is part of the school improvement team and the work of the project is rigorously monitored. Schools visited paid tribute to the way in which the transition was managed by the LEA, to the value of EMAS staff and of joint working between them and literacy co-ordinators and in two cases to very useful INSET from the EMAS team.'

- 21 This analysis describes generally excellent management processes. Here, openness and a willingness to engage thoroughly in discussion led to a partnership which was not confused with an attempt to please everyone.

- 22 More particularly, the following characteristics of good practice can be drawn out:
- clear delineation of responsibilities;
 - genuine delegation of management responsibilities to schools;
 - a clear understanding of shared principles;
 - an acceptance by schools that support for raising the attainment of pupils from minority ethnic groups is integral to the pursuit of higher standards;
 - the use of attainment data to identify need;
 - the allocation of funding and deployment of staff to meet need;
 - detailed joint planning at LEA and school level;
 - competent specialist staff, with effective arrangements for supporting their development;
 - contingency funding to cope with unpredictable influxes of pupils.
- 23 The importance of the last point cannot, in the London context particularly, be overstated. The report on Camden is typical of many in stressing the challenge the LEA faces, and largely meets.

'There is high pupil mobility, an increasing number of children from refugee families as well as a high proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. It is largely a success story – although as rapidly as the LEA tackles one challenge, another emerges, and so it can never be complacent.'

- 24 There is, of course, only so much that LEAs can do. Effective management by the LEA is present where the conditions set out above are met, but raising attainment depends on good management and teaching in the schools. The inspections suggest that LEA management is improving, but, where there is detailed comment on patterns of attainment, it retains a familiar look, with under-attainment among pupils of Caribbean, Pakistani and Bangladeshi heritage (and, in London, Turkish boys) receiving frequent mention. However, a significant number of LEAs were judged to be managing the provision for them well.
- 25 In one LEA, now subject to intervention following a report that found some of its most basic functions to be inadequately performed, provision for pupils from minority ethnic groups was good. The particular strength of the LEA was a very effective language service, which was 'successfully supplemented by a resource centre with loan facilities, a good integrated training programme and a well managed and effective programme of work in the community, including fostering the involvement of parents with the school'.
- 26 The specific references in the reports to support for the attendance and behaviour of pupils from minority ethnic groups mainly concerned efforts to reduce the disproportionate number of exclusions of African and Caribbean boys.

Several LEAs were identified for their successful efforts in this regard. One report also referred to innovative forms of co-operation between schools and the police, designed to improve communications with the black community. References to attendance deal with the familiar issue of extended holidays in term-time; none of the references suggests a definitive answer to the problem.

- 27 Good provision was not confined to LEAs with large numbers of pupils from minority ethnic groups. For example, provision in York, with only 210 such pupils, was rooted in a strong corporate thrust, across the whole Council, towards social inclusion. Seven LEAs managed provision effectively for small or average proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups.
- 28 By contrast, it is a matter for considerable concern that support for the attainment of pupils from minority ethnic groups had major weaknesses in some of the large towns and cities which have high or very high proportions of such pupils. Such weaknesses sprang occasionally from too narrow a view of the provision, or from a lack of clarity of purpose, leading to questionable deployment of staff.

'Criteria for the deployment of support are currently inappropriate. Funding is devolved on the basis of pupil numbers, but using a generalised indication of each minority ethnic group's needs, rather than actual pupils' needs. Schools with under 10% of pupils of minority ethnic origin receive no support. However, not all schools acquiring a Year 5 cohort (as a result of reorganisation) this year have been given additional specialist staff, and there has been some negotiation about individual schools' needs, not all of which have been met through these arrangements. These complexities, taken with the inherent instability of staffing in this area of work because of the temporary nature of many posts, and some competency issues that have arisen, had led to poor staffing arrangements in several schools visited. In three schools the poor management of staffing by the LEA over recent years had led to very poor provision.'

- 29 In a small number of LEAs inspectors advanced a rather different criticism. This is an area of work which is subject to particular interventions in the form of initiatives, both local and national. In some LEAs, that can lead to difficulties in co-ordinating the work of staff engaged on overlapping or, occasionally, virtually identical projects. In such circumstances, however meritorious the intention, the most likely outcome is confusion. The effects of 'management by initiative' were graphically depicted in one report.

'The LEA has also run a large number of other projects to support pupils from minority ethnic groups. However, they have been established at particular times for particular purposes and they have not led to the development of a coherent and long-term strategy to improve schools' ability to meet all pupils' needs. Monitoring of the effect of projects has not been strong enough. The Education Development Plan includes a range of activities concerning minority ethnic support, but these are not clearly described and do not form a meaningful whole. The Education Development Plan is particularly unclear on what action the authority intends to take overall to boost the performance of Black Caribbean pupils. Overall, this is a generally unconvincing programme.'

- 30 This makes the point that, without strategic direction and careful progress-chasing, good intentions come to nothing. In another LEA, inspectors were equally critical, for similar reasons.

'The support for ethnic minority pupils has had a weak basis in policy and a low profile. Its delivery through different services, different line management and varying approaches, results in inconsistent provision and inadequate connection with mainstream improvement work.'

- 31 This reinforces the point that management of this area of provision works best when it is integrated with the main thrust of work to improve standards and when it is clearly assigned, with sufficient co-ordination to prevent the fragmentation described here.
- 32 In a very small number of reports, inspectors criticised LEAs for taking insufficient action, within a largely mono-cultural context, to meet the needs of isolated pupils from minority ethnic groups. One such, again indicating the need for breadth of vision, was criticised as follows.

'The EDP makes no reference to how the needs, other than EAL, of minority ethnic pupils are met, although it refers to "benchmarking for consistency to achieve equal opportunities for pupils with individualised needs across a very dispersed schools' network". The LEA states that it has systems to respond to its context in relation to small schools and dispersed locations, but there is insufficient recognition in the EDP of the needs of small groups of minority ethnic pupils or that their isolation might be an issue.'

Monitoring of racially motivated incidents

- 33 Of the LEAs inspected since the publication of the report of the Stephen Lawrence inquiry (the Macpherson report) most were judged to have responded well to the recommendations. In 10 LEAs the response was judged to have been slow, inadequate or non-existent.
- 34 All the LEAs inspected had policies on equality of opportunity, and the vast majority referred to social inclusion among their principal aims. LEAs' responses to the Stephen Lawrence inquiry/report characteristically involved issuing improved guidelines on racial harassment, with a corresponding tightening of monitoring procedures, which were occasionally said not to have worked well in the past. A few LEAs continued to provide comprehensive guidance, but not to monitor effectively.
- 35 Good practice in this area was, however, becoming more widespread, and was typified by the following example, Wandsworth.

'The LEA's work on tackling racial harassment and the guidance issued to schools is also a key and effective policy development area. The LEA responded promptly and effectively to the Macpherson report. Schools are well aware of the requirement to report all racially motivated incidents, and do so. The LEA's guidance on the prevention and handling of such incidents is of excellent quality.'

- 36 There are many other LEAs, particularly in London, of which as much might be said. It is, by contrast, of concern that among the authorities about whose response to the Stephen Lawrence inquiry recommendations inspectors expressed a degree of reservation are two London authorities. The report on one endorsed the view of schools that more inter-agency work needed to be done, and that the LEA needed to map the various initiatives under way. In the second, inspectors were concerned about delay in establishing LEA policy and procedures while cross-departmental implementation of council policy was awaited.

Education Development Plans

- 37 LEAs are required, under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, to set out how they propose to discharge their functions with a view to promoting higher standards in schools. Inspectors have generally been somewhat critical of the quality and utility of many of these plans: over a quarter were judged unsatisfactory and only 16% good.
- 38 In relation to provision for children from minority ethnic groups, LEA education development plans, in the majority of cases, have not set out clear strategies for improving the attainment of under-performing groups, even where the need was clearly identified in the audit of performance. This has been true even of some of the best-managed LEAs.
- 39 No one education development plan among those analysed illustrates the provision of all the desirable information, but the most informative have several of the following features:
- data on the ethnic composition of the whole population of an area, together with information describing the distribution of minority ethnic groups across the LEA's schools;
 - data by ethnicity and gender describing the performance of pupils from the major minority groups, including baseline data as well as performance at the four key stages and post-16;
 - data by ethnicity and gender on other matters including exclusions, attendance, mobility and post-16 destinations;
 - data on the language proficiency of pupils learning English as an additional language;
 - detailed commentary that draws attention to particular issues needing action;
 - signs of a clear intent to address issues which are important matters of

- principle, even though they may affect relatively few individuals – for example, strategies to support children experiencing racial harassment;
- targets for improved performance and participation by minority ethnic groups;
 - careful specification of the way support for pupils from minority ethnic groups is to be integrated within the programmes planned to address overall LEA priorities;
 - specification of the staffing devoted to support for minority ethnic achievement, including funding sources, and a clear indication of how the roles of the staff involved link with those of mainstream advisers;
 - a statement of the training needs of a range of staff as judged by the LEA, and what its training programme will offer;
 - arrangements for the quality assurance of EMAG-funded and other support for minority ethnic achievement.

