SELECTION PROJECT
SEL4.11: Area Study

SUMMARY

Introduction

The Area Study is based on interviews and fieldwork in 4 grammar and 5 secondary schools. The schools were all drawn from the same geographical area and provided the main postprimary provision for all pupils in that area. The purpose of the Area Study is:

- to explore in some detail the dynamics of the interaction of the selective system with the operation of parental choice and the 'market' within a local area in Northern Ireland, and
- to examine the effects of this competition on individual schools and types of school in the area.

In each of the case study schools interviews were held with principals, members of the senior management teams, the heads of departments of English, mathematics and science, the head of Year 8, class teachers and groups of Year 8 and Year 12 pupils. In addition, questionnaire, attainment and destinations data were collected on pupils, and statistical data on the schools were analysed.

Main findings

In the Area Study schools, across a range of indicators, the selection system, in conjunction with the operation of open enrolment since 1990, has benefited the grammar schools as they have taken an increased proportion of the pupil enrolment. This trend has been further exacerbated by a number of local factors. In addition, the opening of an Integrated school has increased the enrolment difficulties of the other secondary schools.

There is evidence of social segregation between the grammar and secondary schools. This is accompanied by a perception that the grammar schools are accorded higher status and esteem. The differential in esteem is a source of anger for principals, teachers and pupils in secondary schools.

Within each sector, there has emerged a 'pecking order' of schools, as reflected in enrolment data. In both sectors, in those schools which enjoy the least esteem, as indicated by enrolment data, pupils are less likely to achieve average levels of attainment at GCSE.

Issues of competition over enrolment are a concern for all schools, including those with the highest levels of enrolment. Considerable time is deployed to monitor and promote enrolment. The principals of all the schools regularly visit their main feeder schools, as do the teachers with responsibility for the Year 8 intake. Almost all schools engage in marketing and public relations activities and some have adapted their curriculum to establish a 'niche'. All schools report drawing pupils from a larger number of primary schools than they did before 1990, although recent changes in the home-to-school transport regulations have limited the choice options for some economically disadvantaged families.

As the option of fee-paying places is no longer available in grammar schools, the perceived need to obtain high Transfer Test grades has increased. Indications of this included high levels of pupil anxiety, disappointment and a sense of failure for the unsuccessful, the distortion of the upper primary curriculum to accommodate practice testing, and the neglect of the learning needs of opted-out children in some primary schools.

Secondary school teachers report the continuing adverse effects on learning for children whose self-esteem has been damaged by failure in the Transfer Tests, the skewing of the ability range of their intake towards the lower end, the higher incidence of pupils admitted with emotional and behavioural difficulties and a low confidence in their capacity to learn successfully among children admitted to their schools. These challenges have to be confronted within a context of declining enrolments, and therefore declining financial and human resources.

Grammar school teachers report increasing numbers of weaker pupils. This included a perception that some pupils with Transfer Test grade A had been 'coached beyond their ability'. This perception led some to question the reliability of the Transfer Tests. Some of these pupils have subsequently been 'counselled out' of grammar schools, a practice which is unwelcome in the secondary sector.

Teachers' and pupils' views on selection are related to school sector. In general, those in grammar schools accept the principle of selection and wish to retain a more rigorous and reliable system. Those in secondary schools consider the system to operate unfairly to their disadvantage. A common view was that grammar schools should not be allowed to admit children with lower Transfer Test grades. They believe that they and their schools are considered 'second class', and consider the system's effects to be damaging to the bulk of pupils in post-primary education. Many wish for the abolition or deferral of selection.

While many secondary school pupils indicated that they were enjoying their secondary school experiences and anticipating productive careers, many still felt resentful about their experiences of selection and felt that the system had been unfair to them.

Each group of teachers, secondary and grammar, believed that the weight of public and political opinion ran counter to their preference. Grammar schools teachers felt that the position of grammar schools had been undermined, while secondary teachers believed that the strength of the grammar school lobby would prevent any change. Teachers in both sectors expressed feelings of powerlessness about their capacity to influence policy-makers about desired changes.

Penny McKeown, Ian Shuttleworth, Eamonn McKeown, Alan Smith, Ursula Birthistle and Alison Montgomery

SELECTION PROJECT
SEL4.11: Area Study

Penny McKeown, Ian Shuttleworth and Eamonn McKeown (Queen's University Belfast) and Alan Smith, Ursula Birthistle and Alison Montgomery (University of Ulster)

INTRODUCTION

The Area Study of the Selection Project falls within and beyond the wider Case Study strand of the research. Its purpose is to explore in some detail the dynamics of the operation of parental choice and the 'market' within a local area and the effects of competition on individual schools and types of school in the area.

This research into a cluster of schools in one local area affords the opportunity to study, in some detail, the impact of educational reforms, such as open enrolment, on the selective system of post-primary education in Northern Ireland. Until now, this research agenda has not been fully developed in Northern Ireland but the local nature of the Area Study permits the competitive interaction between schools and its effects to be considered in some detail. Research in Scotland and New Zealand (for example, Adler and Raab 1988; Echols and Willms 1995; Waslander and Thrupp 1995) suggests that these issues could be of key importance in understanding the recent evolution of the Northern Ireland selective system because of the significance of the twin issues of *choice* - which parents succeed in making their choice and how far the existing system acts to constrain choice for some pupils - and *intake differences* - have less popular schools lost pupils overall, or certain types of pupil? Has social disadvantage been concentrated in certain schools thereby exacerbating the influence of contextual effects that hinder pupil achievement? The data obtained from the Area Study allows these issues to be considered at both the sectoral and individual school levels.

The data presented below originate from a number of sources. These include data provided by the former Department of Education for Northern Ireland (DENI), published data from DE and the Education and Library Boards, including School Performance Tables, annual school budget statements, and annual Transfer Booklets. In addition, as part of the research, data were generated from questionnaires completed by all Year 8 and Year 12 pupils in the Area Study schools, and a range of interviews was held within these schools. In each school, interviews were held with the Principal, Senior Management Team (as a group), the Heads of the English, Maths and Science departments, class teachers (as a group), the teacher with responsibility for Year 8, and with small groups of Year 8 and Year 12 pupils. Much of these interview data also inform other analyses of the wider Case Study element of the research project. A copy of the interview schedules is attached as Appendix 1. Also, schools provided pupil-level data on the GCSE attainment of pupils in Year 12 in 1998-99.

The first section of this report will provide contextual data on the area under study and on the individual schools, including data on the socio-economic profile of parents of pupils in each school. These data are mainly drawn from published material, supplemented by questionnaire data.

Section Two will consider evidence of how the 'market' in post-primary schooling in the area has operated since 1991, when open enrolment was introduced. Much of the data which evidences this section has been drawn from school interviews with teachers and pupils. Where interview data are available, extensive use has been made of quotations from interview transcripts. These quotations provide rich evidence of teachers' and pupils' experiences of Selection and its effects.

