Report by Tony McAleavy and Alex Elwick

School improvement in London: a global perspective

Education Development Trust

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Education Development Trust

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About the authors

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Introduction

This report considers how successful London's schools have been over the past decade and identifies potentially transferable components of the success story. There is much to be learned from the transformation undergone in London that is relevant to policymakers and educationalists worldwide, working in both high-income and low-income countries.

The improvement in student academic outcomes in London since 2000 has been nothing short of outstanding. This report focuses on the applicability of the lessons from London to other contexts – so that policymakers can reflect on their relevance in education systems across the globe.

Our original research report into London's success sought to investigate the causal factors which underpinned the transformation of schooling in London (Baars et al., 2014). The research identified key lessons for policymakers derived directly from a mixed-methods approach combining qualitative and quantitative data. The research involved analysis of student attainment and school inspection data, a literature review and a series of expert witness interviews with key people who played a part in the London story and focus groups with teachers in London schools.

This report uses the original research and data in order to address how London's story can be applied to school reform worldwide. It re-purposes the lessons in order to make them relevant to a global audience, so that policymakers in whatever context – including both the developed and developing worlds – might learn from what happened in London.

This report is divided into four main chapters. An initial Overview provides a summary of the research findings. Chapter 2 outlines the statistical evidence base from 2000 to 2013 which demonstrates the scale of the improvement in academic outcomes achieved by London's government schools during this period. Chapter 3 describes the specific reforms that proved to be successful in London, while Chapter 4 identifies the underlying themes which characterised these reforms.

Overview
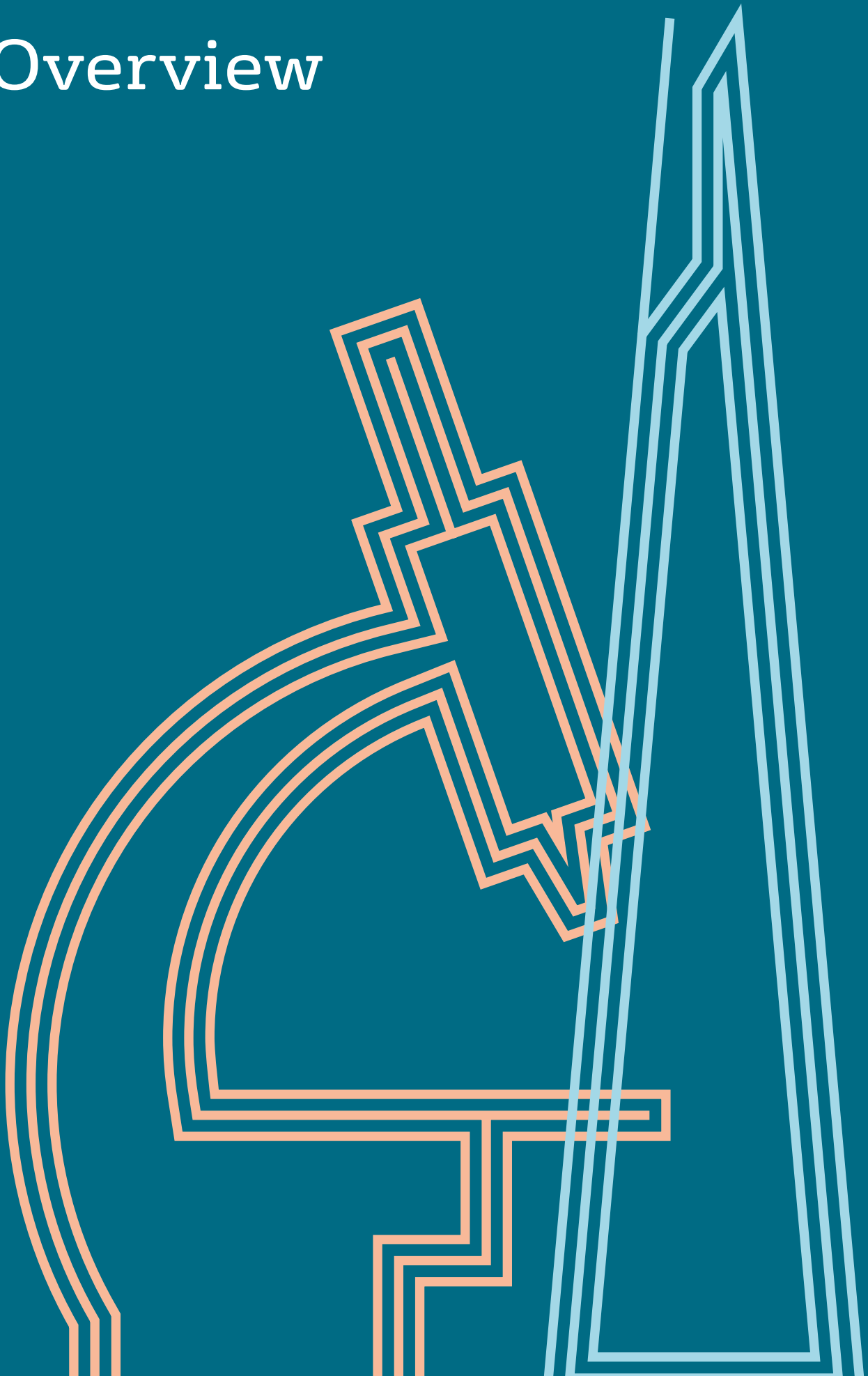
Our research indicates that London schools have improved dramatically since 2000, using the national test scores for 16-year-olds in England and school inspection grades as the key measures.

In 2000 the schools of inner London were the worst in England for student outcomes. Judged by relative performance in tests and in inspections, these schools now outperform schools across the rest of England. Students from poor backgrounds have made particularly good progress and now do much better in London – particularly inner London – compared to the rest of England. London is the top-performing region in England using other measurements, such as the percentage of students leaving school and remaining in further or higher education. The pattern of improvement has been most marked in inner London, which is impressive, as it has a higher level of deprivation than outer London.

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The search for an explanation

The dramatic improvement in the performance of government schools in London cannot be explained in terms of the distinctive nature of the London population or changes in the student population in London. It seems, rather, that there has been a change in the effectiveness of London schools. London has a distinctive and complex ethnic profile. In the UK some minority ethnic groups – such as children of a Chinese heritage – often 'over-achieve' when compared to other groups such as white British students. The improvement in London schools may have benefited from the distinctive mix of ethnic groups but it cannot be entirely explained by reference to ethnicity. The educational performance of all major ethnic groups in inner London improved between 2005 and 2013 at a greater rate than those elsewhere in the country.

The cultural and economical advantages of London

The improvement is not a consequence of the advantages that London has over the rest of England. London has a dynamic and distinctive economy, compared to the rest of England. London is also a very dynamic place culturally, with a thriving art scene and many great galleries and theatres. While these factors bring undoubted educational benefits they cannot explain why test scores improved so dramatically in the years after 2000. London has always had these economic and cultural advantages over the rest of England. The change agents do not appear to be these external factors. It seems instead that what has changed is the internal effectiveness of the schools.

Better resources?

Our research considered how far the improvement was assisted by a set of factors that we described as 'enabling'. These included issues relating to resourcing: finance, teacher recruitment and school building quality. London schools are better funded than other government schools in England but this has always been the case, and London costs are also higher than in the rest of England. Many secondary schools were rebuilt in the years after 2000 but this was part of a national programme to rebuild secondary schools and so it cannot explain the relative performance of London secondary schools. There was a teacher recruitment crisis at the start of the century. While this crisis is now over, the number of applicants for jobs in schools in London is not particularly favourable compared to England as a whole. So while changes in these areas contributed to school improvement, London's success was not fundamentally caused by these factors.

The key London interventions

The conclusion from our research was that the improved performance of London schools could not easily be explained in terms of external factors such as ethnicity or resources. Instead, we concluded that the internal effectiveness of schools had changed for the better and we identified four key school improvement interventions that provided the impetus for improvement. These were:

• a government-funded programme known as London Challenge

• improved support from some local authorities

• new forms of school governance made possible through the government's academies programme

• the Teach First programme, which brought talented and idealistic new teachers into many schools serving disadvantaged communities.

School improvement themes

Although these were distinct interventions, our research identified common features that link together all of these interventions. Four themes, in particular, emerged:

• The power of data

• The importance of professional development

• The contribution of educational leaders

• The significance of sustained political support

Data as a powerful leverage of change
One of the most important developments in London since 2000 has been the growth in the use of education performance data and improved data literacy among education professionals. In extensive interviews with experts and serving

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teachers we found virtual unanimity in the identification of data analysis and data literacy as key to the transformation.

New ways of using data made possible powerful accountability and well targeted support. This preoccupation with data was not the exclusive property of any particular group and all the major initiatives seemed to have strong foundations in the use of educational metrics. The different actors in the London story are therefore linked by a common preoccupation with the effective use of educational data as an instrument for transformation. The use of data made possible a better concept of school leadership, based on a relentless focus on the quality of learning outcomes and the action needed to improve these outcomes.

A preoccupation with professional development

Each of the four key interventions placed considerable emphasis on the professional learning and development of the workforce in London. The methods used for professional development were particularly effective. There was a move away from occasional attendance at off-site courses towards more systematic and regular school-based opportunities for context-specific learning. The London reforms made strong connections between performance management and professional development, with teachers learning from more systematic observation and monitoring at school level. Training became increasingly the responsibility of practitioners rather than expert advisers who had left the classroom. School-based coaching relationships replaced off-site workshops as the main mode of professional development.