EMAG action plans

- 40 The inadequacies found in the education development plans of the LEAs inspected were not generally found in the action plans which LEAs were required to produce to gain funding under the EMAG. In the LEAs inspected, these action plans usually made good use of data to identify needs and set targets, although commentary on how they had been set was usually lacking. They often proposed convincing, clearly costed, strategies for achieving targets, and those strategies were feasible for the services concerned.
- 41 Where EMAG action plans were unsatisfactory, the poor state of data-gathering was a principal reason. By and large, central services tried very hard to gather the evidence they needed to enable them to formulate strategies and action by way of support, but they were hampered by the inability of schools to provide the evidence needed – and, sometimes, by their own lack of determination to pursue the matter. There was, also, sometimes a failure to comment on performance by ethnicity where the numbers of minority groups were small.
- 42 Nevertheless, the general competence of EMAG plans reflected the quality of leadership of the services, which was generally well regarded by schools, a judgement broadly endorsed by inspectors. It was of concern that this better quality of EMAG planning was not reflected in education development plans, since it suggested that the provision of support for pupils from minority ethnic groups was perceived as separate from the main work on standards. The issue has become a sharper one given the lifting from April 2001 of the requirement to produce separate EMAG action plans.

2. Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant: LEA responses

- 43 This section gives a more detailed picture of the introduction of the EMAG, based on visits to 12 LEAs.
- 44 To establish a picture of provision in the last year of Section 11, HMI made initial visits shortly before the introduction in April 1999 of the EMAG. The same LEAs (with the exception of one which was involved in an LEA inspection) were revisited about a year later to identify changes in the nature and quality of provision as a result of the EMAG.
- 45 The LEAs represented both urban and rural contexts from around the country with wide variations in the numbers of students from minority ethnic groups, the structures used to support their achievement and the amount of grant received.
- 46 Visits were made to some five schools in each LEA. Meetings were held with managers of the central services responsible for this work. In the first round, 64 schools (39 primary, 25 secondary) were inspected. On the second leg of the inspection, 67 schools were visited (39 primary, 28 secondary).⁵
- 47 At the time of the first visits, two of the 12 LEAs were already devolving funds to schools. Following the introduction of the EMAG, schools in six of the LEAs agreed to buy back LEA services, mostly until April 2000. Only two LEAs moved straight into the devolution of funds from April 1999. When inspectors returned to the LEAs in spring and summer 2000, devolution was in place in all LEAs except where funding fell below the level (£150,000) where devolution of 85% of the grant is not required.

Distribution of funding

- 48 When the then DfEE took over responsibility for the grant in 1999, it inherited a funding system with many anomalies. These had developed over time as a result of a bidding system that rewarded LEAs that submitted convincing, wide-ranging and, in some cases, innovative projects. It was recognised that the planned move to a needs-based formula would take time to achieve. The historic disparities mean that additional funding for an early stage learner of English, for example, can vary by several hundred pounds from LEA to LEA.
- 49 The DfEE formula for allocating funds to LEAs took account of overall numbers of pupils from minority ethnic groups as well as those with EAL needs. There was also a weighting for the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals. LEAs had responsibility for developing their own formula for allocating funds to schools, on the grounds that they are in the best position to understand local needs.

5 Of the original 64 schools, 43 were revisited. The others, which were largely in rural areas, no longer had pupils from minority ethnic groups on roll or qualified for EMAG support.

- 50 The formulae devised by LEAs ranged from the simple to the very complex, depending on local contextual factors, such as the distribution of pupils from minority ethnic groups. Some were heavily dependent on LEA measures of language proficiency, others were linked to achievement within the national curriculum. Inevitably, the amount received by schools, particularly where it varied from previous years' allocations, was a major factor influencing the decision on whether to buy back or withdraw from the LEA's central provision.
- 51 Another important consideration was the advice given by LEAs about the implications for schools if redundancies needed to be pursued. LEAs differed in the advice they gave on this, with some saying that the responsibility for managing the redundancy process in relation to staff previously employed in the schools under Section 11 would rest with the schools.
- 52 As LEAs devised their first formulae to mirror the broader purposes of the grant, there were winners and losers at school level. The same amount of money was spread across a larger number of schools. Among the schools inspected it was often those serving the most disadvantaged communities which saw the greatest reductions as the new grant basis was introduced. At the time of the visits many LEAs were reviewing their formulae to ensure that some schools were not disproportionately affected by this process.
- 53 The majority of schools revisited by HMI had lost funding, some to the extent of £20,000 or more. Some headteachers indicated that they therefore needed to make changes to their support strategies not because they wished to, but because the funding position demanded it. However there was general agreement among headteachers at the time of the revisits that much greater transparency of funding now existed: local formulae had usually been debated at length and agreed by the LEA and headteacher representatives. Despite this, there was still considerable unease and confusion about the anomalies the various formulae had created.
- 54 The allocations themselves were affected by the schools' decisions on their use of funding, as is illustrated below, and several LEAs had to work on a range of possible funding positions, depending on what schools decided.

In an outer London borough 88 schools bought back into the central service and 18 did not. However, the 18 schools which previously had only had three full-time equivalent staff in total were now due to receive £300,000. This sum was a result of changed criteria in the formulae, enhanced by additional monies representing the schools' share of resources previously held centrally for training and other purposes. The outcome for one school visited by HMI – which had bought back the service – was a reduction of £28,000, despite increased numbers of pupils from minority ethnic groups.

Impact of the EMAG on central LEA teams

- 55 Despite early misgivings about aspects of the new grant, including its impact on their own jobs, EMAG managers had worked hard to implement the new funding regime and respond to policy changes. Not all LEAs were making progress on all fronts, but positive developments arising from the introduction of the EMAG were clear. In the first round of visits, management in 75% of the LEAs was judged satisfactory or better, with 60% good or very good. In the second round, management in all the LEAs was at least satisfactory, with a similar proportion (60%) judged good or very good.
- 56 In several LEAs, closer liaison with mainstream advisers and inspectors - often as a result of the relocation of EMAG teams to the LEA division responsible for standards and achievement - was evident. Some teams were taking a strong lead on the wider issues of achievement, and not just EAL. This reinforced the commitment to collect better quality achievement data and develop strategies for analysis and response. Some were reviewing their training programmes and had improved the quality and range of the training on offer.
- 57 The reinspection visits showed that the extent of buy-back, combined with the 15% limit on funding retained by the LEA, had affected central staffing, including some peripatetic services such as those for Early Years and Black Caribbean achievement. A year after the introduction of the EMAG approximately 50% of the central teams visited had the same number of staff, though they were not always the same people. Two services had suffered a significant decrease in numbers, but two teams were bigger, one significantly. In a few LEAs schools showed little enthusiasm for buying back or taking on peripatetic Early Years or Black Caribbean achievement support teachers and these teams had had to be disbanded.
- 58 In a small number of LEAs the downgrading of a few central posts had led to experienced staff leaving. Other LEAs, by contrast, had upgraded posts and managed to attract good quality advisory staff who have brought about improved training opportunities for mainstream and specialist staff.
- 59 The task for LEA central services in influencing policy at school level is a different one now that the majority of headteachers have control of the resources. At the time of the second visits, many central services were developing their strategic role sensitively, working in partnership with schools and offering good guidance. Examples of this were:
- how to develop an EMAG action plan and how to link it to the school development plan;
 - the provision of model job descriptions and person specifications for language support teachers, bilingual support workers and home/school liaison posts;
 - how to determine the staffing package to meet the differing needs of individual schools.

- 60 Most headteachers reported that the process of producing an action plan had been helpful in clarifying issues and deciding on priorities. The one area where a significant number of schools said they needed much more help was on how to tackle the under-performance of pupils from certain heritage groups, such as Black Caribbean, Turkish and Pakistani. While there was considerable experience to be drawn on in relation to the support for pupils with EAL, this broader area was largely uncharted. One LEA was trying to address this by appointing a strong central advisory team with staff from the major communities represented in the locality.
- 61 The senior inspector who managed the EMAG team in an inner-city authority wrote the following about the changes brought about by the EMAG.