The main focus of Section Three will be to examine how the Area Study post-primary schools have fared since the introduction of open enrolment. Partly this will be analysed with reference to school enrolment data, including the extent to which they are over, or under-subscribed, and the profile of their intakes. Other aspects will explore pupils' GCSE attainment levels and their destinations on leaving school. Published and project-generated data will be used.

Section Four will provide the views of teachers and pupils about their experiences in and around the selective system, and their general views on the value of the current system and its operation.

The main themes and issues emerging from the Area Study research are identified in the Conclusion.

SECTION ONE

THE AREA AND THE SCHOOLS

1.1   <u>Background and contextual data</u>

The area under study in this section of the research comprised a cluster of nine post-primary schools, which serve neighbouring urban areas and a wide rural catchment. It falls completely within a single Education and Library Board (ELB) area. The area is not completely self-contained in terms of inter-school competition for pupils. A neighbouring town provides alternative choices for parents of both secondary and grammar school pupils. Since the recent changes in home-to-school transport regulations, any parents exercising this option will, of course, have to fund their child's home-to-school travel privately, unless they have been refused a place locally.

The local Education and Library Board has for some time, afforded the opportunity for pupils from a small number of nominated primary schools to transfer directly to one secondary school without taking the Transfer test. However many P7 pupils in these primary schools take the test in order to retain the option to transfer to grammar school. A Grant Maintained Integrated school opened several years ago.

Some grammar schools within the area have closed their boarding departments in the last ten years. Although no schools in the area now admit boarders, they have maintained previous enrolment levels. It is likely, therefore, that the places formerly occupied by pupils from beyond the local area are now filled by local day pupils.

1.2   <u>The Area Study schools</u>

There are nine post-primary schools in the area selected for detailed study. There are both Catholic and non-Catholic secondary and grammar schools and a mix of single-sex and mixed schools in both sectors. A Grant Maintained Integrated school opened recently, otherwise, the number of schools has remained unchanged since the introduction of open enrolment in 1991. All of the schools, except one secondary school, offer post-16 provision.

1.3   School and family socio-economic status (SES)

A widely-used indicator of a school's SES profile is the level of entitlement of pupils to free school meals. Data to show these levels are available from two sources: the annual Budget Statements prepared by the Education and Library Boards and by the Department of Education, and the responses to survey questionnaires administered as part of the study. Here, responses to questionnaires have been the basis of analysis.

1.3.1   Free school meals entitlement

TABLE 1: AREA STUDY SCHOOLS: FSM entitlement of Year 12 pupils (1998-9)

SECONDARY SCHOOLS	% FSM	GRAMMAR SCHOOLS	% FSM
SS1	30	SG1	3
SS2	23	SG2	2
MS1	21	MG1	N/A
MS2	29	MG2	9
MI	N/A		

Source: Selection Project Questionnaire Data

TABLE 2: AREA STUDY SCHOOLS: FSM entitlement of Year 8 pupils (1998-9)

SECONDARY SCHOOLS	% FSM	GRAMMAR SCHOOLS	% FSM
SS1	34	SG1	12
SS2	41	SG2	33
MS1	22	MG1	13
MS2	40	MG2	13
MI	28		

Source: Selection Project Questionnaire Data

Overall, levels of FSM entitlement were much higher in secondary schools, especially for the pupils in Year 12. Further, in all of the Area Study schools, the percentage entitlement to Free School Meals for Year 8 pupils was greater than for Year 12 pupils. Without data from the intervening year groups, however, it is not possible to discern whether these figures represent a general trend towards growing levels of pupil disadvantage in the area.

1.3.2   Family socio-economic status

In addition to FSM entitlement, we have been able to explore for the area and for each school the profiles of their pupils' family SES at both a general level and in more detail, from responses to questionnaires given to pupils in the Area Study schools.

From these responses, it has been possible to identify the social class information which underpinned both the levels of entry into the Transfer procedure of these pupils and their levels of attainment in the tests.

TABLE 3: Area study pupils' percentage entry into transfer procedure, by fathers' Registrar General's group: % of pupils

	NON-MANUAL		MANUAL	
	Year 12 (Entered 1994)	Year 8 (Entered 1998)	Year 12 (Entered 1994)	Year 8 (Entered 1998)
ENTERED TRANSFER	89	90	70	66
OPTED OUT	11	10	30	34

Source: Selection Project Questionnaire Data

For both cohorts of pupils, there was a significant association between opting out of Transfer and their family's social background, classified by the Registrar General's grouping. At least three times as many children from manual backgrounds opted-out of the test, compared with children from non-manual backgrounds.

For those who took the test, family social background was also associated with the Transfer grade obtained.

TABLE 4: Area study pupils' attainment of Transfer grades, by fathers' Registrar General's group: % of pupils

TRANSFER GRADE OBTAINED	NON-MANUAL		MANUAL	
	Year 12 (Entered secondary education in 1994-95)	Year 8 (Entered secondary education in 1998-99)	Year 12 (Entered secondary education in 1994-95)	Year 8 (Entered secondary education in 1998-99)
GRADE A	52	53	26	36
GRADE/S B	14	19	13	16
GRADE/S C	15	15	25	13
GRADE D	19	14	36	35

Source: Selection Project Questionnaire Data

Of pupils with fathers classified as non-manual, over half in both cohorts achieved an A grade in the Transfer test. For those with fathers classified as manual, over a third of both cohorts were awarded a D grade, and approximately half did not receive the A or B grades which would make entry to a grammar school likely.

These figures give a clear indication of the extent to which family social class is associated with both entry into the Transfer procedure, and the Transfer grade attained. In combination, they provide evidence for the socially segregated nature of the secondary and grammar schools in the area under study.

Specific evidence of this social segregation is also seen on a school-by-school basis. The responses from Year 8 and Year 12 pupils for their parents' occupations are summarised below school-by-school. Occupations have been classified according to the Registrar General's categories.

TABLE 5: YEAR 12 PUPILS' (1998-9): fathers' and mothers' economic status (Registrar General's categories): % in each category.

REG. GEN. CATEG.	SS1		SS2		MS1		MS2		SG1		SG2		MG1		MG2	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Econ. Inact./other		15		10	1	22		*11*		10	1	17	*na*	*na*		*23*
Mgr/Admin.	2	2	13	2	15	5	*10*		19	5	24	10			29	*2*
Professional	16	10	4	12	11	6	*20*	*12*	19	23	28	17			21	*38*
Skilled non-manual	27	19	17	12	21	26	*15*	*15*	42	34	27	42			10	*16*
Skilled manual	36	10	48	3	30		*36*	*12*	1	1	15				32	*6*
Semi-skilled					16	22			35	14	5	6				
Unskilled		21	2	32	6	20	*28*	*29*	2	13	1	9			3	*14*
Unemployed	18	23	17	30	1	1	*12*	*21*	1	1					5	*2*

Source: Selection Project Questionnaire Data
NOTE: Figures given in italics are for Catholic schools. Figures in bold are data for fathers.