The role of leadership in bringing about transformational change

London benefited from effective leadership at all levels. Each of the four major interventions was very well led. However, the most important leadership developments took place at school level. Inspection evidence indicates a dramatic improvement in the quality of school leadership during this period. Expert witnesses described how many headteachers before 2000 had been preoccupied with 'firefighting' and school-level crisis management, whereas the headteachers of today had the opportunity and ability to focus on the leadership of learning. Perhaps the most significant aspect of the London story was the emergence of the best headteachers as system leaders. London Challenge and the National College for School Leadership encouraged the best school leaders to act as Consultant Leaders. These outstanding headteachers were able to provide highly effective coaching support to other schools. Since 2010 the idea of Consultant Leaders has been adopted at national level in England.

Sustained and consistent political support over many years

There has been a tendency in the UK for education reform to be relatively short-term in focus. The London interventions were an exception to this rule. London Challenge continued as a project for eight years. Teach First and the academies programme continue to this day. The Labour government of 1997–2010 was replaced by a Conservative-Liberal Democrat Coalition government after the General Election of 2010. Unusually, key aspects of the London reforms were continued after this change of political control. This long-term, cross-partisan support received by London schools was exceptional in terms of UK politics but greatly assisted the transformation of London schools.

> Training became increasingly the responsibility of practitioners rather than expert advisers who had left the classroom

The improvement in London schools
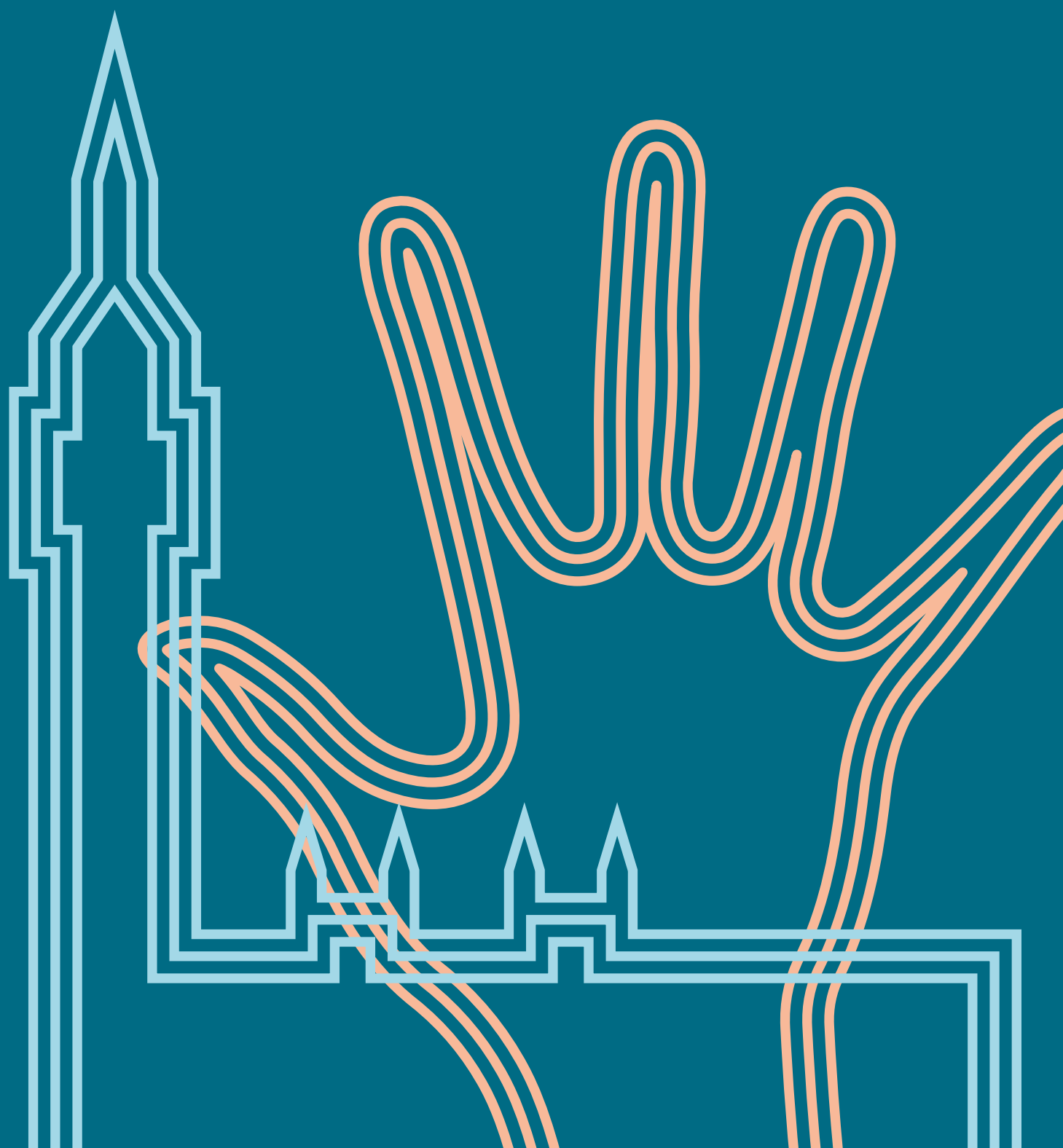
London schools have made extraordinary progress over the last decade. The government schools in inner London were the worst-performing schools in England at the turn of the century. Today London government schools outperform government schools in every other region of England.

Government statistics indicate both improved academic outcomes and improved school effectiveness. London now has the highest proportion of students obtaining five good grades in their school leavers' examination, the highest percentage of schools rated 'outstanding' by the schools' inspection body for England and the highest attainment for pupils from economically disadvantaged backgrounds when compared to both improving and high-performing education systems globally.

The London context

London is the most populous city in Europe, with over 8 million inhabitants (London Councils, 2012); London's educational administration is organised via 33 districts or local authorities, divided into two regions: inner and outer London (figure 2.1).

The transformation since 2000 in London schools, and in particular the schools in inner London, has been remarkable. Pupils in London now outperform every other region in the country based upon their school leavers' examination results. In addition, a greater number of London's students progress to university compared to the rest of the country (HEFCE, 2012: 3); and the gap in attainment for those students who are most disadvantaged[1] is lower in London than in the rest of England.

Pupils in London now outperform every other region in the country based upon their school leavers' examination results

FIGURE 2.1: INNER AND OUTER LONDON
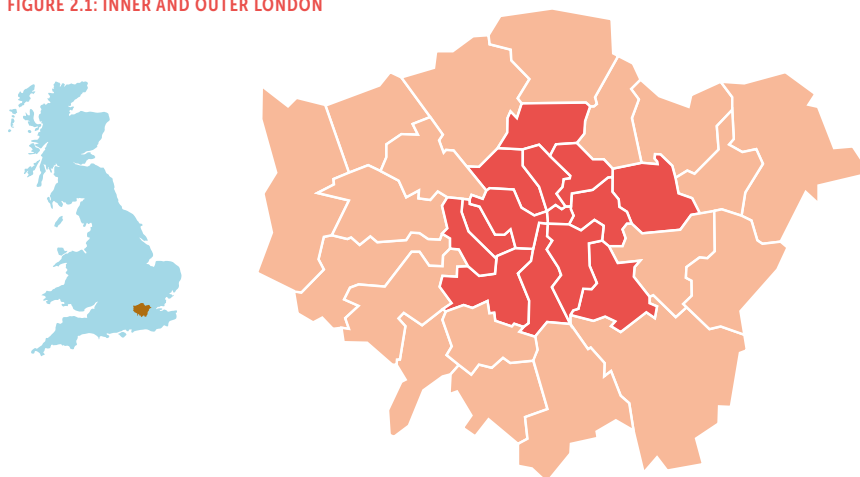
[1] The indicator of disadvantage used here (and most commonly used in England) is those pupils who receive free school meals

A dramatic shift in academic outcomes for 16-year-olds

All 16-year-olds in England take a series of tests at the end of Year 11. This is known as the GCSE (the General Certificate in Secondary Education). In 2001 inner London achieved the lowest national test scores in England when compared to the other regions of the country (figure 2.2), significantly below the level of average performance. By 2013, London as a whole was the best-performing region in the country, with inner London outperforming every other region except outer London (figure 2.3). This turnaround in fortunes was nothing short of exceptional.[2]

Although results in these national tests have steadily improved across the whole of the country over the past 15 years, London was lagging behind the rest of England in the late 1990s, closed the gap in the early 2000s and has since accelerated away – with results in recent years significantly higher than those in England excluding the capital (Hansard, 2013).