'Schools continue to grapple with their data but, in general, the EMAG work is better focused on achievement. The annual moderation exercise carried out by the service supports schools in identifying pupils who may be under-achieving or causing concern. For some groups of pupils – particularly refugee and Black Caribbean/Black British pupils – it has been hard for some schools to establish baseline data. Moreover, we recognise that in future we may need to ask schools to distinguish between pupils from settled and recently-arrived refugee communities – it is the achievement of the latter which most concerns us.

In general, minority ethnic issues are assuming more importance for schools. The recent Macpherson report has had a positive impact on schools' thinking. With only two or three exceptions, all schools have written a policy on ethnic minority achievement which has required them to think through their strategies carefully.

The broader focus on under-achieving groups is especially apparent in secondary schools, which in general have had greater scope to make changes to the roles of their staff. Some secondary schools have developed or are developing projects and initiatives designed to address the under-achievement of Black pupils. Primary schools have put in place initiatives to improve contact with parents. Central support for this has come from a Sylheti-speaking member of the advisory team, refugee team workers and a family link officer based at Education Social Work Service.

Central services – chiefly the EMAG team, with a full complement of staff – have continued to play a significant role in supporting schools and have extended and refined the annual moderation exercise which monitors the progress of pupils and identifies causes for concern.

The central training offer has expanded significantly to take account of the needs of mainstream as well as EMAG-funded staff. About half of all schools have set aside EMAG money for training, though those which have not will find money from other sources to fund supply cover for their staff to attend central courses.

There have been a few redundancies in the secondary sector: in some cases, heads have looked to the new funding regime as an opportunity to encourage under-performing staff to leave. The Early Years team, previously a central team working with children in nursery and reception classes, had to be disbanded when too few schools agreed to take on the teachers concerned. Some primary schools which have shed early years staff now lack a member of staff sufficiently experienced to assess and monitor the progress of very young EAL children.'

- 62 This response was echoed in part by other LEAs and summarises some of the key successes and concerns in the introduction of the EMAG from an LEA perspective. Local headteachers' views of the developments largely confirmed this analysis, as did HMI inspection evidence from the schools.
- 63 In LEAs receiving less than £150,000, where the pattern is for a small peripatetic service to provide a limited amount of support at irregular intervals, the EMAG had brought about less change. The work of such services is often concentrated on providing pastoral support for the child and family in isolated settings and this is often done very well.

Black Caribbean achievement projects

- 64 About a dozen specific projects on Black Caribbean achievement had been running under Section 11. In the first leg of the exercise, two LEAs carrying out significant project work in respect of Black Caribbean pupils, and funded under Section 11, were visited.
- 65 In the first LEA, headteachers were very appreciative of the work. Schools selected for additional support had relatively high numbers of Black Caribbean pupils, the exclusion rates for the boys were high, and a significant number of pupils had low motivation, low achievement and poor behaviour. Work included mentoring, especially of pupils under threat of exclusion, provision of home/school liaison and curriculum support within the mainstream.
- 66 One finding was that short-term help (that is, a specialist member of staff placed in a school for, say, a term) was not as productive as hoped. Consistency of staffing was important and support needed to be seen as long term. Black history clubs had raised the cultural profile of these students in school, and the teachers involved provided role models and offered effective home school support. This work largely took place at top junior and secondary level. Pupils and parents who were asked for their views of this work were generally positive. In one secondary school, some Black Caribbean girls said that the counselling support from the Caribbean teacher had helped them to improve their attitudes. Some pupils had been moved into higher sets as a result of intervention and in most cases attainment had improved.
- 67 In a second LEA, the work of the Black Caribbean team had been particularly effective in one of the two schools visited. Black Caribbean pupils' achievement had risen, relationships between staff and pupils, and between the school and parents, had improved and more Black Caribbean pupils were staying on into the sixth form. Similar strategies to those outlined above were used.
- 68 In a third LEA, following the setting up of a research project funded by a range of interested parties (but not through Section 11), support for parents was offered through the establishment of local groups involving up to 40 parents and community representatives. These groups were exploring ways of involving parents, for example encouraging them to become school governors. Excellent relationships had been established between the researcher, the communities and

the schools. HMI judged that the first phase of the project had been valuable and that the second phase was likely to have a positive impact.

- 69 Return visits showed a surprising and worrying picture. There was greater recognition of the under-achievement of Black Caribbean pupils by schools, but less intervention work was in evidence on the ground. A small number of new central posts were planned, but few appointments had been made. At school level the situation was similar.

Target-setting, monitoring and evaluation

- 70 Under Section 11, monitoring often drew heavily on the progress of pupils as measured by movement through LEA-devised EAL stages. Many schools and LEAs remain wedded to EAL stages for the assessment of language development. The time spent collecting these data is often disproportionate to the benefit secured.
- 71 Since the introduction of the EMAG there has been increased recognition of the need to analyse national curriculum and examination attainment data by ethnic group. The increased contact in some LEAs between EMAG managers and LEA advisers or inspectors had led to joint monitoring of provision and outcomes at school level. Joint visits to schools typically involved reviews of plans and outcomes and the setting of new targets. This helped to sharpen the achievement focus of the new grant and, where EMAG managers were provided with adequate training for this new role, it had been found helpful by headteachers.
- 72 In the first round of visits, few EMAG managers or EMAG staff in schools had any involvement in target-setting. This mirrored the lack of attention to minority ethnic achievement in most LEA education development plans and the similar picture in relation to school development planning. The expectation that school development plans take account of priorities in the EMAG action plan was beginning to change this.
- 73 A range of structures had been put in place for monitoring and evaluating the work of additionally funded staff, such as the monthly review of staff support sheets by managers, termly discussions with headteachers about their satisfaction levels and the gathering of data about the language and attendance levels of targeted pupils.
- 74 The extent of the monitoring of the quality of provision at classroom level – which had been very limited in the first visits - had increased since the introduction of the EMAG. The greater interest taken by some headteachers in the quality of work funded by the EMAG had strengthened this aspect, but not all headteachers and senior managers were sufficiently informed about the nature of good quality EAL support work. There is a continued need for authoritative advice from central LEA teams in this respect.

3. Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant: School responses

- 75 This section focuses on the responses of schools in the 12 LEAs to the introduction of the EMAG, starting with the picture as it was in the last year of Section 11 funding.

Support under Section 11

- 76 The first round of visits to the 12 LEAs produced generally positive findings about the quality of Section 11 provision in schools and its effects on pupils' response and achievement:
- the quality of teaching across the 12 LEAs was satisfactory to good, but better at primary than at secondary level;
 - some excellent joint working between mainstream and Section 11 staff was seen, with in-class support more effective than withdrawal work;
 - EAL learners responded well to the teaching and made satisfactory progress and, once their knowledge of English was secure, their achievement matched or exceeded that of their peers – but, not surprisingly, those with continuing needs for EAL support performed below age-related norms, more significantly at secondary level;
 - the achievement of certain groups (Black Caribbean, Pakistani, Bangladeshi) remained a matter for concern, and understanding of the full picture was limited by the fact that a significant number of LEAs had inadequate data on achievement by ethnic groups;
 - the work of bilingual assistants was greatly valued and was particularly effective in one-to-one and small-group situations and in home/school liaison.
- 77 Other findings from the first round of visits were:
- the level of LEA support to pupils from minority ethnic groups, especially those with EAL, was unacceptably wide and raised questions about the models of provision used and their relationship to outcome;
 - the formulae used by LEAs to allocate staffing to schools were largely EAL-based, but the needs of more advanced learners of English were not systematically met in any LEA; and the needs of other groups were rarely addressed at all, although in the few LEAs where work of this kind was inspected good outcomes were noted;
 - 80% of Section 11-funded staff worked at primary level and had widely differing caseloads;
 - the composition of teams was varied, with one LEA, for example, investing almost exclusively in bilingual assistants;
 - 23% of qualified Section 11-funded teachers were from minority ethnic groups, while the figure for staff without qualified teacher status was 94%;

- except in one LEA, over 50% of Section 11-funded teachers were on short-term contracts, while the figure for staff without qualified teacher status was higher;
- training was regularly offered to Section 11-funded staff, but provision for mainstream teachers was more *ad hoc* and few LEAs had coherent schemes of differentiated training to meet the differing needs of staff;
- there was insufficient monitoring of the quality of Section 11-funded work at classroom level;
- Section 11-funded staff were rarely involved in whole-school target-setting.