Overall, the percentages of both fathers and mothers classified as managerial or professional were much larger for grammar schools, except that the lowest percentage of 'professional' fathers (at school SG1—19%) was exceeded by the equivalent group at school MS2 (20%). This type of 'overlap' also existed in the fathers' categories of skilled non-manual, skilled manual and unskilled. Much larger proportions of secondary school pupils' fathers were described as unskilled and unemployed. For mothers, the most marked differences were in the professional group (grammar school range was 17% - 38%, compared to secondary school range of 6% - 12%) and the unskilled and unemployed categories, in which the largest percentages were in the secondary schools.

TABLE 6: YEAR 8 PUPILS' (1998-9): fathers' and mothers' economic status (Registrar General's categories): % in each category.

REG. GEN. CATEG.	SS1		SS2		MS1		MS2		MI		SG1		SG2		MG1		MG2	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Econ. Inact./Oth.		20		19	**2**	19	*2*	*34*		16	**1**	10		15		*10*		*17*
Mgr/Adm.	**6**	3	**15**	3	**15**	7	*5*		**8**	8	**28**	7	**21**	5	*15*	*5*	*17*	*3*
Profession		2	**3**	6	**7**	7	*12*	*7*	**11**	9	**20**	19	**27**	22	*22*	*22*	*32*	*41*
Skilled non-manual	**21**	17	**22**	15	**21**	14	*17*	*18*	**18**	6	**23**	30	**27**	34	*18*	*18*	*13*	*29*
Skilled manual	**59**	11	**41**	9	**19**	1	*55*	*5*	**29**	2	**16**	4	**19**	5	*12*	*3*	*39*	*2*
Semi-skilled					**21**	24			**16**	20	**7**	9		1	*12*	*25*		*1*
Unskilled	**6**	38	**4**	31	**10**	26	*5*	*32*	**8**	39	**2**	20	**5**	13	*3*	*13*	*2*	*5*
Unemploy	**8**	9	**14**	17	**6**	3	*5*	*5*	**10**		**4**	1	**2**	6	*3*	*3*	*1*	*3*

Source: Selection Project Questionnaire Data
NOTE: Figures given in italics are for Catholic schools. Figures in bold are data for fathers

SES of Fathers

The contrasts between the economic status of fathers of Year 8 pupils, between the Area Study secondary and grammar schools, were also fairly marked in a number of categories. In no secondary school were more than 15% of fathers categorised as managers, or as professionals, while in no grammar school were fewer than 15% of fathers described in this way. This difference, for fathers, was most marked in the 'professional' group: in only two of the five secondary schools were more than 10% of fathers in this category, while in no grammar school were there fewer than 20%. There was, however, little overall variation between the groups of schools in the percentages of fathers deemed skilled non-manual, although the range of indices within the grammar sector was wide, from 13 to 27%. In secondary schools, percentages of fathers grouped as skilled manual, semi-skilled and unskilled were generally higher than those of grammar schools, although in the skilled manual category there were individual variations. Among those described as unemployed, the lowest level reported for a secondary school was higher than for any grammar school.

SES of Mothers

In secondary schools more Year 8 pupils reported economically inactive and unemployed mothers than did pupils in grammar schools. Differences between sectors were minimal in the managerial category, but were marked in the professional category: while the levels of this group, for Year 8 pupils' parents, were always at least c. 20% in grammar schools (ranging up to 41%), in no secondary school were there more than 10% of 'professional' mothers. Also, in general, grammar schools reported considerably higher levels in skilled non-manual, and much lower levels of skilled manual and unskilled categories of mothers than did secondary schools. In the semi-skilled group, however, there was wide variation in numbers within and between each sector.

The summary, according to school sector, of family SES levels of Year 8 and Year 12 pupils in the Area Study schools, is presented in the following Tables.

TABLE 7: YEAR 12 PUPILS' (1998-9): fathers' and mothers' economic status
(Registrar General's categories): mean %, by school sector

REG. GEN. CATEGORIES	SECONDARY		GRAMMAR	
	Fathers	Mothers	**Fathers**	Mothers
Econ. inactive		15		17
Mgr./Administrative	**10**	2	**24**	6
Professional	**13**	10	**23**	26
Skilled non-manual	**20**	18	**26**	31
Skilled manual	**38**	6	**16**	2
Semi-skilled	**4**	6	**13**	7
Unskilled	**9**	26	**2**	12
Unemployed	**12**	19	**2**	1

Source: Selection Project Questionnaire Data

TABLE 8: YEAR 8 PUPILS' (1998-9): fathers' and mothers' economic status (Registrar General's categories): mean %, by school sector

REG. GEN. CATEGORIES	SECONDARY		GRAMMAR	
	Fathers	Mothers	**Fathers**	Mothers
Econ. inactive	**2**	22		13
Mgr./Administrative	**9**	4	**20**	5
Professional	**7**	6	**25**	26
Skilled non-manual	**20**	14	**20**	28
Skilled manual	**41**	6	**22**	4
Semi-skilled	**7**	9	**5**	9
Unskilled	**7**	33	**3**	10
Unemployed	**9**	7	**3**	3

Source: Selection Project Questionnaire Data

Between the secondary and grammar school sectors in the area as a whole, the most striking differences existed between the fathers' categories of managerial/administrative, professional, unskilled and unemployed. For mothers, the largest differences were evidenced in the categories of economically inactive, professional, skilled non-manual, unskilled and unemployed. More than 70% of fathers of grammar school Year 12 pupils (and 60% of Year 8 fathers) were categorised as managerial, professional or skilled non-manual, compared to just 43% (Year 12) and 36% (Year 8) of secondary school fathers. The equivalent figures for mothers were 63% (Year 12) and 59% (Year 8) as against 30% (Year 12) and 24% (Year 8). In the secondary sector six times as many fathers of Year 12 pupils and three times as many fathers of Year 8 pupils were described as unemployed.

Within each sector there were very few differences between the SES status recorded for the parents of these Year 8 and Year 12 pupil cohorts. In the secondary sector, fewer fathers of Year 8 pupils were reported as unemployed, or unskilled, and more Year 8 mothers were unskilled or economically inactive. Otherwise, the percentages within the main categories (managerial/ professional, skilled, and semi-skilled/unskilled) exhibited few differences. This was generally also the case for grammar school parents, except that a much smaller percentage of Year 8 fathers were classed as semi-skilled.

1.4   School attendance data

Levels of attendance at school are provided annually in the School Performance Tables. Figures for the Area Study schools are provided in the Tables below.

TABLE 9: SECONDARY SCHOOLS: % attendance (1994/5 – 97/8)

	SS1	SS2	MS1	MS2	MI
1994-5	92	91	96	94	N/A
1995-6	90	90	96	95	N/A
1996-7	90	90	96	95	N/A
1997-8	90	90	96	95	N/A

Source: School Performance Tables, 1999

Note: In 1997-98 the Northern Ireland average attendance rate for secondary schools was 91%

In both mixed secondary schools, levels of attendance were well above average throughout the period. This was not the case for the single sex schools. In both of these, attendance was just below average, and had declined slightly since 1994-95.