> By 2013, London as a whole was the best-performing region in the country

FIGURE 2.2: NATIONAL EXAM RESULTS FOR 16-YEAR-OLDS BY REGION, 2001 KEY STAGE 4 — 2001

Source: DfES, 2002
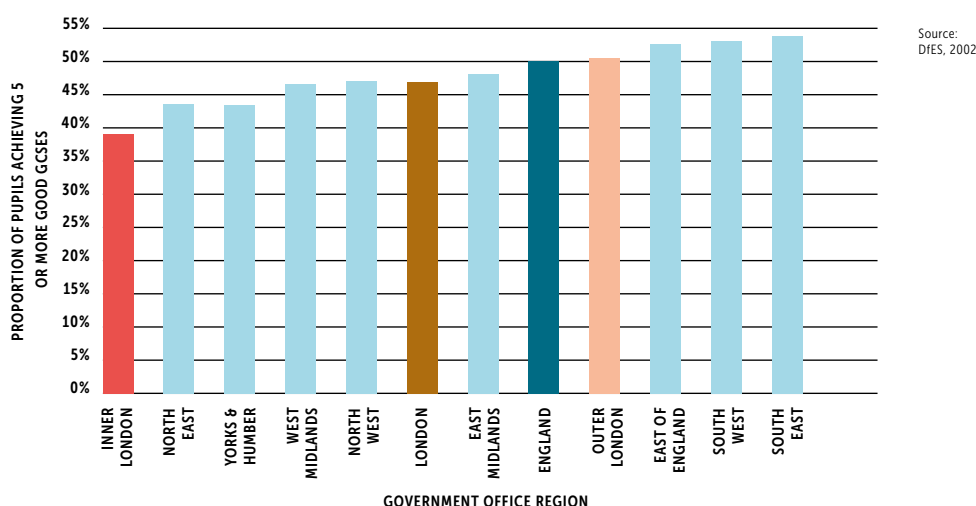
FIGURE 2.3: NATIONAL EXAM RESULTS FOR 16-YEAR-OLDS BY REGION, 2013 KEY STAGE 4 — 2013

Source: DfES, 2013a
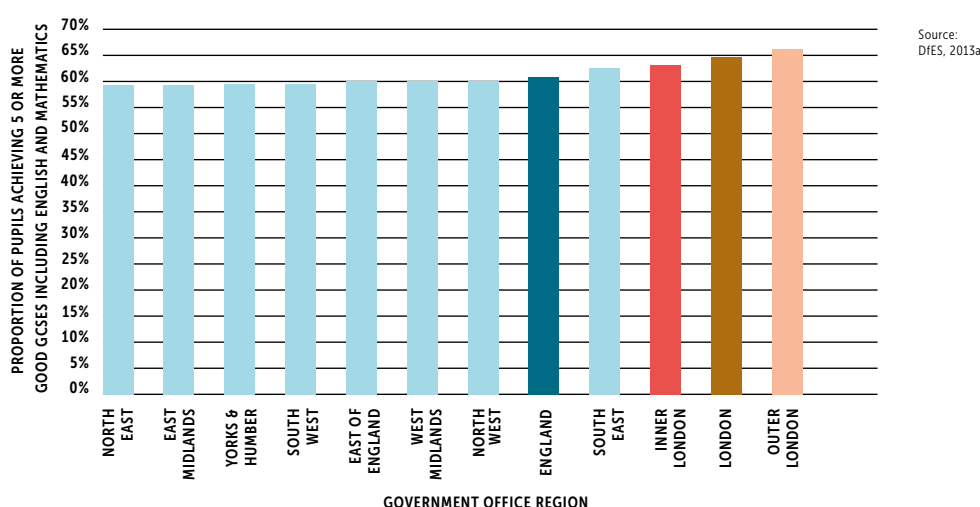
[2] Figure 2.2 is based on achievement of 5 A*-Cs at GCSE (the school leavers' exam in England), figure 2.3 on achievement of 5 A*-Cs at GCSE including English and mathematics. These measures reflect the key indicators used by the government at the time
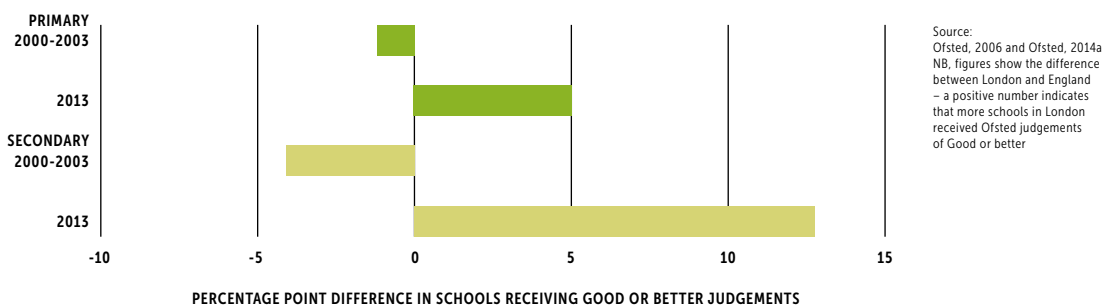
Improved school effectiveness according to school inspection reports

Improvement has not solely been seen in the exam results obtained by pupils in London schools: inspection data from the national schools inspection body (Ofsted) suggests significant changes in the overall effectiveness of schools and the quality of teaching in London between 2000 and 2013. Figures 2.4 and 2.5 show that based upon inspection judgements (ratings of Good or better), schools in London have gone from performing below the national average to exceeding it. Although this swing is evident in primary schools (for students aged 5–11) it is even more marked in secondary phase schools (for students aged 11–18), where there has been a swing of 17 percentage points in overall effectiveness and 21 percentage points in the quality of teaching.[3]

The improvement in London is even more extraordinary when the performance of disadvantaged students is taken into account. Such students in England have historically performed much worse than their non-disadvantaged counterparts (Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission, 2013; Education Select Committee, 2014) and given that London has a higher than average proportion of these high-poverty students (24 per cent, rising to 34 per cent in inner London) one might expect that the region would achieve lower than average attainment scores – which, as figure 2.3 shows, is not the case.

> Based upon inspection judgements... schools in London have gone from performing below the national average to exceeding it

FIGURE 2.4: DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LONDON AND ENGLAND: SCHOOLS JUDGED GOOD OR BETTER FOR OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

PERCENTAGE POINT DIFFERENCE IN SCHOOLS RECEIVING GOOD OR BETTER JUDGEMENTS

Source:
Ofsted, 2006 and Ofsted, 2014a
NB, figures show the difference between London and England – a positive number indicates that more schools in London received Ofsted judgements of Good or better

FIGURE 2.5: DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LONDON AND ENGLAND: SCHOOLS JUDGED GOOD OR BETTER FOR QUALITY OF TEACHING

PERCENTAGE POINT DIFFERENCE IN SCHOOLS RECEIVING GOOD OR BETTER JUDGEMENTS

Source:
Ofsted, 2006 and Ofsted, 2014a
NB, figures show the difference between London and England – a positive number indicates that more schools in London received Ofsted judgements of Good or better
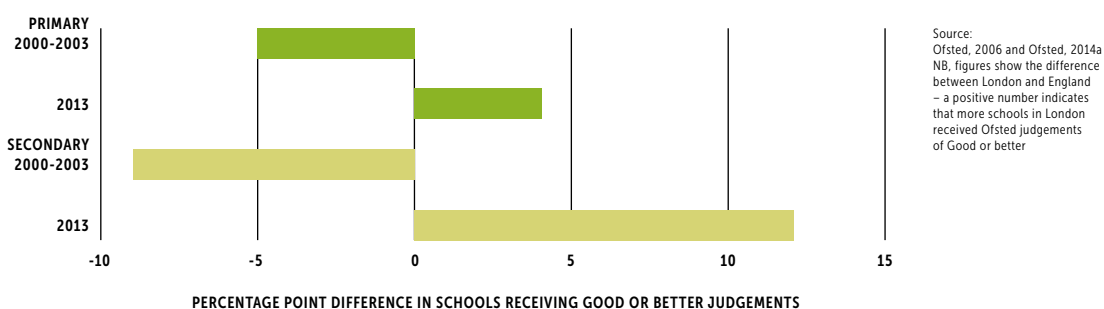
[3] Figures 2.4 and 2.5 are based upon data provided directly by Ofsted. Available data for the period 2000–2003 is based upon only those schools that were inspected in that timeframe; data for 2013 is based upon the Ofsted rating held by all schools on 31 August 2013. Due to the changing nature of how Ofsted reported their data, as well as changes in inspection frameworks, these charts should be approached with caution. Nonetheless, because both graphs show the differences between London and England at given time points they are a valid measure of change

Substantial improvements for high-poverty background students

While the average performance of disadvantaged students (identifiable in national data as those pupils receiving Free School Meals) in London has been higher than similar students outside of London since at least 2002, this group have improved at a greater rate than those in other regions. In 2012, 54 per cent of high-poverty students in inner London achieved five or more good grades on their school leavers' exam compared with 40 per cent of high-poverty students in the next best performing region outside of London (the West Midlands) (Greaves et al., 2014). A comparison of local authorities across England shows that those in London generally do significantly better than those across the rest of the country (figure 2.6).

As well as exhibiting an impressive improvement trajectory in terms of raw attainment over the past decade, the gap between the performance of non-disadvantaged and disadvantaged students is closer in inner London than anywhere else in the country (figure 2.7). This means that a high-poverty pupil in inner London is not only likely to do better than a similar pupil elsewhere in England, but is also likely to achieve results which are closer to their non-disadvantaged peers.