Effects of the new grant in schools

- 78 Before its introduction in April 1999 there was much anxiety amongst Section 11-funded staff about the future of their work under the EMAG. But features of the new grant were welcomed, notably, the stronger focus on training for teachers, the clearly articulated LEA strategic role, the requirement for ethnically monitored attainment data, and greater attention to under-achieving groups, not just pupils learning EAL.
- 79 The feature that caused most concern was the devolution of funding to schools. Section 11-funded staff recognised that this could lead to greater school involvement with their work and greater connection between that work and the mainstream. There was, nevertheless, concern, for example about possible redundancies or pressure to work in ways which were not consistent with accepted good practice. A second major concern was about how the extended remit of the grant (more focus on under-attaining groups, not just EAL, and more training) could be delivered.

Use of devolved funding

- 80 The majority of headteachers in the schools visited welcomed the devolution of funding and resulting clearer line management. A significant number were taking a much closer interest in the quality and deployment of staff and some had seized the opportunity to rethink the use of resources by creating new posts, redefining current ones and in some cases putting money aside for training and resources. In most cases EMAG-funded staff had been involved in the debate and were enthusiastic about the changes. In particular, many had come to feel more part of the school.

In one primary school in the Midlands the role of the EMAG co-ordinator was enhanced to enable her to oversee the work of not only the EMAG team but also a Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) initiative. This allowed her to play a much wider role in the school, focusing not just on EAL but attainment more broadly. She had also started early morning reading initiatives for boys and girls. The greater flexibility provided by the new funding arrangements enabled the headteacher to rethink the role of the EMAG co-ordinator, which has resulted in the better co-ordination of initiatives across the school and improved the quality of the provision.

In an infant school in a small shire town, Section 11-funded staff had tended to work with groups of children, including bilingual pupils, identified as slow learners. There was now a much sharper focus on identifying bilingual pupils held back by their knowledge of English and providing appropriate help for them. There had been an improvement in the standards achieved in Key Stage 1, and especially by bilingual pupils, in the school.

- 81 Some headteachers had grasped the greater flexibility offered by devolved funding to review job descriptions. They had noted the grant's greater focus on achievement and effective deployment of resources and had rewritten job specifications accordingly. In many cases this had led to the closer integration of EMAG-funded teachers into mainstream staffing structures and held out both the prospect of a clearer career structure for them and the chance to capitalise on their experience for the benefit of the whole school.
- 82 In a very small number of the schools visited, headteachers were reluctant to sustain the additional allowances attached to some posts in the past by the LEA.
- 83 In secondary schools with large numbers of pupils from minority ethnic groups and substantial additional funding, opportunities for more radical changes to staff responsibilities and ways of working were that much greater.

The headteacher of a large girls' comprehensive school believed that the new grant offered greater flexibility in the use of resources than under Section 11. The school already had a successful and respected EAL department which contributed significantly to its improving standards. The headteacher wished to build on this work, but also to respond to the spirit of EMAG by creating a new senior teacher post of Pupil Achievement Manager which would serve to co-ordinate the various achievement initiatives under way in the school. She also wanted to increase the amount of time given to home/school liaison work and appointed a new bilingual officer to work with the local Pakistani community on issues such as attendance, truancy, bullying and general welfare.

Although the work co-ordinated by the two new post-holders was developing well, reductions in EMAG funding to this school from April 2000 meant that the headteacher was obliged to move the posts on to the main school budget, hampering other planned developments. The liaison officer post in particular had resulted in dramatic improvements, with fixed-period exclusions dropping by 60% between November 1999 and Easter 2000, a marked reduction in extended holidays in term-time and improved behaviour at school as a result of the skilful mediation of the liaison officer.

In a northern comprehensive with 96% of pupils from minority ethnic groups (virtually all with EAL) the headteacher appreciated the greater freedom to manage staff and spend the school's allocation more variably. The large (10.7 full-time equivalent) EAL department was now organised in three teams – new arrivals, Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4. Each team is led by a language support teacher and has additional staff attached, depending on precise needs.

The role for each group was also clearly defined, so that bilingual support workers supported new arrivals, Key Stage 3 work was targeted at different capability levels (bands) and Key Stage 4 pupils whose English was more advanced but who would still benefit from additional support to raise attainment were targeted. The former co-ordinator of EAL had been promoted to a new post, Head of Additional Need, a role that gave her oversight of special educational needs as well as EAL. There had also been money to spend on resources and a short-term intensive course for late-arriving pupils. The EMAG-funded staff felt happier in their new, more carefully defined roles and there is general agreement that the greater funding flexibility allows them to adjust support as needs dictate.

In a large inner London comprehensive where pupils from minority ethnic groups form almost 60% of the school, the new grant prompted a complete rethink of posts and support strategies. Two upgraded co-ordinator posts were created to give greater status to the work and to respond to the need for bilingual and refugee support and the tackling of achievement issues more generally. The co-ordinators worked closely with the senior management team and other key members of staff (the literacy co-ordinator and the senior teacher responsible for assessment and monitoring).

The headteacher had also set aside a significant percentage of the school's EMAG allocation for training and resources. The intention was that all staff would participate in training, for, unless these issues were accepted as everyone's responsibility, further significant progress was thought unlikely. The new structure responded well to the spirit of the new grant. However, while the long-term vision for the work was positive, the immediate result of the new approach was to reduce support for bilingual pupils by at least half. It was fortunate that the school contained few early stage learners of English at that point.

Another inner London comprehensive set out to respond to the new grant's thrust on under-achieving groups by using some of its resources to appoint a part-time support worker to work with a small number of black boys who were causing concern. However, in contrast to the EAL and refugee support staff in the school, who had well-defined responsibilities and targets, the role of this member of staff was not clear. She worked in isolation, with no formal links to form tutors, the pastoral system more generally, or parents. The main strategy seemed to be forging good relationships with the boys. Pupils were withdrawn from the curriculum for group discussion: some attended the sessions; some did not. No structures were in place for monitoring outcomes.

- 84 The examples show a range of school responses to the use of devolved funding. In the majority of cases, however, it had been largely a question of business as usual. In many instances this was because headteachers were largely, if not wholly, satisfied with the quality of work and the personnel involved. In others, headteachers might have wished to engage in more whole-school training or alter the balance of support or use funds to buy in resources, for example, but to do so would have meant losing staff and few had been prepared to contemplate this. Some headteachers preferred to use the main school budget to fund staff training rather than reduce the EMAG allocation.

- 85 Most schools had sought to retain a balanced programme of support for their pupils from minority ethnic groups. They were keen to employ not only EMAG-funded teachers with specialist qualifications and the ability to play a co-ordinating and advisory role across the school, but also bilingual assistants who have much to offer in helping new arrivals settle in and make sense of the curriculum. They also frequently play an important role in forging links with the community and sustaining dialogue between home and school. It was regrettable, however, that a significant number of schools were employing more bilingual assistants simply because they felt it was easier to offer them part-time, temporary contracts which could easily be terminated should funding worsen.

Use of central LEA staffing

- 86 Schools with devolved EMAG funding can buy back services from the LEA if they wish. In the first year of the new grant many schools decided to do so. In some LEAs all the schools remained with the central system, and in others only a handful of schools withdrew from it. Secondary schools, especially those which received sizeable grants, were more likely to withdraw than primary schools. Some schools withdrew in the first year of the grant and then came back in a year later.
- 87 The decision whether to end the use of central staff caused much discussion in some schools. Some preferred to buy back the LEA service because of its quality even though they could have had greater flexibility by managing the funding themselves. Some schools bought back the LEA package uncritically, regarding it as insurance that EAL needs would be met. In other cases, schools felt that they could achieve more by using some of the funding in alternative ways.

One secondary school used its funding (approximately £1,000) to buy the services of an assistant rather than a qualified teacher to provide a three-week intensive language programme for the pupils judged to need support – a small number, but more than the number attracting funding under the formula. The school believed the pupils gained in self-confidence; links with subject departments had been strengthened and useful resources produced. Taking responsibility for the money gave the school the flexibility to focus on need as it arose. It recognised, however, that it was in a particularly favourable position in having two experienced EAL teachers on its mainstream staff.

- 88 The educational issues were not always well thought through. For one primary school, the main objective in coming out of the LEA service was to move to a system of withdrawing pupils from mainstream classes for EAL support, as class teachers were not comfortable with in-class provision through partnership with a support teacher. This had been a bone of contention between the school and the LEA support service, which strongly promoted joint working.
- 89 Another primary school decided not to buy back for a quite different reason. The school had established a school-based EMAG team, line managed by the headteacher, who gave the following reasons for the decision.