TABLE 10: GRAMMAR SCHOOLS: % attendance rate (1994/5 – 97/8)

	SG1	SG2	MG1	MG2
1994-5	94	96	94	93
1995-6	95	96	94	93
1996-7	95	96	95	93
1997-8	95	96	95	93

Note: In 1997-98 the Northern Ireland average attendance rate for grammar schools was 95%

Only in school SG2 was attendance consistently above average. In schools SG1 and MG1 attendance varied around the average, but School MG2's attendance did not reach the average level in any of the years under study.

SECTION TWO

THE OPERATION OF THE AREA 'MARKET' SINCE 1991

2.1   <u>School catchment areas</u>

Since the introduction of open enrolment in 1991, most post-primary schools in Northern Ireland no longer have a defined catchment area. They may recruit pupils from wherever they wish. As noted above, the introduction of new home-to-school transport regulations has meant that unless a pupil has been refused a place at her nearest suitable school, free home-to-school transport will not be provided to travel further. Arguably, in practice, this is not a restriction on choice for parents who can afford to pay for such travel for their children, but it has limited the choice options for other parents, especially those who live in rural areas.

The freedom for post-primary schools to recruit more widely if they wish is a key factor in the operation of a 'market' for school places. Although the catchment areas reported seemed very wide, many of the school principals interviewed expressed reservations about 'poaching' pupils from areas not traditionally in their general catchment:

'I don't want to go to (neighbouring town) to bang doors and say send your children to me. I don't believe that. I think children should attend their local school, I think it is much more sensible so I don't go outside my own area'

However, given the need to maintain enrolment levels, it is unlikely that children from outside the 'main' catchment who apply to the school, will be turned away simply on the grounds of geography, and the evidence suggests that many parents are prepared for their children to travel very long distances to attend the school of choice. Most of the schools identified numbers of pupils who travelled 10 – 15 miles each way to come to school, and one school reported that pupils from one family made a daily round trip of almost sixty miles.

As indicated earlier in the report, there is a facility for some direct transfer of local pupils to one of the Area Study secondary schools. Children from the designated

feeder schools wishing to attend this school do not have to opt out of the Transfer procedure. Others, wishing to try for a grammar school place, must opt in.

The pressures on schools to maintain enrolments and thereby budgets was reported as a constant preoccupation, and the broadening of catchment areas might be considered an obvious avenue for addressing this. Therefore, an important aspect of the interviews was to establish current recruitment areas and the extent to which these might be different from the situation before open enrolment.

It was clear from the interviews that great importance was attached to the scrutiny of annual intake patterns by principals and members of school senior management teams. All of these interviewees were knowledgeable about the number of possible feeder schools, and the numbers of P7 pupils who might be expected to seek entry:

'We would find our traditional intakes would be fairly constant. We would pick up very quickly if a school suddenly didn't send someone to us. School X, for example, might be one of the first schools I look for in the Transfer forms, because from there, there is a direct bus route to (neighbouring town), so I would be interested to see who I was getting from there.'

The study schools all reported an increase in the numbers of primary schools from which they drew pupils. Broadly these primary schools fell into two groups, a smaller number (perhaps 3 to 6) of more local schools from which the bulk of their children transferred, and a generally increasing number (up to 25, for some schools) of smaller, more distant schools from which each year they might attract a few pupils. One principal stated that:

'To be honest, it is the 1s and 2s from here and there who make up the difference between a reasonable intake and a very healthy intake. It is a wide catchment. Parents at the present time are prepared to send their children a lot further than previously to get to the school they want them to go to.'

With the exception of schools MI and MS1, generally the secondary schools reported smaller numbers of feeder schools than the grammar schools did. In the secondary schools, although most pupils were bussed and a few pupils travelled considerable distances, the average number of feeder schools was between 10 and 15, with the bulk of enrolment coming from 3 or 4. For the grammar schools and for schools MS1 and

MI, the average figures were much larger – between 20 and 33, in total, with most pupils transferring from 5 or 6 main feeders. It may be inferred that this between-sector difference is partly the consequence of the differing SES composition of families in each sector.

It seems to be the case, although there is no firm evidence from the data available, that school catchments for day pupils increased considerably for almost all schools in the immediate aftermath of open enrolment. This may perhaps be confirmed by the greatly increased levels of ELB spending on free home-to-school transport at that time. Thus, by the mid-1990s schools were recruiting pupils from a wider area and from a greater number of primary schools. However, the changes in the home-to-school transport regulations had limited this expansion, had affected enrolment and had, in general, shifted the boundaries of catchment areas. These are now not as wide as in the mid-1990s, but are still wider than before open enrolment.

2.2 'Image' and 'niche' in the local 'market'

It is evident from our study that schools consider that a key element of attracting and maintaining a stable enrolment is the development of a positive image and reputation in the local community, and the provision of an attractive curriculum and extra-curricular activities. These elements were often described as the school's ethos. If these can be made distinctive, this will provide some 'market advantage' for the school.

No principal, at interview, had any difficulty in articulating what they believed to be special about their school, and how it was developing its image in the community and among prospective parents. This applied to both secondary and grammar schools.

2.2.1 Secondary schools' and a market 'niche'

The importance of reputation was emphasised by several secondary principals. In these schools, work to develop the school's reputation was generally less based on the likelihood of high academic outcomes, than on issues to do with school expectations, climate and ethos. One mixed secondary school viewed itself as being very 'caring', and

this image was confirmed by a number of Year 8 pupils who said that they had chosen the school because at the Open Night, and by local reputation:

'the teachers were more friendly'

and,

'I remember how kind the teachers were (in the school) and how friendly they were.

Another secondary principal explained its ethos:

'It is a different school. It has a different ethos about it, it's co-educational, it's an attractive school, it's a successful school, It's a school with certain values and ethos, behaviour-wise and uniform-wise. This school has been a fore-runner in this area ..... We have forced the issue.'

As expected, the ethos of the new integrated school was based on:

'tolerance. You are aspiring to help people enjoy their own beliefs and customs and traditions .... but at the same time accept that other people have a right to believe something different. .... You are not trying to make everybody into some kind of grey sameness.'

This school's other area of distinctiveness lay in the wider ability range of its pupils. Data presented earlier in the report show that a proportion of pupils in the school had obtained higher Transfer grades, and might have gone to a grammar school. The principal said:

'You have to persuade parents that an all ability context is good and is viable and can work'.

The principal of a single-sex school described pupil performance and behavioural initiatives which were considered to have improved the general reputation of the school in the community, and importantly, among primary principals, who played a key role in providing advice about the choice of a suitable school of parents of P7 children.

One mixed secondary school, however, did base its reputation partly on academic success:

'(Also) we have been seen to be successful with our results and this is now feeding back down into the system. This school is a good school and there are people who will take us as first choice, whereas a few years ago we were second choice'.

The very varied components of ethos, and of reasons for parental preference were acknowledged:

'why do people come here? It's the closest one. It's not something else. The family had a history at another school, so if we go to (this school), we have got a clean slate. It's got a nice uniform. Lots and lots of reasons. They didn't get into the grammar school'.