> In 2012, 54 per cent of high-poverty students in inner London achieved five or more good grades on their school leavers' exam compared with 40 per cent of high-poverty students in the next best performing region outside of London

The improved outcomes were achieved by all ethnic groups

London has a distinctive and complex ethnic profile. Is it possible that the London improvement is in essence the work of particular high-achieving ethnic groups? The statistics do not wholly support this idea. Figure 2.8 shows that all major ethnic groups in inner London improved between 2005 and 2013 at a greater rate than those elsewhere in the country. This runs counter to claims that recent research into the London effect has underestimated the significance of changes in pupil characteristics, particularly the changing ethnic composition of London (Freedman, 2014) and that the improvement in London is entirely accounted for by ethnic composition (Burgess, 2014). In 2005/06 all major ethnic groups were performing either at or below the national average for England; by 2013 all these groups were outperforming the national average, and in the majority of cases by a similar margin (groups whose numbers are relatively low are more likely to show greater variability in outcomes, hence the Chinese-heritage students' more marked changes in performance shown in figure 2.8). This suggests that regardless of the changing ethnic make-up of the region and regardless of students' ethnic background, on average a pupil in inner London would have performed worse than one elsewhere in the country in 2006, but in 2013 would perform better.

FIGURE 2.6: HIGH-POVERTY PUPIL RESULTS BY LOCAL AUTHORITY (2013)

— LONDON LOCAL AUTHORITY
— NON-LONDON LOCAL AUTHORITY

Source:
Ofsted, 2014b [each line represents the performance of students in one English local authority]
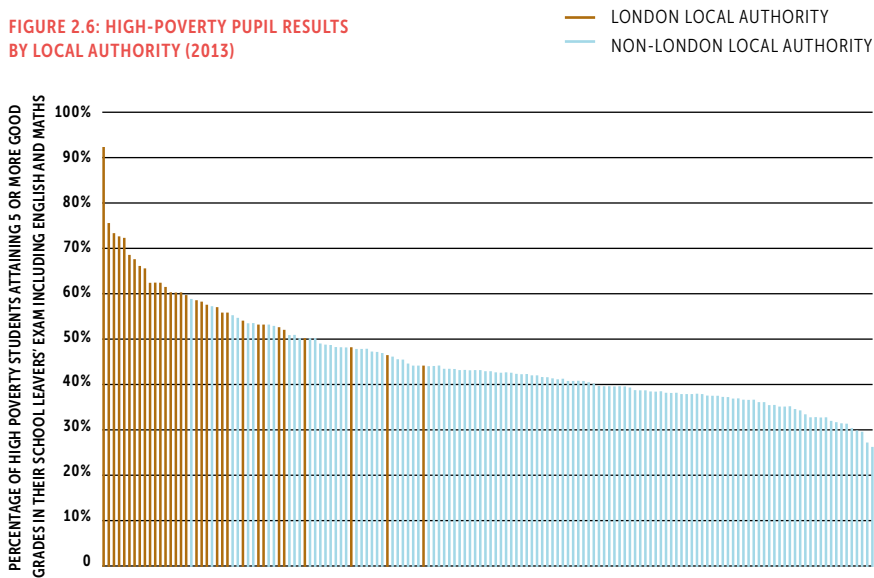
FIGURE 2.7: GAP BETWEEN NON-DISADVANTAGED AND DISADVANTAGED PUPIL ACHIEVEMENT (PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS OBTAINING FIVE OR MORE GOOD GRADES IN SCHOOL LEAVERS' EXAM FOR 16-YEAR-OLDS)

— ENGLAND
— INNER LONDON

Sources:
DfES, 2004; DfES, 2005; DfES, 2006; DfE, 2010a; DfE, 2014a
NB, in figure 2.7, the top two lines represent the performance of non-disadvantaged students in England and London, the bottom two lines represent the performance of disadvantaged students
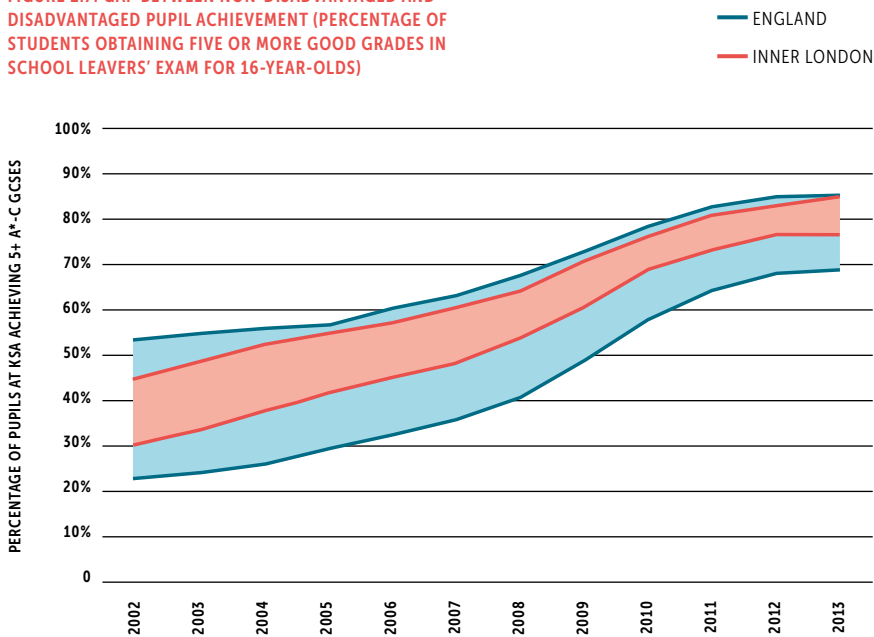
FIGURE 2.8: DIFFERENCE IN ATTAINMENT BETWEEN INNER LONDON AND ENGLAND (BY ETHNICITY)

— WHITE   — ASIAN   — CHINESE
— MIXED   — BLACK

Sources:
DCSF, 2008 and DfE, 2014a
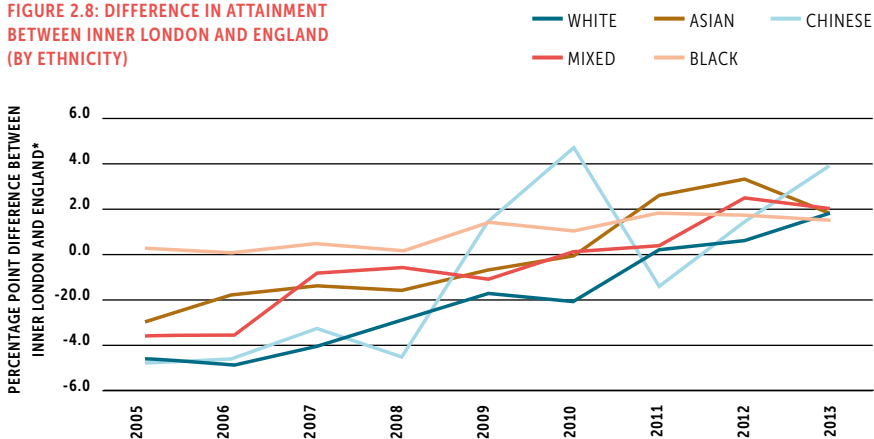
*(PERCENTAGE OF PUPILS ACHIEVING 5 OR MORE GOOD GRADES IN THEIR SCHOOL LEAVERS' EXAM, INCLUDING ENGLISH AND MATHS)

What did you
find out? Record
your results.

Explain you
results usin
cience.

A perception of transformational change

The expert witnesses that we interviewed were of the view that something dramatic had happened in London government schools. Although there was already some evidence of improvement in London in the early 2000s, the data shows that the transformation experienced over the last decade, particularly in inner London, was remarkable for both its breadth and its depth.

Many of the expert witnesses who experienced or were involved in the London story commented on the change in terms which mirror the picture painted by the data:[4]

> *'From being the worst performing region in England to the best performing region in England in a period of not much more than ten years is a very considerable achievement.'* (Former headteacher)

> *'The [...] 2011 data showed that the poorest one per cent of children by postcode do as well as children in the average postcode by wealth in the rest of the country. That's a pretty stunning statistic.'* (Political adviser)

> *'[London has] exceptional density of outstanding schools and very effective schools, some exceptional leaders and systems leaders, architects of new developments across London and nationally. [London has had the] biggest rate of improvement and highest outcomes for children. [It's] the only global city in the world where that's the case.'* (Policy specialist)

They unanimously agreed that there had been dramatic improvements in school quality. These interviewees confirmed, broadly speaking, the patterns derived from the data:

- London has moved over time from being educationally worse than the other English regions to the 'best in class', with inner London in particular moving from being the worst-performing region to being one of the best.

- There were substantial improvements in teaching quality and outcomes as measured by exam results.

- There was a particularly beneficial impact in London schools on the performance of disadvantaged students.

> The transformation experienced over the last decade, particularly in inner London, was remarkable for both its breadth and its depth

[4] The group of 'expert witnesses' interviewed for the research consisted of academics, politicians, government advisers, school leaders, programme leaders and educationalists who were either active during the period in driving the changes in London or have been key figures in the debate around the changes in more recent years.

Specific reforms that make a difference

This chapter looks at effective interventions that took place in London in the years after 2000 – interventions that appear to have contributed to the success of London's government schools.

Our research concluded that there had been four key reforms in London, and that each one had contributed to enhanced academic outcomes:

- **the London Challenge:** a successful school improvement programme for target schools

- **improved performance** by some, but not all, of the school districts

- **the academies programme:** new providers were allowed to take management control of previously failing schools

- **Teach First:** an innovative graduate teacher recruitment and training programme with a focus on the most disadvantaged schools.