'Buying in staff from a central service is tantamount to seeing pupils from minority ethnic groups as someone else's problem. I want minority ethnic issues to be embraced by the whole staff. I also want EMAG staff to be concerned with the full range of minority ethnic achievement issues – not just EAL. I want to use key EMAG staff to model teaching approaches to their colleagues. With buy-back I would have no control over personnel and there would be no guarantee that they could take on this advisory role. The central service could also guarantee no sickness cover.'

Impact on teaching and learning

- 90 Given that the staff were often the same, it was not surprising that the quality of work at classroom level was largely similar to that observed on the first leg of the inspection. In 70% of the LEAs the overall quality of EAL teaching was good; in all of them it was at least satisfactory. Individual lessons ranged from unsatisfactory to outstanding, but average grades indicated good quality work overall, with an encouraging rise in quality in secondary schools, where a good range of quality support work was seen with older pupils. This was linked to the continuing development of good quality joint working between EAL and subject staff in mainstream classrooms.⁶
- 91 A parallel, and, at first sight, contradictory, finding was that there was a considerable amount of withdrawal work in both primary and secondary schools. In the past, a significant proportion of primary schools provided all their additional EAL support within the mainstream; the figures for secondary schools were much lower. All the primary schools that were visited this time provided in-class support, but 88% of them also used withdrawal to some extent. At secondary level, 95% of schools provided in-class support, with all of them also using withdrawal from mainstream classes from time to time.
- 92 Schools were now using support more flexibly and, while most support work was still provided within the mainstream, the increase in EAL withdrawal represented a more general acceptance of the use of withdrawal strategies in schools (for example, in the use of 'catch-up' schemes in literacy and numeracy). It is, of course, right that schools debate and match the kind of support they offer to their individual contexts and the needs of the pupils. However, inspections have judged the quality of EAL support work provided through withdrawal to be less successful than that provided in class.
- 93 Much of the support work focused on helping pupils access the curriculum and did not do enough to address their specific language needs directly at the same time.
- 94 The support given by bilingual assistants attracted much favourable comment from schools and overall was judged to be of good quality. Their strengths were usually in working one-to-one or with small groups rather than across the curriculum.

⁶ An analysis of Section 10 inspection reports for all schools inspected in the summer and autumn terms of 1999 revealed a similar picture. Of these, 111 reports made reference to this additional provision. Comment on the quality of EMAG provision (teaching, management, use of resources) was overwhelmingly positive, with only a very few reports indicating the need for improvement. In general, staff were judged to provide good quality support (teaching was good or very good in the majority of schools); pupils made reasonable progress and in some cases their attainment was good. Staff were deployed efficiently and the funding was used effectively. Some of the reports further commented on the good partnership work developing in the schools.

- 95 Pupils' response to the teaching was nearly always good or very good. Some older pupils expressed their gratitude for the help received and appreciated the fact that there were staff to whom they could turn if they had problems. Unsurprisingly, the standards of pupils at early stages of learning English were below age-related norms. This was more marked at secondary level, where many of the targeted pupils had joined the school after the normal age of transfer and were struggling to catch up across the curriculum.
- 96 Overall, progress for pupils with EAL was satisfactory and there was considerable evidence that, once proficiency in English was achieved, their progress across the curriculum was rapid and their attainment on a par with or higher than that of their monolingual peers.
- 97 Factors which enabled bilingual learners to develop their English successfully were :
- joint planning between mainstream and specialist EMAG staff;
 - a focus on the content of the lesson, ensuring appropriate cognitive challenge, as well as on the language necessary to complete the task;
 - activities which enabled pupils to rehearse and explore the language they needed;
 - opportunities to use and build on their first language skills, where appropriate;
 - continuing support with writing through, for example, the use of matrices for organising information and writing frames for more extended contributions.

These factors applied whether the support was provided in-class or through temporary withdrawal. The lessons described below exemplify these strategies.

Year 6 literacy hour with EAL support

The EAL teacher introduced the lesson, based on an excerpt from *Oliver Twist*, by asking the children what they knew about Charles Dickens. (There was linked history work on a Victorian childhood.) She then introduced the notions of language change over time, autobiographical writing, abridged writing and annotation. Pupils were encouraged to work out the meanings of words such as 'autobiographical'. Subsequently the class teacher read the excerpt (projected onto a screen) which was both annotated and illustrated, modelling how to use the additional information to help them understand the text.

In pairs they read a longer extract from the chapter and then in fours sorted 16 questions onto a matrix. Three kinds of question that can be asked of a text were categorised by where the answers can be found: 'on the line', 'between the lines', 'beyond the lines' (literal, inferential, evaluative). In a plenary at the end, each group was asked to explain where they had placed three questions and why.

This complex and challenging lesson, jointly prepared and delivered by the EAL and class teacher, had many excellent features: additional visuals and annotation to help

understanding in this linguistically diverse class; an activity that encouraged debate and the exploration of meaning; the modelling of responses in whole-class sessions; careful grouping to ensure maximum support for EAL pupils. The pupils responded well to the challenge and clearly enjoyed the session, providing some excellent 'beyond the lines' questions of their own in the last few minutes. One boy from South America who had been in the country for only three weeks managed to produce a few words in response to the question 'what happens next?' He guessed, 'run away and put in prison'.

Year 1 humanities lesson - EAL withdrawal

Six pupils, including early stage bilingual learners, joined the EAL teacher in the EMAG resource area adjacent to the main classroom. The EAL teacher had planned the lesson with the Year 1 teacher and then developed additional materials for this small group. Local area work included safety near the school. The teacher had taken photographs of street furniture. These elicited good discussion, with the teacher providing models of the language needed and allowing pupils time to prepare their responses. Pupils selected and matched labels to the photographs and then suggested other ideas for making the road safer. A writing frame was provided ('Our street needs to be a safe place because ...'; 'To make it a safe place there...'; 'To make it even safer we could have...'). When the group joined the main class for the plenary, they contributed well, with a little prompting from the EMAG teacher. The group work had clearly increased their confidence.

Year 8 geography with EAL support

This lesson, on the similarities and differences between northern and southern Italy, had been jointly planned by the EAL and geography teacher. The EAL teacher had produced additional, differentiated resources. It was a carefully crafted lesson to help pupils review the unit prior to an assessment. Activities included: vocabulary revision by matching specialist terminology to definitions; sorting activities, involving placing vocabulary items (such as drought) in the appropriate column on a matrix and giving reasons; working up a model answer, focusing both on the specialist vocabulary and the structures needed for contrasting – including connectives (such as 'but', 'however', 'whereas').

This was an ambitious attempt by the teachers, who both led at different stages of the lesson, to: help pupils review specialist vocabulary, structure and content; establish clear definitions that they could draw on for revision; talk through their ideas; help pupils to write about areas of contrast and organise their comparisons clearly; and focus on the connectives necessary for this task.

By the end of the lesson the pupils showed themselves to be familiar with most of the specialist vocabulary and had a good idea of the contrasts between northern and southern Italy. Despite some progress in their use of English, they needed continuing support with how to write up what they had learnt in appropriate language.

Year 2 bilingual support

A bilingual classroom assistant supported Mohammed (recently arrived in the UK) in both Arabic and English, following detailed joint planning with his class teacher. She started by sharing an early reading book with him, discussing the pictures in Arabic. She then read the text in English. After this they read the English together, Mohammed repeating and then reciting the story for himself. Later in the week, further story-building work was undertaken in Arabic, enabling Mohammed to develop an extended contribution which was then recorded in his first language. Subsequently some simple sentences in English were added to pictures drawn by him to illustrate the story. Mohammed was asked to read the story to his parents at home. His parents, initially keen for Mohammed to use only English at school, were subsequently delighted by his rapid progress in both languages.

- 98 In the visits, some good partnership work between EMAG-funded and class or subject teachers was seen at both primary and secondary level. In-class support was generally more effective than withdrawal work. It was encouraging to see, for example, good joint working developing in the literacy hour in primary schools.
- 99 This was not universally the case, however, and a number of lessons were seen where the EAL teacher had not been involved in the planning and took little part, apart from whispering to pupils on occasion and, in one instance, being sent out to find extra pens. In a few schools the involvement of EAL staff in supporting the literacy hour had curtailed cross-curricular partnership work. For peripatetic staff who might visit a school for only one hour a fortnight, the requirement to support within the literacy hour was inappropriate.
- 100 Most schools were developing a range of strategies, both within and outside the classroom, to support bilingual pupils. Curriculum development was undertaken in 64% of primary schools but 84% of secondary schools. Home-school liaison work was popular in both sectors (88% primary, 79% secondary). Almost 50% of secondary schools ran clubs (often at lunchtime) specifically aimed at EAL pupils; the figure for primary was 40%. Homework clubs, as might be expected, were much more in evidence at secondary level (63% compared with 28% for primary). Mentoring for pupils from minority ethnic groups took place largely in secondary schools (58%) but a few primary schools which had EMAG-funded achievement projects to support African and Caribbean pupils offered mentoring.