One principal spoke of the fragility, under open enrolment, of even a formerly good reputation:

'Earlier, …… our school was very highly perceived. The attitude throughout the whole area would have been …. don't worry if your (child) doesn't get a grammar school place because s/he has always got (this) secondary school to go to … and s/he will receive a fine education there. …… Now, through possibly the creaming off of potential (by the grammar schools), ….. we have a much higher percentage of pupils with learning difficulties …. and our overall standard of performance has fallen.'

Others also acknowledged the difficulty of erasing a formerly negative image. The principal of a single-sex school described the difficulty:

'The image of the school at that point was honestly not that good. People would have described it as a kind of rough place. …. I think there is a perceived image, some of which was founded. We tried to work very hard but we're only beginning to put that image down, because an image sticks, as you know. …. It's just people's perceptions.'

In addition to the issues of reputation and image, several schools reported having developed new curriculum areas and other specialisms. Two single-sex schools had developed joint arrangements for Sixth Form provision, and one of these schools had attracted about 40 extra pupils into Sixth Form by providing a highly regarded vocational course which brought in pupils from the whole area, including from all the local grammar schools. School MS2 had re-introduced a Sixth Form for pupils wishing to take Advanced GNVQ which had been very successful in keeping pupils in school post-GCSE.

Two schools had also worked explicitly to develop a good local reputation for welcoming pupils with special needs, both learning and physical, and one school had agreed to be the venue for a Special Education Unit. Although not fully integrated with the 'main' school, this had been valuable more generally:

'The unit has built up quite a reputation and the parents are aware of it and we have (siblings) of those who have been through the unit coming to the school.'

2.2.2 Grammar schools and a market 'niche'

The principals of grammar schools, too, spoke candidly about issues to do with their schools' special emphases. Largely these were to do with traditional expectations of academic attainment, but there were a number of varying emphases within these. This approach was summed up by the principal who said that:

'Our two main goals are, number one academic to help the child achieve its potential, and number two to make it happy at school by providing a good broad range of activities.'

A second principal described the 'particular selling points' of the school:

'The school has a status. I think it represents in the eyes of most parents, a fairly traditional, structured environment with probably traditional attitudes and values and yet this concept of high expectations and standards. I would imagine that the values have been tweaked over the decades, but many people who come back would see that it has changed, but there is a substance that is ongoing, the style is ongoing.'

Another principal provided a different emphasis:

'I would like to produce people who would get on with things without trying to make an exception of themselves. Who would cope with various crises .... without fuss, either swallow it and get on with it, or cope in some other way. Some schools mollycoddle their children a bit ...... I believe we are a friendly, caring school .... where they have to develop the resourcefulness to get on with whatever tasks they need to perform. ..... We see ourselves fulfilling our vocation as teachers in being at the service of the pupils, but that service would not run to dancing attendance on them and finding them stuff they should be finding for themselves, because that wouldn't be a service to them'.

One principal was also aware of the danger of 'over-selling' a high academic reputation:

'The other perception that may be out there is that (this school) put them under a lot of pressure and parents don't want that. Even though the child may be capable of doing the work, there is a perception that in order to achieve so highly you must be put under pressure ..... So that may have an impact on numbers.'

The emphasis on extra-curricular activities was common across these schools, however it was approached rather differently. One school claimed a 'culture of most people being around … until after five most days'. Another employed specialist coaches for after-school activities since 'every day there is something on after school ….. and it would not be practical to expect teachers after a hard day's work to go and provide a service after school'. This broad range of activities was valued by pupils. Some claimed that they had chosen particular schools because of these areas of provision. One Year 8 pupil at a school with a strong sporting emphasis had preferred it over a competitor which only offered 'music and education'!

Unlike the secondary schools, the grammar schools seemed to see less need to examine what was already on offer through the curriculum. They believed that parents were generally satisfied with current provision. Any of their older pupils wishing to take vocational qualifications could transfer post-16 to the local FE college, but generally the numbers of these pupils was very small. Only in one grammar school which admitted a larger proportion of pupils with lower Transfer grades did one senior teacher indicate that the school was considering some curriculum expansion to cater for more 'non-academic' pupils. However, nothing had yet been done.

However, like the secondary schools, the grammar school principals were concerned with reputation and image, and acknowledged the difficulty of managing these:

'So much of this; people's attitudes to schools, people's reactions, children's reactions, so much of this is built on myth, reality as perceived, or hearsay, even though we and the ELB produce a vast amount of documentation to explain it. So much is on what the neighbours say, what the primary principal says, what my friends are doing. It's really quite fascinating.'

2.3   Schools and marketing

Given the importance of reputation, image and 'niche' in maintaining enrolment, the research interview schedules in the Area Study schools asked for information about

the strategies used by schools to maintain and encourage pupil numbers. Broadly, across both sectors, these strategies fell into two main groups: the development of closer links with a wider range of feeder primary schools, and other activities which might be described as varying forms of public relations, with primary schools, parents, parents of prospective pupils, and the local community. Only in one grammar school did the principal explicitly refuse to expand the number of feeder schools:

'on policy, (we don't look for extra schools). We have always been oversubscribed, as a grammar school. Every grammar school is over-subscribed. There is nothing we, or parents can do. Parents would be very anxious to get their children into this school, but if the child doesn't get the grade, we can't do anything and they can't do anything …. even if there is a strong family connection with the school. I feel sorry for them'.

2.3.1   Links with feeder primary schools

All the schools in the Area Study reported close links with a wide range of feeder, or potential feeder primary schools. Most schools also had a designated teacher, often the Head of Year 8, who had formal responsibility to foster these links and to liaise with primary principals and teachers about Transfer arrangements. Principals and designated teachers seemed to have generally distinct roles in this liaison. Most principals reported that they tried to visit as many feeder primary schools as possible each year, generally in the autumn term, before pupils in P7 sat the Transfer tests. This was usually a visit to the school principal and may be viewed perhaps as a form of public relations activity. The importance ascribed to such visits was illustrated by a grammar school Head of Year 8:

'The principal would tend to go round so many schools every year so as to make sure of contact with all of them, and if there was a school that hadn't sent a pupil for a few years, s/he would probably go out and see the principal then.'

Designated teachers had a more 'functional' role, which operated once Transfer grades were known and school choice had been made. Most visited the schools which would be sending them pupils, to begin to prepare these children, and sometimes their parents, for transfer and induction. One such teacher said:

'When I go out, my liaison is less with the (primary) principal and more with the pupils, really. I am sure that the conversation between the principals is different to the conversation I have.'

Most post-primary schools organised visits to the school in the summer term for incoming Year 8 pupils, and many of the secondary schools then tested these pupils as a basis for streaming or banding them on entry to the schools in September.

It was evident that the Area Study schools, especially those in the secondary sector, deployed considerable resources in establishing and maintaining such links. There was a high cost to the schools in terms of staff time. Principals and teachers thought these links to be valuable, both strategically and for individual pupils, but there may be a question about the opportunity costs of such activities, especially for schools where the numbers of 'extra' pupils recruited may be quite small and where declining rolls have meant high levels of teacher redundancy.