In our original research we looked at the literature that described changes in London during the 2000s, with particular reference to high-impact reforms. We also sought the views of our expert witness interviews in order to identify those reforms that had most effect.

There was no single cause of the London improvement but these four reforms were important and were interrelated. The idea of a complex interplay of measures and policies was articulated by some of our interviewees as important to its success:

> *'It's cumulative, a combinatory effect of things, of which probably London Challenge was the most significant, but there were a range of other factors as well. It's cumulative, a rolling snowball of interventions and policies.'* (Educationalist)

London Challenge: Highly effective school improvement

Evaluation studies (such as Ofsted, 2010) suggest that one programme – London Challenge – was particularly important for London's educational success. London Challenge concentrated on failing schools and five key districts that were considered to be underperforming. The programme benefited from the charismatic and energetic leadership of a highly experienced school improvement expert called Tim Brighouse. The programme began in 2003.

London Challenge was not one single programme or set of actions, but rather a combination of approaches which together focused on school improvement in London (Ogden, 2013: 22). The approach was rolled out in two phases. The first phase (2003–2008) targeted secondary schools only. While most secondary

London Challenge was not one single programme or set of actions, but rather a combination of approaches which together focused on school improvement in London

schools in London had some degree of involvement, that focus was on two high-priority groups:

• schools in five key districts (where the government was most concerned about performance)

• underperforming secondary schools across London that were termed 'Keys to Success' (KTS) schools.

The second phase (2008–2011) continued the emphasis on low-performing secondary schools but also extended involvement to include primary schools. The basic approach was also rolled out to two other urban areas in England under the banner of the 'City Challenge' programme.

London Challenge was the umbrella for a suite of different school improvement activities. At the heart of the whole school improvement work was a twinning relationship between the low-performing schools and high-performing schools. Good and outstanding headteachers provided coaching support to the heads of the low-performing schools. Classroom teachers had access to pedagogical improvement provided by the good and outstanding schools. The package of support was 'brokered' and supervised by a London Challenge adviser. The programme provided training and quality assurance for the work of the expert practitioners.

An independent evaluation of London Challenge identified some of the indicators of success during the final years of the programme, 2008–2011:

• The number of schools performing academically at a rate 'below the floor target' (a minimum standard used by the government at the time) fell at a greater rate than the national rate.

• The gap between the performance in tests of economically disadvantaged students (as measured by eligibility for free school meals) and non-disadvantaged students narrowed at both primary and secondary levels.

• The percentage of schools achieving Good or Outstanding grades from Ofsted increased at a higher rate than the national average (Hutchings et al., 2012).

The KTS programme was particularly successful. In London, 119 secondary schools were involved between 2003 and 2008, and 75 secondary schools from 2008 to 2011 (Hutchings et al., 2012: 40). The evaluation by Hutchings and her colleagues showed that the 'increase in the percentage of secondary students reaching the expected level (five A*-C GCSEs including English and mathematics) was higher in these schools than the national average.'

> At the heart of the whole school improvement work was a twinning relationship between the low-performing schools and high-performing schools

Improved performance by some of the school districts

The success of London during the 2000s can, in part, be credited to improved performance at district level. In England there are about 150 school districts, known as local authorities. They are not formally part of the central government system and have oversight from local politicians rather than the national ministry of education. London is divided into 33 of these local authorities, also known as boroughs. The emphasis in recent years on school autonomy has reduced the extent to which

the local authorities supervise the work of government schools. However, during the period 1997–2010 local authorities retained an important role in monitoring performance and intervening in most schools causing concern.

By 2000 some local authorities, in London and the rest of England, were viewed as being relatively ineffective in this school improvement function and were subject to critical inspection reports by the national inspection agency, Ofsted. In the years after 2000, many local authorities responded to these criticisms from Ofsted and became more successful at enabling local school improvement, particularly the improvement of those schools that were underperforming relative to the performance of schools serving similar communities. Our interviews with expert witnesses generated a range of views about local authority performance but also a recognition among many that some inner London local authorities, such as Camden and Westminster, were effective in their school improvement function over many years. Other inner London authorities such as Lewisham, Hackney, Islington and Tower Hamlets, started from a lower baseline but began to develop a reputation for high-impact school improvement activity in the years after 2000. The most effective local authorities in London typically placed a substantial emphasis on the need to support school improvement through a 'challenge and support' model, based on:

- strong leadership of the school improvement function

- systematic analysis of school-level performance data

- challenge in schools that appeared to be relatively underperforming

- early intervention in schools causing concern

- robust performance management of headteachers.

The most comprehensive analysis of a high-performing district is the study of Tower Hamlets by David Woods and his colleagues (Woods et al., 2013). Tower Hamlets is in the East End of inner London, an area of high social disadvantage. In 1997 the local authority was ranked 149th out of all 149 local authorities in England for its educational performance. A quite extraordinary transformation took place in the following years under the leadership of two highly effective education directors, Christine Gilbert and later Kevan Collins. By 2008 the Ofsted stated that the district 'consistently delivered outstanding services for children and young people'.

The story of Tower Hamlets illustrates the potential contribution of so-called 'middle tier' organisations that sit between the central ministry and individual schools. As the influential UK commentator, Robert Hill, said: 'it is neither possible nor desirable to manage the whole education system from the centre' (Hill, 2012: 34). Instead he argued that there is a key role for an effective middle tier which enables school improvement to be 'coordinated and steered' (ibid: 6).

This aspect of the London story is complex. While local authorities became increasingly effective, some schools were not subject to local authority control due to their status as 'academies'. As the next section will describe, many of the best academies were members of academy organisations or chains. The chains acted as another form of middle tier, providing the co-ordination and steering that individual schools require.

A quite extraordinary transformation took place... under the leadership of two highly effective education directors

Academies: new providers managing previously failing schools

Policy towards the management of government-funded schools was based on a commitment to diversity of provision. Some London schools benefited from improved local authority support; others were removed from local authority control and were designated as 'academies'. There is evidence that allowing new providers of education services to compete for students with existing providers can drive change and improvement. Hill stated that 'school diversity and choice can undoubtedly contribute to school improvement' (Hill, 2012: 12) and Sahlgren's research into school choice and education quality argued that increasing choice (e.g. by allowing new providers entry to the market) 'can be especially important for disadvantaged students' (Sahlgren, 2013: 97).

The school system in London has become more diverse since 2000, with the introduction of academies particularly driving this move towards diversification. The first 'sponsored' academies (also known as city academies) opened in London in 2002. Failing schools were replaced with new schools, removed from district control and run instead by a government-approved 'sponsor' in the form of a not-for-profit trust provided with philanthropic support by the sponsor. Although the evidence for their performance is mixed, the best new sponsored academies are now some of the highest-performing government-funded schools in England. Some of our expert witnesses discussed the direct and indirect effect of these academies. The best academies provided proof that radical transformation of outcomes was possible. The 'threat' of forced conversion to academy status 'concentrated the mind' in some schools and assisted others to 'raise their game'.

Sponsored academies first began opening in 2002 – under a programme which directly targeted failing schools. From 2010 onwards the new Coalition government in the UK introduced a new type of academy for schools in England – the so-called 'converter' academy. This programme allowed schools that were already performing well to convert to academy status of their own accord without the need for a sponsor to take over their management. There were significant financial benefits to schools in the new status. The result was a massive expansion of academies, especially in the secondary phase. Figure 3.1 shows the effect this new policy had on secondary schools in London, with a huge shift in many boroughs across the city.

The National Audit Office (NAO) has undertaken a sequence of studies of the academies programme (NAO, 2007; 2010; 2012) and has generally found that, compared to other schools, academies have made good progress in terms of improved results in the school leavers' exam. The latest annual report on academies in England from the Department for Education shows that converter academies continue to outperform schools maintained by the local authority, and sponsor academies' performance improves the longer they are open (again, with the rate of improvement outperforming those in non-academy schools) (DfE, 2014b).
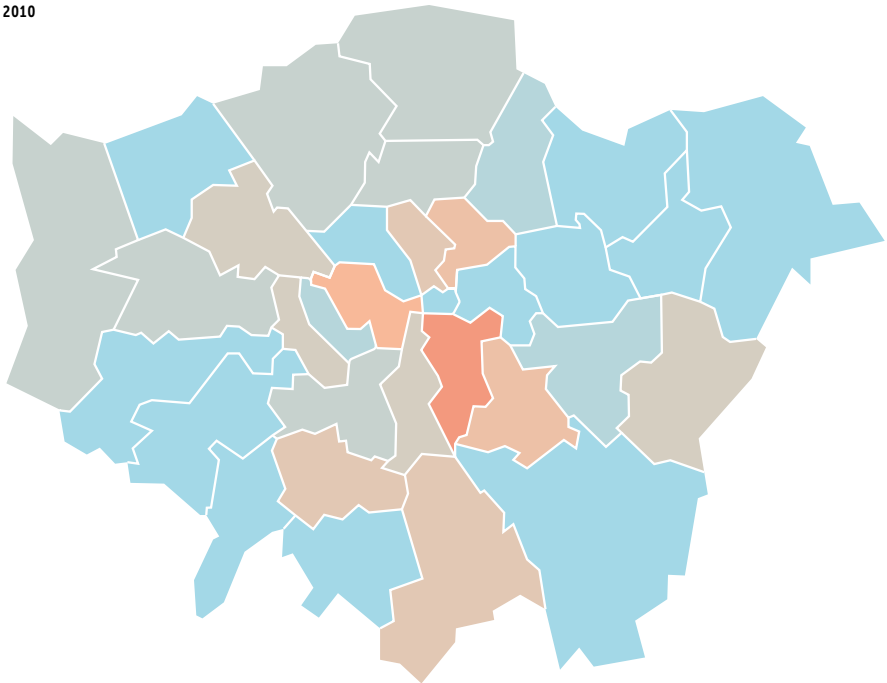
There is evidence that allowing new providers of education services to compete for students with existing providers can drive change and improvement