Impact of new arrivals

- 101 In almost all the 12 LEAs where clear data were provided, the numbers of pupils from minority ethnic groups had increased since the first visit. In one LEA there had been a 13% increase, representing almost 1,400 pupils. Many EMAG managers and headteachers referred to the significant number of refugees and asylum-seekers arriving in the schools and the impact this was having on the provision in place. Many of the new arrivals were beginners in English with extensive needs for language support, with additional home/school liaison and pastoral care also urgently required in some cases, for example by unaccompanied minors.

- 102 Schools responded as well as they could, but doing so sometimes posed great difficulties. One secondary school, for example, had developed a reputation for welcoming and dealing well with refugee pupils. The numbers of new arrivals increased even further. The EMAG co-ordinator described the impact as follows.

'The school is 93% ethnic minority (British Asian) in a very disadvantaged area. Normally about 14% of these pupils receive additional support, but current pressure from new arrivals has reduced this by 50%. We now face a situation where we have a lot of first-phase learners and no additional resources beyond a little fragmented support from the LEA outreach team. Staff have had to drop their normally quite heavy in-class programme of support to attend to the new arrivals. A majority of time is now spent out of class. This is a serious issue as our existing pupils still need support and are being disadvantaged.'

- 103 The impact was felt most acutely at secondary level. Pupils arriving at that stage have further to catch up both in terms of language and curriculum knowledge and even though many of them make good progress, their attainment at Key Stage 3 and GCSE is likely to be low. The key issue for the schools was deciding priorities in meeting different levels of need.

Staffing

- 104 Overall, there was little change in the numbers and types of staff employed under the EMAG, compared with Section 11. The picture described earlier remained largely unchanged at the time of the second round of visits. Variability in levels of support between the phases and across the LEAs remained. Workloads, as measured by pupil to teacher ratios, had increased. The percentage of EMAG-funded teachers from minority ethnic groups had increased from 23% to 25%, although the corresponding figure for classroom assistants had decreased from 94% to 90%. Overall, there were twice as many qualified teachers as bilingual assistants.
- 105 However, recruitment problems had worsened and in some areas in particular threatened the quality of work. The short-term nature of additional grant funding for pupils from minority ethnic groups has long served as a disincentive for teachers to move into this area of work, but the change from projects lasting 3–5 years under Section 11 to the requirement for annual submissions under the EMAG has built more uncertainty into the system. The percentage of staff on short-term contracts, especially bilingual assistants, already high under Section 11, has increased since the introduction of the EMAG. The range in LEAs was from 3% to almost 100%, although some LEAs no longer hold such information now that responsibility for appointments has moved to schools.

Professional development

- 106 An important feature of the new grant is the stronger focus on training both for mainstream and specialist staff. Schools are allowed to use devolved funds for training purposes. The picture, however, that emerged during the second round of visits was far from clear. A few schools had used some of their EMAG funding for training, or were planning to do so. Most, however, although welcoming the greater freedom offered by devolution, said they were unable to commit funding to training.
- 107 Training offered by central EMAG services, often as part of service level agreements with schools, drew mixed comment. In some LEAs, provision was said to have improved as a result of new appointments with a specific training brief to the central team. In others, training opportunities were seen to have declined, perhaps as a temporary measure while restructuring at the centre took place.

'We have held school INSET for EMAG staff to help them develop their new roles. Our EMAG funding has reduced slightly, but we felt it important to sustain the same level of staffing and invest in training also. The new impetus is on teams at different key stages. So at Key Stage 1, for example, EMAG staff are keeping close observational profiles on the language behaviours of pupils. This is enabling classroom assistants and bilingual support workers to become more aware of how pupils progress and what good interventions are. It is also raising awareness about their own use of language. The fuller involvement of all staff in curriculum discussion is working well. An attempt is being made to give support staff an important development role at all times. Devolved funding has forced me to recognise and do something about the staff development needs of EMAG staff.'

- 108 The picture given by the central services in response to questions about the provision of professional development was also mixed. One LEA said that it had significantly increased the training on offer and this was largely confirmed by the schools visited. The same LEA said that about half of its schools had set aside money for training, although it admitted there was no way of checking how it was spent. HMI found few schools had the option to set money aside for training if they wanted to retain staff, and even fewer examples of school-based provision using these funds. A few LEAs reported that, despite financial pressures, they had managed to sustain their training programme; others admitted that the restructuring of the central team had caused a hiatus in provision.
- 109 The LEAs agreed that the focus of much of the training had shifted to take account of new EMAG and other government priorities. Training now covered the following areas, although not all were addressed in all LEAs: the national literacy and numeracy strategies and EAL; support for refugees and asylum-seekers; target-setting; the broader role of the EMAG co-ordinator; data analysis; under-achieving groups; EAL in the mainstream; senior management team briefing about the EMAG; and the role of classroom assistants.

- 110 Training for the staff in some central teams focused on the link work they would undertake with schools advising on data collection and analysis, target-setting by ethnic group, school development planning and ethnic minority achievement, and monitoring and evaluation. Several LEAs pointed out that, although their course provision might have reduced, the closer working with schools, for example, in relation to action planning and target-setting by ethnic group, constituted training of a kind. In a number of LEAs the provision of accredited courses had certainly declined.
- 111 The visits indicated that, while some useful training was still being offered, with an appropriate shift in focus evident in many LEAs, provision across the LEAs visited remained rather *ad hoc* for both specialist and mainstream staff. Schools' difficulties in recruiting qualified specialist staff are of particular concern in the light of increased demands and expectations. The decline in accredited courses and the lack of a nationally recognised qualification for specialist EAL teachers serve to underline this problem. The training that some EMAG co-ordinators need for their changed role is not being provided in all LEAs and opportunities for local networking have reduced in some areas.

4. Traveller education

- 112 This section is based on HMI inspections of 30 Traveller education services, including work in 54 schools, carried out between 1999 and 2001. Traveller education services were also covered in half of the LEA inspections in 1999 and 2000.

Changes in funding

- 113 Between April 1999 and April 2001, there were changes in the funding for Traveller education.
- 114 In the first instance, in April 1999, the funding was transferred from the regime of statutory approval under Section 488 of the Education Act 1996 (as amended from Section 210 of the Education Act 1988), to the Standards Fund administered by the then DfEE. There were anxieties on the part of LEA Traveller education services about this change, but the impact of it was, in practice, very modest and confined mainly to the administration of the grant.
- 115 One effect was to end a practice allowed for under the previous arrangements, whereby projections towards the end of the financial year of under-spending had enabled re-allocations to meet contingencies in some LEAs. Another effect was that the funding for 'displaced persons', including refugees and asylum-seekers within the special category so defined, now fell within the remit of the EMAG.⁷ The Traveller Achievement Grant during this period could in theory only be used for refugees and asylum-seekers if they were of Roma (Gypsy) heritage.
- 116 With the transfer of the grant to the Standards Fund came the announcement of an addition of £1.5 million to the grant.⁸ A third of this sum was allocated to 12 LEAs which had been invited to establish a Traveller education service; the rest was for a development fund to support new projects to improve access, attendance and levels of achievement. The increase was welcomed by LEAs and only a few were unable to take up the extra grant available.
- 117 A second set of changes came into effect in April 2000. The Traveller Education Grant and the EMAG were merged into one grant, the Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Grant (EMTAG). For Traveller education, there was potential impact from the ending of ring-fenced funding, from the reduction in the proportion of spending supported by the grant (from 65% to 58%, in line with the EMAG), and from the possible devolution of funds to schools on the basis of pupil numbers.

7 'Displaced persons' was a term used in the Education Act 1996, Section 488, and which was defined within DfEE circulars 10/90 and 11/92, as relating to refugees and asylum-seekers who were accommodated within 'reception hostels'. Grant, subject to DfEE approval, could be claimed for the provision of education at the hostels, or additional costs incurred in attendance at other educational institutions.

8 The grant for 1999-2000 represented an increase from £7.2 million to £8.8 million. With the LEAs' 35% contribution, the total funding increased from £11.2 million to £13.7 million, an overall increase of 20%.