2.3.2   Public Relations activities

Almost all the schools in the Area Study used such marketing activities. Comments from grammar school principals illustrated the use of local media:

'I like to advertise by use of the local papers everything of interest that happens in the school ......   regularly we would have a lot of success'

'Yes, we photographed the top achievers in the paper, and when I was asked to do an interview for the media, I would do it selectively, but I would do it.'

Other frequently-spoken of activities included making premises available to primary schools for some curricular and extra-curricular activities, the invitation of primary principals and pupils to school dramatic or musical productions, and wide advertisement of Open Nights to primary schools and in the local media in order to generate as wide an attendance as possible.

One secondary school had introduced a bursary scheme following the changes in the transport regulations:

'The transport change was potentially a very serious blow to this school, so we introduced a bursary scheme, from school funds, where we offer half of the transport costs for remaining children in the family to come to this school, to finish off the education of those children. That is about 20 children or their parents prepared to pay to come here, and it will finish eventually.'

A much wider view of marketing was expressed by a secondary school principal:

'Yes, outright PR. Plus image enhancing methods, not just for the primary schools but for the image of the whole school and for our own teachers and our own kids who are in the school already and that certainly has had an impact. We try to turn the ethos of the school into a positive discipline system, create a more friendlier atmosphere. We worked on problems like bullying, youth sport, including coaching of primary children. We haven't deliberately gone into areas of primary schools which traditionally aren't ours because I don't think that's very professional to be honest. So, really you have the deliberate actions of the PR and then you also have the image enhancement which if anything is more beneficial.'

A grammar school principal used the language of business in describing the purposes of the school's Open Night:

'I don't do the hard sell …. I tell people what we do, not what we think we're doing, because I think that's safer. ….. If I do this push – aren't we wonderful—there are risks with that and I'm not into playing that game. I am simply providing information, this is us, this is the school, these are our pupils, come and meet them and judge for yourself. …… And that is terribly important. ….. They have got to see, in very crude terms, they have got to look at the product and make up their own minds whether this will do.'

The principal of school MS1, on the other hand, refused to engage in any form of PR, even though many of the teachers felt that this should happen. The principal explained the school's practice:

'We don't advertise anything. We don't advertise our open night, except sending information to local primary schools. Literally just in the ELB booklet, and we send copies of letters to all the local primary schools for that letter to go to their parents We don't have that sort of marketing ethos in the school at all. We market by having as good as school as we can.'

2.4 Pupils and school choice

Both Year 12 and Year 8 pupils were asked what, in particular, had attracted them to the school they attended, and who had made the final choice of school for them.

2.4.1 Reasons for choosing their school

Although many pupils interviewed indicated that they had attended the Open Nights of several schools, both secondary and grammar, clearly those who had opted out of the Transfer procedure and those who obtained lower Transfer grades had a constrained choice of school. Many of those interviewed in secondary schools were not in their school of 'absolute' first choice; with a higher Transfer grade they would have been at a grammar school. Further, figures presented later in this report show clearly that very few pupils with an A or B grade at Transfer had chosen to attend a secondary school. Pupils' comments must be read in this context.

To some extent, the expressed reasons for school choice varied between pupils in the secondary and grammar sectors. Proximity was mentioned much more frequently by secondary pupils and pupils from MG2. These pupils also seemed much more likely to have chosen the school because of existing family connections:

'I had family'

' My mum and all her sisters. All my family came here. And one of my younger sisters.'

'I used to have an older sister here'.

'I had a brother at the school. He said it was good'.

'My mum came here, and my granny and all my cousins'.

'My brother and sister, cousins all went here'.

'Yeah, my whole family went here'.

Several pupils at both types of school mentioned factors which they had found attractive:

'I heard a lot about it and to have a good education. (GS)'

'I saw how kind the teachers were and how friendly they were. (SS)'

'Everything looked really new, it was very big and new so I decided to come here. It's just exciting. (GS)'

'There were a lot of computers ……. The science rooms (SS)

'Just the way the teachers teach. (GS)'

'I came for the sports (GS)'

Many pupils also referred to the importance of where their friends had chosen to go as a factor in school choice, 'Everyone at primary school was coming here'. Others, in both sectors, had chosen the school because they could get into it:

'I came here as my second choice, the grammar at home didn't take me, so I came here. (GS)'

'It was a good school, I wanted to go there, but I couldn't get in with a C. They only accepted As and Bs. (GS)'

'I would have liked to have went to School X, because all my friends …. went there. And I feel desperate. (SS)'

Several secondary pupils also mentioned a 'push' factor: they had disliked something about a possible alternative school:

'I put down the grammar school as my first choice and this school was my second choice. I didn't like the grammar school so I came here'.

'I visited (another school) but I didn't really like it. I didn't think it was me. … It was sort of really dark and morbid.'

'I didn't want to go to the (grammar school) because it would have been too much pressure there for me.'

'Because my brother went to the grammar, he didn't like it and he just came home at night and worked at night and never went out.'

'I went up to (the other school) but the teachers were too posh ……. They never talked to you, the teachers walked right past you.'

'You get seven homeworks a night at (the grammar school) ….. everyone who I've met get shouted at all the time in (the grammar school).'

2.4.2 Who made the choice?

It was evident from the interview data that pupils had been heavily involved in the choice of post-primary school. A few pupils indicated that the choice had been theirs alone.

In both sectors, considerable numbers indicated that following discussion, the final choice had been theirs:

'My mum and dad had a say in it, but they left it up to me. (SS)'.

'It was discussed, but at the end of the day I was told it was my choice. (SS)'

Otherwise, several pupils described the process of choice as a family decision:

'No (nobody told me to come to this school). My mum said these are the schools we like and these are the schools we'd like you to choose which one. (GS)'

'We had a family discussion. (SS)'

The data presented above come from a limited group of pupils in an opportunity sample, but their views appear to underscore both the importance given by schools to issues of reputation and image and the extent to which perception plays a role in school choice. The evidence of the heavy involvement of children in choice-making also suggests that schools, in presenting themselves, should give emphasis to pupils' views, as well as to those of parents.

SECTION THREE

THE IMPACT OF COMPETITION ON THE AREA STUDY SCHOOLS

This section explores the effects of the operation of a 'market' on the schools in the area under study. A key focus will be the impact on the numbers and type of pupils transferring to individual schools and to the two main sectors. Also examined are some aspects of pupil attainment, according to school and sector. Interview data relating to individual perceptions of these effects on pupils and schools will also be presented.

3.1 <u>Transfer to post-primary schools in the Area Study</u>

The parents of children in the final year of primary school may choose whether to enter them into the Selection procedure or not. Substantial numbers of them choose not to do so, and such children will not then be able to apply for entrance for a grammar school, except in special circumstances. Since this choice is available, it is probably reasonable to infer that children entered for the test aspire to a grammar school place. However, since secondary schools may not select pupils on the basis of academic achievement in Key Stage or Transfer tests, there are no published data in ELB Transfer booklets to show what proportions of the children attending these schools took the test, or opted out.

The study, through the student questionnaires, asked pupils in both secondary and grammar schools whether they had taken the Transfer test. Analysis of these responses allows some judgement to be made about pupils' aspirations for post-primary school placement.