FIGURE 3.1: CHANGE IN THE NUMBER OF PUPILS IN LONDON STUDTING AT A SECONDARY ACADEMY, 2010—2013
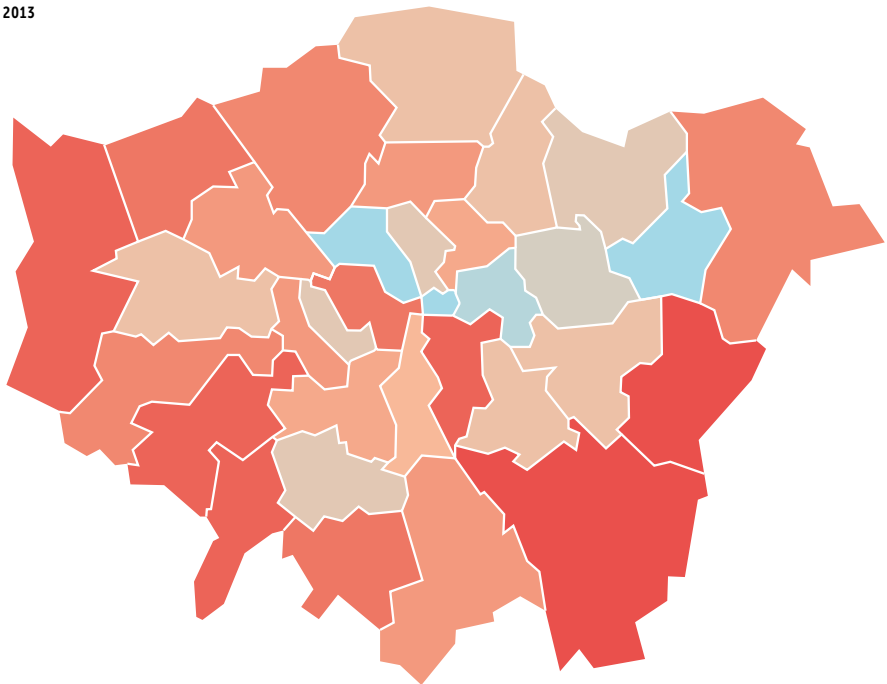
PERCENTAGE OF PUPILS STUDYING AT AN ACADEMY

0%   50%   100%
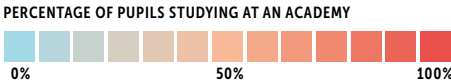
2010

2013

A recent report for the Sutton Trust found that on average high-poverty students studying at a sponsored academy were likely to do better in their school leavers' exam than their peers in mainstream schools. Academies were either individual free-standing institutions or they were part of a group, a so-called academy chain. Overall the chains seemed to perform better than the standalone academies. However, there was wide variation between different groups of sponsored academies, with some chains performing worse than schools that remained under local authority control (Hutchings et al., 2014).

Our expert witnesses had different opinions about the academies programme. Some interviewees suggested that the effect of academies was to apply pressure for improvement across the system through the existence of an alternative form of governance. One senior figure who was central to London education for many years spoke in very positive terms about the role of the academies in ensuring the success of London schools in general. Using the language that was common during London Challenge, he refers to academisation as a 'structural solution'. For him the very existence of a possible structural solution via academies had the effect of concentrating the mind and generating improvement even in schools that did not ultimately become academies:

> *'I don't think you should underestimate the importance of the academies, their input into London, because it did mean that where there needed to be a structural solution, there was a structural solution available. I think it's very important that that avenue was opened.'* (Senior educationalist)

There are similarities between this view and a common view among supporters of charter schools in the USA that 'charters' can have a beneficial effect not just on the students they educate but also on standards locally, as conventional government schools are forced into action for improvement by the competitive pressure they perceive from the charters. The evidence for this is highly contested in the USA. However, some studies do support the notion that new providers can stimulate system-wide improvement, as in the case of Hoxby (2003) in an investigation into charter schools in Michigan:

> *'Public schools that were subjected to charter competition raised their productivity and achievement in response, not only exceeding their own previous performance but also improving relative to other Michigan schools not subject to charter competition.'* (Hoxby, 2003: 333)

Creating greater diversity and choice within the system, by allowing access to new providers, can apply pressure for change and drive improvement. Improvement can occur both directly, through the performance of the new providers, and indirectly, by introducing alternatives and breaking cultures of complacency.

> Creating greater diversity and choice within the system, by allowing access to new providers, can apply pressure for change and drive improvement

Teach First: improving the quality of teacher supply

There is a substantial evidence base suggesting that, after socio-economic background, teaching quality is the factor that has the most marked effect on pupil outcomes (e.g. OECD, 2006; Ko & Sammons, 2013). Attracting and retaining the best quality teachers is therefore manifestly important. Barber and

Mourshed suggest that the best school systems prioritise getting the right people to be teachers, subsequently training and developing these people into effective teachers (Barber & Mourshed, 2007). Similarly, Slater found that high-performing systems pay particular attention to ensuring that the teaching profession is attractive (through competitive pay and conditions) and places emphasis on professional development in order to increase retention (Slater, 2013a: 6).

Before 2000 there was a widespread feeling of unease in the UK about the quality of teacher supply. Today, by contrast, these concerns have largely disappeared. Although there remain some challenges in recruiting in some subject areas, overall it is now possible to recruit talented people into government school teaching. In 2000 the perception of crisis in teacher recruitment was at its greatest in London. How was the problem of teacher recruitment solved? Several reforms have played a part in improving the quality of teacher supply in London but one key factor was the Teach First programme.

Teach First provided a new route into teaching for some of the most academically able graduates of UK universities. These recruits made a commitment to teach for two years in some of the more economically disadvantaged government schools in London. The Teach First programme contributed significantly to a new perception of teaching in London as a high-status profession for both idealistic and talented recruits. In the past many well qualified teachers have sought posts in schools serving relatively prosperous communities. Teach First has changed this by requiring participants to teach in the capital's most disadvantaged schools. This has contributed to the renewed energy and optimism in these schools.

Teach First was heavily influenced by 'Teach for America' which began in 1990 and aims to 'recruit a diverse group of leaders with a record of achievement who work to expand educational opportunity, starting by teaching for two years in a low-income community' (Teach for America, 2012). Teach First was launched in the UK in 2002, with its first cohort starting to teach in 2003, in 45 secondary schools across London. The organisation recruits high-quality graduates and places them within schools in low-income communities over a two-year programme with a particular focus on developing both their teaching and leadership skills. The new teachers undertake a very brief training course before they start work. Over the course of the programme candidates work towards a recognised teaching qualification.

There is evidence to suggest that Teach First made a disproportionate contribution to the transformation of London schools. Since many of the programme's participants remain teaching in London, the number has gradually built up and there is now a body of 1,421 of these teachers in London – amounting to six per cent of the teaching population (Teach First, 2013). Furthermore, they are concentrated in the challenging schools which have seen the greatest improvement and in some of the most deprived districts. In the boroughs where they can be found in high concentrations, like Westminster (where 15 per cent of teachers have come through the programme), they constitute an influential element of the workforce.

The Teach First programme contributed significantly to a new perception of teaching in London as a high-status profession

While Teach First brought thousands of new and talented teachers into classrooms across London, it may have also had an effect beyond those schools that participated. Many of those interviewed in our research recognised the impact Teach First had had on the perception of teaching as a profession:

> *'But what it [Teach First] did was it said that teaching is, you know, a top class thing to go into. You know, it made it desirable to be a teacher […] The idea 20 years ago that Russell Group universities [an association of 24 particularly high-performing and research-focused universities in the UK] would have a roadshow coming to them which attempted to pick out the best graduates to go into teaching… they'd have been laughed out, wouldn't they?'* (London headteacher)

The programme therefore assisted in changing attitudes about what teaching in London involved. As one interviewee put it, Teach First had helped to 'detoxify' teaching, leading to, according to an academy chain leader, a broader 'upgrading of the workforce' and making London 'an attractive place to be for bright young teachers'.

High-performing school systems offer support to attract and retain qualified teachers, based upon the principle that the quality of a school system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers (OECD, 2013). The launch of Teach First represented a significant moment in the journey of London's schools – with the image and perception of teaching steadily improving ever since. Even those schools that did not have Teach First teachers benefited from this change in perceptions and allowed London's schools to attract talented recruits.

The launch of Teach First represented a significant moment in the journey of London's schools

Key school improvement themes

This chapter deals with the cross-cutting themes which underpinned the London reforms. Although there was no single blueprint that guided the improvement, there were in effect guiding principles that linked together all the major school improvement interventions.

Each of the major school improvement interventions in London was characterised by:

- sustained political commitment
- effective use of education performance data
- high-impact leadership
- innovative professional development and impact evaluation.