- 118 Again, these further changes had only limited impact. Modifications to service management were made in only a handful of LEAs, with mixed effects: there was some improvement in liaison and co-operation in the setting up of new unified EMTAG services, but some loss of dedicated and expert time available to Traveller education. Only one LEA devolved 15% of the Traveller element of the grant to schools; in this case, a majority of the schools bought back into the central service provision.
- 119 In other LEAs, the work of Traveller education services continued in much the same way as in the previous regime, albeit in some at a reduced level, but in most cases with the benefit of much closer working with EMAG teams. To the disappointment of some services, the development fund became less distinct from core funding and the suspension of annual reporting to the DfEE on the work of the services acted as a further disincentive to exploit the opportunities offered by the development fund.
- 120 In summary, the changes to the arrangements for grant funding the provision for Traveller education had more to do with administrative procedures at national level than with the identification and assessment of needs at the local level. While they brought some benefits, they had a negative impact on service morale and imposed unnecessary administrative burdens.

Management of support in LEAs and schools

- 121 In the separate inspections carried out by HMI the management of Traveller education services was invariably judged to be satisfactory or better, with a number of very good services. This picture was reflected in those LEA inspections in 1999 and 2000 in which Traveller education services were covered.
- 122 The monitoring of Gypsy Traveller pupils' achievement by LEA services provided evidence of some marked improvements, particularly at the primary stage. Access, attendance and achievement were, however, still a serious concern in the secondary phase. In these respects the position reported in two earlier OFSTED reports had improved little, despite the efforts and good quality of the work of Traveller education services.⁹
- 123 In the main, the services were very well managed in terms of their support to schools and Traveller pupils, and provided very good value for money. The vast majority of the services were managed by experienced and well-informed teacher co-ordinators.
- 124 Line management of the services within the LEAs varied in quality and effectiveness, but was generally good. The status and effectiveness of many services were enhanced by specific reference to them within education development plans. However, a surprising number of plans made no such reference, reflecting in a few cases less than adequate knowledge of and attention to the service on the part of senior LEA managers.

9 *The Education of Travelling Children (OFSTED 1996) and Raising the attainment of minority ethnic pupils: School and LEA responses.*

- 125 The management of the additional teaching and other resources within the schools was good, although there was generally more emphasis on individual pupil support than on whole-school action. The best practice was based on an agreement between the service and the school which specified the amount and the focus of support, with time limits and review dates set for support for individual pupils.
- 126 Another feature was the commitment by the school to arranging training sessions for all or some of the school staff. Such sessions were mainly concerned with the cultural and historical backgrounds of the Traveller communities and setting support for Traveller education in the context of equal opportunities and race equality.
- 127 Among the LEAs, service management at its best was dynamic and creative. The teams, of mainly peripatetic teachers and learning support assistants, were well supported, with appropriate opportunities for in-service training and professional development. Centrally managed peripatetic services afforded much-needed flexibility of deployment to meet changing needs and circumstances.
- 128 While pupil support by service staff was frequently effective in terms of achieving targets for pupils' access to the curriculum and progress, liaison with class teachers was not always thorough, and the roles and expectations of the service learning support assistants were sometimes ill defined. The quality of teaching and learning was better when there were well-established routines for joint planning, teaching and evaluation.
- 129 Schools benefited significantly where time was devoted to joint planning and teaching about Gypsy Traveller history and culture. This generally added much to the knowledge and understanding of all the pupils in the class and made a marked contribution to the self-esteem of pupils from Gypsy Traveller families and to their general attainment. Schools relied heavily in this respect on books and other materials supplied by the Traveller education service, and there was some reluctance on the part of schools to purchase materials for themselves.
- 130 All the successful work in securing regular attendance and confident and successful learning was crucially and directly linked to the quality of the relationships with the parents of pupils from Gypsy Traveller families. Mutual respect and trust are essential to these relationships. The best practice, which was by no means uniform, was characterised by services helping the schools to develop these relationships and by not usurping the school's duties and responsibilities by retaining the role of go-between.
- 131 For a significant proportion of pupils from Gypsy Traveller families, educational discontinuity was a major contributory factor to under-achievement. Within the constraints of resources, all services attempted to provide support to schools with pupils from Traveller families with predictable patterns of migration in the preparation of distance-learning materials. These travelled with the pupils until the pupils returned to school or units of completed work were periodically posted back to their base schools.

- 132 Access to other schools en route is now legally allowed, while the pupils can remain jointly registered with their base school. In these circumstances, most of the pupils also carried an educational record with them which was maintained both by the individual child and the peripatetic teachers who supported the child while travelling within or between LEAs. While Traveller education services have usually prompted the development of the use of distance learning, this was frequently a joint exercise with base schools, although some schools were less than willing or able than others to play a full part.
- 133 Most Traveller education services had inspired inter-agency action within their local authority area or region. Where senior managers were involved in these developments they had helped to secure better co-ordination of policy and practice in relation to the different transient and nomadic communities.
- 134 Many service teams included education welfare officers or social workers, some designated as education liaison workers. Their duties varied, but central to them were establishing relationships with families, finding school places and encouraging regular attendance. Some of these duties involved staff undertaking outreach work with Traveller families who were visiting the area for a relatively brief period. Despite sometimes poor levels of school attendance in these circumstances, the work was usually of a good standard. However, in a significant number of cases, there were difficulties in the management of these posts, stemming in the main from differences between the responsibilities and approaches of the postholders and those of teachers and learning support assistants within the Traveller education service.

Broader issues

- 135 Issues of access and attendance at school continue to bring a large number of Traveller education services into some conflict with schools, other LEA departments and national policies.
- 136 Many sites provided for Gypsy Traveller families are located either some distance from schools and or on marginal land which represents major environmental and health dangers to the residents. In these circumstances, home-to-school transport is frequently and helpfully provided even if the distance is below the statutory minimum above which free transport must be provided. However, decisions taken by some LEAs not to use their discretionary powers have militated against better attendance. It is important that decisions are based on objective factors and are taken in the light of the need to maximise attendance at school.
- 137 Most Traveller education services had lists of pupils who were known not to be registered with schools or registered but seldom attending. In a majority of services, action was being pursued in relation to the individual children. However, in too many cases, action was not being taken or was inadequate, with mainstream education welfare services failing to take direct responsibility. There was a general and disappointing tendency for these services to see the attendance and welfare of Traveller children as the exclusive responsibility of the Traveller education service.

- 138 In all the LEAs inspected, Traveller families moved to the area on a temporary basis. In a majority of cases, the shortage of designated sites meant that the families stopped on land not authorised for the purpose. Where, through the effective working of inter-agency groups, good working relations had been established between the Traveller education service and the relevant department and or the Traveller liaison officer, early notification usually resulted in rapid outreach to such families and the initial securing of appropriate school places. However, positive efforts by Traveller education services to fulfil the LEA's statutory responsibilities were sometimes at odds with the practice in the eviction of the families. In a number of cases, decisions by authorities appeared not to take into account adequately the educational and other needs of the children in these circumstances.
- 139 An equally basic problem – although one which is fortunately much less common – is that a few schools in a small number of the LEAs inspected had expressed reservations to Traveller education services about taking on pupils from Traveller families, such schools clearly failing to recognise their legal responsibilities.
- 140 In about half of the LEAs in which services were inspected there was a growing trend among Traveller families to opt for education other than at school (that is, education at home), particularly in the secondary phase. Services responded with appropriate advice, but the practice on registration and monitoring varied significantly among LEAs. The lack of evaluative monitoring typified the poorest provision.¹⁰

10 A related issue is the use of distance-learning material for children travelling with their families for mainly work opportunities. Despite some regular en-route teaching support and the maintenance of educational records, this form of provision is not viewed by the DfES as satisfying the requirements for school attendance. If, however, the pupils are registered at a school and attend for 200 half-day sessions, then distance learning can be seen as a support to parents who have the duty to provide the other 180 half-day sessions. This situation represents a dilemma for Traveller education services in that most of the pupils in these circumstances do not make the 200 sessions at school as required, and there is also a question about the use of grant funding to support the education of children for whose education their parents have the direct responsibility for the period in question.