Data from the Year 12 pupils, whose Selection experiences occurred in 1993-94 and who entered post-primary education in 1994-5 are used in the following Table to show the proportions of those opting in and out of the Transfer procedure.

TABLE 11: AREA STUDY SCHOOLS: Year 12 pupils' (1998-99) entry to Selection procedure (1994-95)

SCHOOL	% TOOK TEST	% OPTED OUT
SS1	**62**	**38**
SS2	**62**	**38**
MS1	**64**	**36**
MS2	**58**	**42**
MI	**N/A**	**N/A**
SG1	97	3
SG2	99	1
MG1	N/A	N/A
MG2	100	0

Source: Selection Project Questionnaire Data
NOTE: Figures in bold refer to secondary schools

TABLE 12: AREA STUDY SCHOOLS: Year 8 pupils' (1998-99) entry to Selection procedure

SCHOOL	% TOOK TEST	% OPTED OUT
SS1	**37**	**63**
SS2	**60**	**40**
MS1	**59**	**41**
MS2	**56**	**44**
MI	**59**	**41**
SG1	98	2
SG2	100	0
MG1	99	1
MG2	100	0

Source: Selection Project Questionnaire Data
NOTE: Figures in bold refer to secondary schools

As expected, almost all Year 12 and Year 8 pupils in grammar schools had taken the Transfer test in P7. Considerably fewer secondary school pupils had done so in both years for which data are available. Of the 1998-99 Year 8 cohort, larger proportions of pupils had opted out, compared to the 1994-95 Year 8 cohort. This difference was especially marked at school SS1. Even so, the figures suggest that in 1998-99, over half of the secondary pupils in Year 8 may have hoped to obtain a grammar school place.

Without data for the Year 8 pupil cohorts between 1994-95 and 1998-99, it is not possible to determine whether this change is part of a trend towards an overall reduced level of aspiration to obtain a grammar school place.

As reported in Section One, above, entry into the Transfer procedure and the grade awarded were associated with pupils' social class background. Analysis by social class has also been undertaken of the eventual placement, in the Area Study schools, of pupils who had entered the Transfer procedure and who had not gained A or B grades.

TABLE 13: AREA STUDY SCHOOLS: placement of C and D-graded pupils in secondary and grammar schools by fathers' social class background (RG's categories): % of pupils

	NON-MANUAL		MANUAL	
	Year 12 (Entered secondary education in 1994-95)	Year 8 (Entered secondary education in 1998-99)	Year 12 (Entered secondary education in 1994-95)	Year 8 (Entered secondary education in 1998-99)
PLACED IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS	74	75	86	96
PLACED IN GRAMMAR SCHOOLS	26	25	14	4

Source: Selection Project Questionnaire Data

For these C and D-graded pupils, school placement by sector was associated with fathers' social class status. Many more children of non-manual fathers had obtained grammar school places, compared with children of manual fathers (six times as many in the Year 8 group). While the percentages of pupils from non-manual backgrounds placed in each sector were similar for both pupil cohorts, for those from manual backgrounds a much smaller proportion of the Year 8 group had obtained grammar school places than those in Year 12.

(The GCSE attainments of these Year 12 pupils, graded C and D in the Transfer test, are analysed later in this report)

3.2 Entry profiles of Area Study secondary schools

Education and Library Boards' annual Transfer booklets provide information to parents about the levels of attainment in the Transfer test of pupils admitted to grammar schools. Such data are not provided for secondary schools, so it is not normally possible to analyse the entry profiles of these schools. However, the Area Study questionnaire data permit an analysis of the grades obtained by the secondary school pupils who took the test. The

figures presented show the grades obtained by opted-in Year 8 pupils in the secondary schools. These tables, in combination with the one immediately above, show the secondary schools' entry profiles in 1993-94 and in 1998-99.

TABLE 14: SECONDARY SCHOOLS: Transfer test attainment of pupils entering the school in 1994-95

SCHOOL	%GradeA	%GradeB	%GradeC	%GradeD
SS1			26	74
SS2			44	56
MS1	4	4	25	66
MS2		3	18	80

NOTE: School MI did not exist in 1994-95
Source: Selection Project Questionnaire Data

Of those who had taken the Transfer test, at least 20% in each secondary school had obtained at least a Grade C, and that proportion was much larger in school SS2.

TABLE 15: SECONDARY SCHOOLS: Transfer profile of pupils entering the school in 1998-99

SCHOOL	%GradeA	%GradeB	%GradeB2	%GradeC	%GradeC2	%GradeD
SS1			4	4	4	87
SS2			3	19	14	64
MS1	2		3	10	10	75
MS2				3	29	68
MI	9	5	2	7	19	58

Source: Selection Project Questionnaire Data

Except in school MS2, the proportions of Year 8 pupils obtaining a C grade or better had decreased considerably compared with the Year 12 students. This change was particularly evident in school SS1, in which only 12% of opted-in pupils had obtained better than a Grade D. This school also had the highest proportion of children who had opted out of the selection procedure (63%) that year. Conversely, 16% of opted-in Year 8 pupils in school MI had obtained transfer grades which would probably have enabled them to obtain grammar school places and, in total, over 40% had obtained better than Grade D. It may therefore be reasonably inferred that the placement in the school of these A and B-graded children was an expression of the deliberate preference by their parents not to take a grammar school place.

Overall, however, these data clearly confirm the view expressed at interview by all the secondary principals that a major consequence for secondary schools, of the introduction of open enrolment had been the 'creaming off' by local grammar schools of increasing proportions of the B and 'better' C grade pupils transferring from primary schools. The principal of school SS1 expressed this view forcefully:

'Absolutely, absolutely, no doubt about that at all. Our top stream has been top sliced'.

3.3 <u>Entry profiles of Area Study grammar schools</u>

Data on grammar schools' Year 8 entry profiles, according to Transfer grade, are available from the Transfer Booklets published annually by the Education and Library Boards. Figures for the Area Study grammar schools have been analysed both to establish any changes in profile over the most recent three-year period for each school, and to compare the relative profiles of each school.

School SG2

Overall, the entry profile of this school since 1996 has shown a steady, large rise in the number of 'A' grade pupils, from just under 70% to just over 80%. Concurrently, the numbers of pupils admitted with a grade C1 or lower has dropped from 8% to 1%.