Political commitment

One of the greatest barriers to effective education reform worldwide is short-termist political thinking. Many politicians worldwide want rapid results, during their own period in office, and typically wish to differentiate themselves from their predecessors in policy terms. This is understandable but it can encourage frequent changes in policy direction. Significantly, high-performing countries such as Singapore, Japan and Finland have an unusual pattern of greater policy consistency over time.

London benefited from very high level political support for reform. Sponsorship from key policymakers, over many years and across different administrations, was one of the fundamental drivers behind the success of schools in London during the 2000s: allowing reforms to take root and to become established. Support for the reforms came from the highest level. One of our witnesses was a former junior government minister who described how during the Blair administration both the Prime Minister and successive cabinet level education ministers – Morris, Clarke and Miliband – personally endorsed London school reform as a priority:

> 'Then, politically, you know, this was a programme that Tony Blair, Estelle Morris, Charles Clarke, David Miliband, you know, all of the senior people in the government that were there when it was set up, they believed in it, it came from them and it had buy-in at the senior level. I think, again, if we hadn't had that it might not have had the impact that it did.' (Former minister)

London benefited from very high level political support for reform

The Labour government of 1997–2010 was replaced by a Conservative-Liberal Democrat Coalition government after the General Election of 2010. Unusually, key aspects of the London reforms were continued after this change of political control. This long-term, cross-partisan support received by London schools was exceptional in terms of UK politics. Michael Gove, the new education minister in 2010, explicitly endorsed major components of the reforms of his political opponents. In particular, Gove was impressed by:

- the school improvement methods of London Challenge, especially the use of expert headteachers (National Leaders of Education) and the best schools (Teaching Schools) as the key school improvement resources

- the impact of the academies programme in improving outcomes in disadvantaged areas

- the success of Teach First in recruiting able, idealistic new teachers in disadvantaged areas.

The new minister expanded the use of these approaches that he had inherited from his political opponents.

The London story demonstrates that school reform takes years to enact. Changing professional culture is not a question of 'flicking a switch' or issuing a ministerial directive. It requires, to use the word of one of our expert witnesses, a 'relentless' focus over a long period of time.

Sustaining policy over time can be particularly difficult in the UK given the five-year cycle of general elections, heralding a new government who may not be culturally interested in their predecessors' policies, no matter how effective they were (Hallsworth et al., 2011: 8). What happened, and is continuing to happen, in London is evidence that a sustained approach to policy can reap rewards. Although reform began at least as far back as Tony Blair's Labour Government of 1997, the current Mayor of London (Conservative Boris Johnson) has made the further improvement of London schools one of his priorities: different reports from his office explicitly recognising the achievements of prior Labour governments (Mayor of London, 2012 and 2013).

The wisdom of this approach is reinforced by experience in other countries. Maintaining a consistent approach is one of the characteristics of high-performing jurisdictions, such as Finland and Singapore (Slater, 2013b: 30). An analysis of the results of the 2012 PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) survey by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development has suggested that 'a cohesive and systematic approach is needed' and 'since school systems change over time, intentionally or not, in response to external factors, efforts to improve school systems should be continuous' (OECD, 2013: 194).

The idea that education reform takes time and requires sustained persistence has been strongly advocated, for example by Michael Barber, who has provided advice globally on reforming education systems. In a context very different to London, the Punjab province of Pakistan, he has identified the importance of sustained political support for reform and commitment over the long term: 'Persist. The single word says it all. In Punjab, we're just embarking on year three... It hasn't been easy. It

> The London story clearly illustrates the benefits of long-term political commitment and persistence

won't get any easier for a long time, but there is visible progress and persistence will be rewarded ultimately' (Barber, 2013: 70). The London story clearly illustrates the benefits of long-term political commitment and persistence.

Use of data and literacy

One of the recurring themes that emerged throughout our investigation into London schools was the effective use of education performance data at every level of the system. The data was used both to identify underperformance and to target support. Interviews with stakeholders showed that a preoccupation with data drove virtually all the major initiatives that were enacted in the 2000s.

This preoccupation was not the exclusive property of any particular group and all the major initiatives seemed to have strong foundations in the use of educational metrics. The different actors in the London story are therefore linked by a common focus on the effective use of educational data as an instrument for transformation:

- London Challenge placed performance data at the heart of the programme. The schools that received the highest level of support were identified through the use of consistent data-based criteria. The educational improvement process was supported by the careful benchmarking of performance against the performance of other schools with similar characteristics. This use of 'family of schools' data was identified by our research to be a major feature of the programme's success.

- The best academies emphasised data analysis and student target setting as central components of their educational methodology. These schools have been consistently praised by the national schools inspectorate for the way that they use data to guide their work. The ARK academies, for example, place great emphasis on the systematic use of data in order to set ambitious but realistic targets for each individual student.

- The most effective local authorities placed a substantial emphasis on the need to support school improvement through systematic data analysis. The recent report on the transformation of Tower Hamlets (Woods et al., 2013: 25) states that 'a particular strong feature to drive school improvement has been the emphasis put upon the collection, dissemination and analysis of assessment data.' Armed with robust data, local authority staff and headteachers were well equipped to take action. Ofsted reports on Tower Hamlets schools frequently comment on the purposeful target setting and tracking at an individual level that was made possible as a consequence of access to good data. Progress towards these individual level targets is frequently reviewed.

- Teach First makes careful use of data, targeting the deployment of its teachers through the use of deprivation data in order to ensure that these teachers are serving communities with a disproportionate share of disadvantaged students. Teach First makes a priority of data-based analysis of the career trajectory of Teach First teachers and alumni.

This use of data across the board was greatly assisted by the reforms in assessment and school inspection that had taken place in England in the decade before 2000. By 2000 a robust system of student testing and school inspection was in place that

> The most effective local authorities placed a substantial emphasis on the need to support school improvement through systematic data analysis

generated a substantial body of performance data that could be used in order to identify poor performance at every level.

Both expert witnesses and teachers interviewed in our research regularly mentioned the use of data as a vital aspect of the approach to school improvement. One interviewee, who played a major role in the management of London Challenge, characterised schools in London today as 'using data increasingly well within the school as well as among schools'. The teachers we interviewed who had worked in London during its period of transformation were unanimous in their regard for data. They described consistent cross-subject approaches to data analysis and a focus on early intervention when the data suggested that students were not on track to fulfil their potential:

> 'The data tells a lot [...] There's quite good open communication with teachers from different subjects because a child may be doing well in English and maths and not in science: there is obviously an issue but you won't know that unless there is that communication between the middle leaders [...] Also it's a standing item in faculty meetings because we understand that if we don't visit them regularly we will miss which students are not getting their target levels or grades. If you don't intervene early then you are going to have to play catch-up for the rest of the time the child is in school.' (Focus group teacher)

> 'Everything's been reviewed and renewed: tracking students, TIG groups [targeted intervention group] which we didn't really have a long time ago, so we know which students need extra support.' (Focus group teacher)

> 'A large part of our focus is identifying areas where we can develop and improve and that is down to using things like improving our data analysis, making sure staff are able to analyse their own data.' (Focus group teacher)

Teachers talked with a degree of real expertise about data-related issues. They discussed the importance of student self-assessment and peer assessment as well as more formal academic monitoring. Focus group discussions gave a strong sense that a high level of data literacy was the norm among staff in these schools.

Data was used in London as a powerful mechanism for challenging underperformance and holding schools to account. The data allowed leaders to act as advocates for students who were entitled to a better education. There was therefore a strong connection between data literacy and moral purpose. Expert witnesses to the London story described how the 'terms of trade' changed in London so that schools were increasingly run in the interests of students rather than in the interests of the workforce. This was made possible through the gathering and comparative analysis of performance data at every level of the London education system.

The existence of comparative data was an important component of the improvement process. The benchmarking of data made it possible to challenge underperformance based upon a comparison of schools with similar intakes. Leaders of the system were able to reject excuses about the poor performance

Data was used in London as a powerful mechanism for challenging underperformance and holding schools to account

of students because they had access to powerful benchmarked data showing that similar students in similar schools were performing better elsewhere:

> *'I thought the way the data allowed you to pair schools... was a revelation, so I could go to a head of a school in East London and I could say "I know you tell me you're like no-one else in Tower Hamlets so what about this school in Hammersmith, it's got exactly the same proportion of boys there, exactly the same proportion of free school meals... Now tell me why you're not doing as well as that school?" '* (Former director of children's services)

School leaders were able to adopt a similar approach at the level of the individual institution. Research shows that in-school variation in quality is typically greater than overall school-to-school variation. Data analysis at school level enabled school leaders to understand which teachers were performing at a high or low level. This information was then used to guide performance management and professional development. Schools leaders became particularly skilled at this type of data literacy. One of our expert witnesses, a former special adviser to the education minister, told us that educational leadership in London today was typically based on 'a forensic focus on performance'. Leaders across the system were often expected to use data and were held accountable through data. Local authority managers, leaders of academy chains, headteachers and individual teachers were all challenged to perform by the existence of student data that was subject to rigorous analysis.

Our expert witnesses, many of whom were themselves London leaders, linked the data-driven approach to the idea of management focus. They talked about the need for unremitting and relentless leadership action. One director of children's services stated this succinctly: 'I remember back in 2004 I think [...] I remember the phrases being used in our Ofsted report about just 'relentless', you know relentless leadership, relentless activity and that's what we did, that's what we did.'