Conclusions and recommendations

- 141 The trend in LEA inspection reports gives some grounds for optimism that LEAs' work in relation to minority ethnic achievement is improving. LEAs are now called upon to monitor attainment by ethnicity, and, where there is clear evidence on under-attainment, the room for inactivity is reduced – although the signs of improvement in this respect do not mean that familiar patterns of differential achievement among ethnic groups are ceasing to exist.
- 142 There is clear evidence from the reports that a significant amount of good practice exists at LEA level. It contains no magic ingredient, only good management which creates a climate in which effective teaching can flourish. Central to the spread of better practice is, as always, raising expectations. The EMAG has brought benefits on a number of fronts. But, despite positive developments, some important problems need to be addressed if the good work on which the EMAG sought to build is to be sustained.
- 143 The EMAG's focus on achievement has caused most LEAs and schools to review their approach to the use of additional resources. More comprehensive data have been collected and analysed, enabling the progress of specific groups and not just bilingual learners to be monitored. This is leading to better analysis of needs and greater debate about the effective deployment of staff and resources.
- 144 There is, however, still some way to go, as not all schools are convinced of the importance of monitoring data on children from minority ethnic groups. Some still equate achievement with the movement through language stages and fail to plan adequately for the needs of specific groups, whether bilingual or monolingual. Even schools which are convinced of the importance of looking at the attainment of individual groups often feel unsure about which strategies are likely to achieve results. More guidance on the use of data that is analysed by ethnicity, as well as the dissemination of successfully targeted initiatives, is needed.
- 145 Giving headteachers more control over resources, including appointments, is a key element in the government's efforts to ensure that minority ethnic achievement becomes more central to schools' work. There is evidence that this is occurring. Other factors, such as the report on the Stephen Lawrence inquiry, have helped.
- 146 The requirement to produce action plans and link these to schools' development plans has strengthened the response to the issues. Some headteachers have taken the opportunity of the EMAG to redefine posts, giving EMAG-funded staff increased responsibilities and a broader role. However, there are also examples of schools which have downgraded the work or are using funds inappropriately.
- 147 The focus of the EMAG on under-attaining groups other than EAC learners is clearly signalled at LEA level, at least on paper, but its manifestation at school level is less obvious. Even where appointments have been made, initiatives are tentative, lacking clear strategies and objectives. There is clearly more to be done to produce effective approaches. Whole-school strategies hold greater

promise than small-scale add-on projects, but there is a need for deliberate development and dissemination to secure understanding and evidence of such strategies at work.

- 148 A brake on this work is that overall resources have stood still while schools and LEAs have been asked to address a wider range of issues. The difficulties of producing sensitive funding formulae have meant that some schools with large populations of pupils from minority ethnic groups have received smaller budgets than previously. This has made it difficult for the schools to innovate.
- 149 The EMAG has served to exacerbate, rather than resolve, the problems signalled in the 1999 OFSTED report in relation to the recruitment and training of staff. Attracting and retaining good quality staff under a regime which currently requires annual submissions present serious difficulties. Career opportunities remain limited, the percentage of temporary contracts has increased and good quality specialist training for EMAG-funded teachers has dwindled. Unless these issues are addressed the good quality work at LEA and school level, largely sustained in the change from Section 11, will suffer.
- 150 The funding of Traveller education was subject to changes over the two years from April 1999. The effects have been mixed, but have been less than anticipated, one way or another. Traveller education services have continued to be very well managed and are sometimes better connected now with services for other minority ethnic groups. Many schools do good work, but some do not do enough to take on issues for themselves, relying heavily on the resources and other support of the services.
- 151 There is evidence of improved attainment by pupils from Traveller families in primary schools, but attainment and attendance in the secondary phase remain highly problematic. Broader issues of policy, national and local, remain to be addressed if these long-standing difficulties are to be significantly eased.

Recommendations

- 152 Steps are needed to sustain and accelerate improvement in the attention given to minority ethnic achievement, and in particular to ensure successful outcomes for the EMAG and the Traveller Achievement Grant as their use is refined and developed.
- 153 In relation to the **Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant**, at the national level, steps should be taken to:
 - establish funding on a longer timescale, in order to secure greater stability in programmes and the staffing of them;
 - continue monitoring of the use of the funding, in order to ensure that it is being used effectively for the purposes intended and to underline the expectation that action on minority ethnic achievement is an essential element of work on raising standards and should have an appropriate call on the use of overall funding for school improvement;

- provide fuller guidance to schools on analysing and using data by ethnicity;
- resource the needs of refugees and asylum-seekers so that other provision is not significantly reduced;
- develop a national strategy for the teaching of bilingual pupils, including a recognised training programme for EAL specialists and bilingual assistants;
- disseminate successful strategies for raising the achievement of under-attaining groups, such as Black Caribbean pupils, more widely.

154 Action by LEAs should include:

- continuing to improve their analysis of data and their guidance to schools on how to use the data to target resources effectively and raise standards;
- providing clear guidance on the roles and deployment of EMAG-funded staff for schools so that they can take well-informed decisions;
- sharing ways of establishing sensitive needs-related formulae for the distribution of funds to schools and disseminate good practice in the use of EMAG funding, including whole-school approaches to raising the achievement of under-attaining groups;
- working with schools on ways of supporting late-arriving pupils;
- reviewing their provision for professional development so that it not only addresses the wider range of tasks encompassed by the EMAG but retains and improves high-quality training for EAL specialists;
- ensuring that central teams include staff who can deliver on key aspects of the EMAG such as training for specialist and mainstream staff and improved outcomes for under-attaining groups;
- promoting closer connection between central EMAG teams and LEA inspectors or advisers so that close attention is given to minority ethnic issues in mainstream work.

155 Action is needed by more schools to:

- use data analysed by ethnicity within their strategy for raising standards;
- ensure that devolved funding is used for the purposes of the grant and that it is supported by the use of the totality of school resources for improvement;
- ensure that provision takes account of under-achieving groups as well as those pupils needing EAL support;
- incorporate the key elements of EMAG action plans in whole-school development plans;
- where possible, appoint EMAG-funded staff to key roles in the school so that their impact on school policy is assured;
- provide access for mainstream and specialist staff to high-quality training so that the identified needs of pupils from minority ethnic groups can be tackled with confidence.

156 Action on Traveller education at the national level should ensure that:

- there is more systematic development and use of distance-learning material;
- fuller guidance is given to LEAs on policy and practice in relation to education at home as it affects Traveller children;

157 Action by LEAs and Traveller education services should ensure that:

- the use of peripatetic staff to support schools is defined by a service agreement covering roles, functions and classroom practice, as well as the means by which whole-school briefing is given on the support and on the backgrounds of pupils;
- there is closer connection between Traveller education services and LEA inspectors and advisers;
- more schools are made aware of the need to develop relationships with parents from Traveller families, to take account of the cultural backgrounds of their children and to provide appropriate curriculum resources;

- LEA judgements on the provision of home-to-school transport for Travellers are based on objective factors, including risk analysis and the need to promote regular attendance at school;
- LEA education welfare services see through their responsibilities for all children in their areas, including Traveller children not registered with schools, or only residing temporarily either on authorised or unauthorised sites, in order to address high levels of non-attendance among pupils from Traveller families of secondary age;
- decisions on the eviction of Traveller families have regard to the statutory duties of LEAs on the provision of education.

158 These steps in relation to the use of the grants need to be matched in LEAs and schools by continuing wider efforts to improve policy and practice with regard to ethnic minority achievement and race equality and, in particular, to ensure that action is taken to meet the recommendations arising from the Stephen Lawrence inquiry.

Annex. LEAs inspected

The 39 LEAs inspected by OFSTED in autumn 1999 and spring 2000 were:

Autumn 1999

Barnet
Bristol
Derbyshire
Doncaster
Greenwich
Halton
Hertfordshire
Solihull
Walsall
Worcestershire
Lancashire
Leeds
Lewisham
Oxfordshire
Plymouth
Rotherham*
Salford
Sheffield
Southwark*

**reinspections*

Spring 2000

Camden
City of York
Corporation of London
Luton
Rochdale
Tameside
Trafford
Waltham Forest
Wolverhampton
Sandwell*
Bradford
Brighton and Hove
Hammersmith and Fulham
Kensington and Chelsea
North Yorkshire
Portsmouth
Wandsworth
Westminster
Manchester*
Tower Hamlets*.

The 12 LEAs in which the introduction of the EMAG was studied in detail were:

Barking and Dagenham
Blackburn with Darwen
Camden
Coventry
Croydon
Hampshire

Kirklees
Leeds (one visit only)
Lincolnshire
Luton
Oldham
Telford and Wrekin.

In addition, an African-Caribbean achievement project was visited in Sheffield.

The LEAs in which Traveller education services were subject to full inspections were:

Doncaster
Nottinghamshire
Nottingham
Hounslow
Walsall
Worcestershire
Lincolnshire

Oldham
Derbyshire
Derby
Luton
Leicestershire
Leicester
Haringey

Oxfordshire
North Yorkshire
Bolton
Milton Keynes

Norfolk
St Helens
Cheshire and Stockport.

In addition, short visits were made to services in:

Barnet
Barking and Dagenham
Redbridge
Bexley
Dorset

Barnsley
Waltham Forest
Havering
Kirklees and Calderdale.