A major lesson from London is that, properly used, performance data can be used at every level of the system to ensure effective advocacy for the interests of learners. It can be used as a means to hold schools and other people working in education to account, to challenge underperformance and to provide targeted support to where it is needed most.

> A major lesson from London is that, properly used, performance data can be used at every level of the system to ensure effective advocacy for the interests of learners
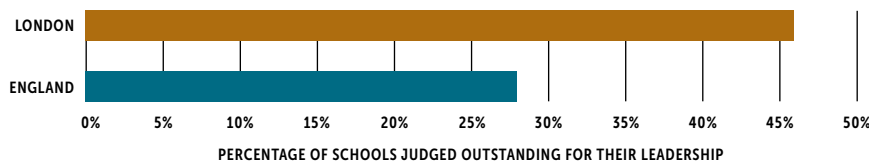
Leadership and expert practitioners as 'system leaders'

The London story was about effective leadership at every level. As one headteacher put it to us: 'It's all about leadership, isn't it? So whether it's leadership at local authority level, whether it's leadership at the Department [for Education] level, or whether it's leadership at the school level.'

Our research revealed evidence of leadership effectiveness throughout the education system – national government, regional agencies and initiatives, 'middle tier' organisations such as local authorities, and academy chains and schools. There was a virtually unanimous view that this was a vital factor in the transformation of London schools. The expert witnesses described a particularly powerful alignment of leadership energy, from senior figures in the government

FIGURE 4.1: COMPARISON OF SCHOOLS RATED OUTSTANDING FOR THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THEIR LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT (2013)

Source:
Ofsted, 2014a

LONDON	
ENGLAND	

0%   5%   10%   15%   20%   25%   30%   35%   40%   45%   50%

PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOLS JUDGED OUTSTANDING FOR THEIR LEADERSHIP

to individual headteachers. While London derived benefit from many people in leadership positions, the key leaders were the school headteachers or principals. There seems to be little doubt that one of the reasons for the improvement of London schools was the impact of highly effective school leadership.

Our interviewees had, without exception, a highly positive view of the overall quality of the leadership in London schools now, after more than a decade of reform. One former minister talked about 'the amazing headteachers' of London today. A senior figure from the world of higher education talked about the 'exceptional leaders and systems leaders' of London who were the architects of innovative new approaches to leadership that were now widespread in London and increasingly to be found across England. A highly experienced educationalist who played a key role in the London Challenge story attributed the improvement in teaching and learning in London schools to 'very much better leadership of schools' by headteachers who had become 'very clever at enabling teachers to improve their game'. While many headteachers before 2000 had been preoccupied with 'firefighting' and school-level crisis management, the headteachers of today had the opportunity and ability to focus on the leadership of learning. After a decade of reform the school leaders of London were judged by the school inspectors of Ofsted to be more effective than those in every other region of England, with a wide difference in the percentage of leaders judged outstanding (figure 4.1).

During the period of the London reforms, the concept of 'system leadership' was becoming part of the educational zeitgeist in England. The idea owed much to the thinking of Michael Barber in England and Michael Fullan in Canada about how school systems could move beyond 'top-down' reform to sustainable school-led improvement (e.g. Barber & Mourshed, 2013; Fullan, 2004; Fullan, 2012). The lesson of the national strategies for pedagogical improvement in England from 1997 onwards (which Barber initially managed and Fullan had evaluated) appeared to be that the centralised prescription of the 1990s was appropriate for its time, but ultimately led to diminishing returns. After initial significant gains, the test scores from primary schools in England had reached a plateau. In order to take an education system to a higher level of productivity there was a need for a greater degree of professional ownership of the reform and improvement process.

The architects of the London reforms were able to apply these ideas to the improvement of the city's schools. Through London Challenge, some of the best

> Our interviewees had, without exception, a highly positive view of the overall quality of the leadership in London schools now, after more than a decade of reform

schools and best headteachers were encouraged to lead improvement networks with other schools and other school leaders.

We spoke to the key individuals who managed the development of networks of school-to-school support. They were interested in the theory of knowledge management and knowledge mobilisation. They identified some of the naive assumptions that often weakened attempts to 'share good practice' in the context of London schools. One of our expert witnesses described three techniques, used by London Challenge, to optimise the chances of effective knowledge mobilisation by consultant leaders:

1 It was important to quality assure the expertise that was about to be 'shared'.

2 It was necessary to identify a 'fit-for-purpose' mechanism for sharing expertise which could include such different media as one-to-one coaching or large scale e-learning.

3 Expert practitioners needed very careful training if they were to undertake work as coaches of other, weaker practitioners.

The London experience suggests that system leadership requires a shared responsibility for school performance in an area. One of our interviewees expressed very strongly the importance of the cultural change that made possible this new sense of joint accountability and support at headship level. For her the London school system had matured from one characterised by crude competition to a much more mature blend of competition and partnership based on shared accountability for the well-being of all children in London.

> *'I think there is a real spirit of collegiality across London schools. There is much less competition than I experienced in the early days of my headship. But there is a real pride in being in a London school and being part of this very successful movement [...] And even though people know that circumstances can be challenging they also know that there is support out there because the support will come from other London headteacher colleagues [...] I think in the old days there were some schools that were good but they were charging people to go in and look at what they were doing. I don't think that culture exists any more, it is much more of a partnership culture, much more of an awareness of responsibility for all community schools and outcomes for all children in the local community and not just your own.'* (London headteacher)

> The London experience suggests that system leadership requires a shared responsibility for school performance in an area

Practitioner-led professional development

All of the London reforms were concerned with the improvement of teaching quality through better professional development. They also shared a rejection of traditional forms of professional development which used 'off-site' training workshops as the main mechanism for professional development. Instead of attending courses at teacher centres or other central places, the London reforms made the school itself the main setting for professional development. The main mode of professional learning moved towards 'on the job' coaching rather than classroom training.

The London model for professional development also rejected the notion of the full-time professional expert as the trainer. Instead, highly effective serving practitioners were used as part-time trainers. These people had up-to-date professional knowledge, an understanding of problems based on personal recent experience and a high degree of credibility with their peers.

As part of our research we discussed the change in approach to professional development with our focus groups of London teachers. They described the improvement in training as schools moved towards in-house training and away from traditional off-site training. One teacher described the regular programme of in-house training provided at the school:

> *'When I was head of science I remember doing quite a few external courses […] more helpful than that is how the school generates quite tailor-made 'INSETs' [In-Service Training] that we run on a weekly basis. So different members of staff [lead the training] – we look at different strengths of various members of staff – and we put on regular in-house INSETs each week. Some staff will be directed to attend, some will opt to go in, in order to help them along that course. They have been a lot more powerful than some of the [traditional] courses.'* (Focus group teacher)

Another senior teacher explained how the school worked in partnership with other schools to provided individualised coaching opportunities:

> *'I've spent quite a lot of time working closely with a deputy head who does my job in a different school. And that's had more impact than any course you'd have gone on. It's been an eye opener – it's been brilliant.'* (Focus group teacher)

One teacher in our focus groups made an important point about a new school culture of regular reflection that had replaced the previous tradition of attending off-site courses:

> *'I think it's the organisation getting us to really become more reflective on our own practice that makes things more powerful. It isn't about these one-off INSETs that you might attend, it's about regularly reviewing what your lessons are like.'* (Focus group teacher)

There was a sense amongst these teachers that professional development had matured over time, moving away from occasional attendance at off-site courses to more systematic and regular school-based opportunities for context-specific learning. They identified a growing connection between performance management and professional development (teachers learning from observation and monitoring at school level as well as from other practitioners still working in schools).

Two professional development programmes were particularly important in London: the Improving Teacher Programme (ITP) and Outstanding Teacher Programme (OTP). Ofsted (2010) explained its view of the success of these programmes:

> *'Working with teachers from other schools with similar challenges, outside the confines of their home school, enabled frank discussions of strengths and weaknesses in their own teaching, free from concerns about performance*

Professional development had matured over time, moving away from occasional attendance at off-site courses to more systematic and regular school-based opportunities for context-specific learning

management or the disapproval of peers. In particular, a high proportion of time was dedicated to reflecting on and reviewing their own teaching, and their understanding of pedagogy. This taught teachers to become reflective practitioners and they began to share that skill with their colleagues at their home school, under the guidance of the school mentor.' (Ofsted, 2010)

'[One teacher had] been on the Improving Teacher Programme, but she'd also had a coach from that school who came into her school, and she said the real thing was seeing this person teaching her class, because it's so easy to say "Oh well, it works there but it wouldn't work with my kids". And seeing it work with her kids, and seeing that her six-year-olds could write at length and be excited about it, had made her excited about it, and so she was now excited about teaching.' (London headteacher)

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Education Development Trust... we've changed from CfBT

We changed our name from CfBT Education Trust in January 2016. Our aim is to transform lives by improving education around the world and to help achieve this, we work in different ways in many locations.

CfBT was established nearly 50 years ago; since then our work has naturally diversified and intensified and so today, the name CfBT (which used to stand for Centre for British Teachers) is not representative of who we are or what we do. We believe that our new company name, Education Development Trust – while it is a signature, not an autobiography – better represents both what we do and, as a not for profit organisation strongly guided by our core values, the outcomes we want for young people around the world.