School SG1

Overall, there has been a slight increase of the percentage of 'A' grade pupils admitted, from 45% to 51%, between 1996 and 1998, but a very slight drop between 1997 and 1998. However there has also been a very slight increase in the percentage of pupils admitted with a C1 grade or lower, from 23% to 26%.
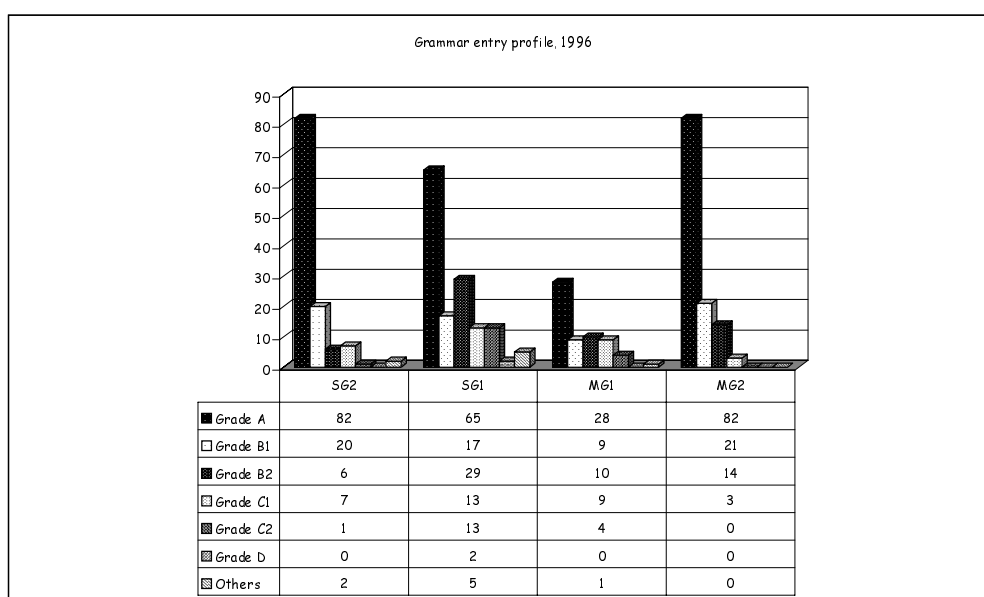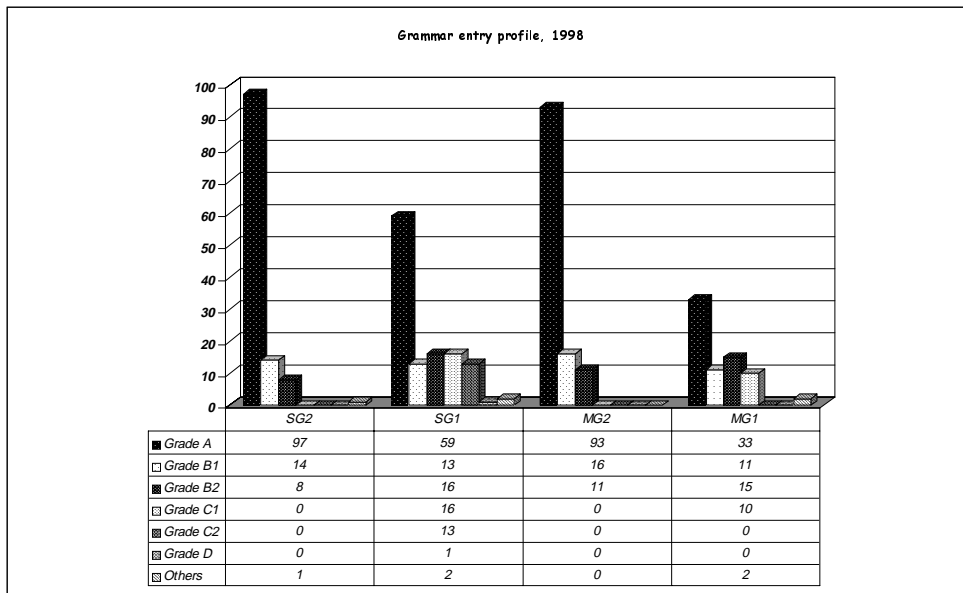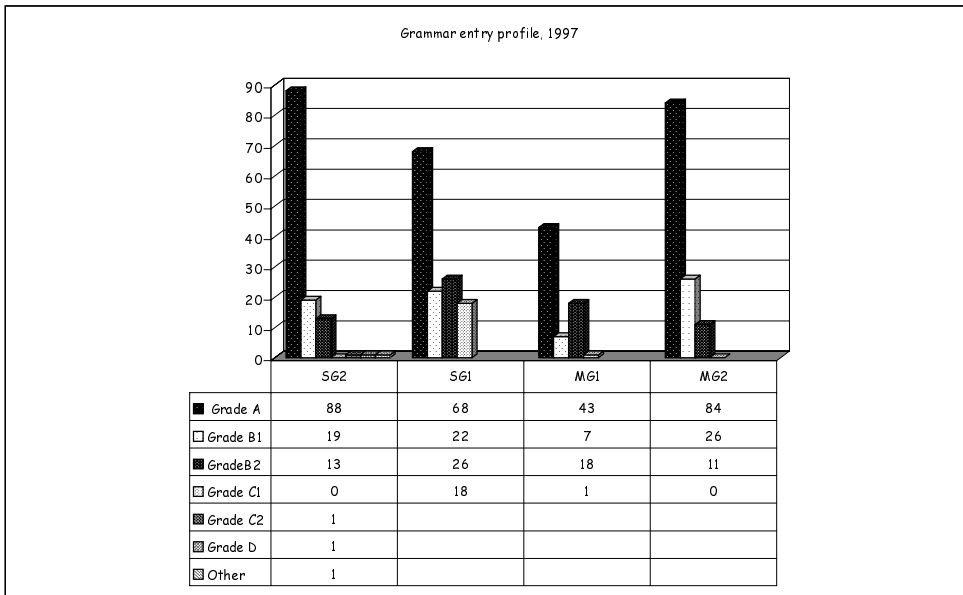
School MG1

'A' grade admissions rose sharply between 1996 and 1997 from under 50% to over 60%. At the same time the percentage of C1 or lower admissions dropped from 23% to 2%.

School MG2

Overall the entry profile since 1996 has show a large rise in the number of 'A' grade pupils admitted from just under 70% to 78%. The school has admitted no grade C1 or lower pupils since 1996.

Between-school comparisons of the grammar schools' entry profile data show two groups of school: SG2 and MG2 admitted only A and B grade pupils in 1998. SG1 and MG1 reveal a wider ranging picture of admissions: although the pattern is not totally consistent over time, each of these schools has admitted, on at least one occasion since 1996, a fairly large proportion of pupils who have not gained either an A or B Transfer grade. Historically, such pupils would only have been admitted as fee-payers. These data are illustrated by the graphs below.

Grammar entry profile, 1996

	SG2	SG1	MG1	MG2
Grade A	82	65	28	82
Grade B1	20	17	9	21
Grade B2	6	29	10	14
Grade C1	7	13	9	3
Grade C2	1	13	4	0
Grade D	0	2	0	0
Others	2	5	1	0

Grammar entry profile, 1997

	SG2	SG1	MG1	MG2
Grade A	88	68	43	84
Grade B1	19	22	7	26
GradeB2	13	26	18	11
Grade C1	0	18	1	0
Grade C2	1			
Grade D	1			
Other	1			

Grammar entry profile, 1998

	SG2	SG1	MG2	MG1
Grade A	97	59	93	33
Grade B1	14	13	16	11
Grade B2	8	16	11	15
Grade C1	0	16	0	10
Grade C2	0	13	0	0
Grade D	0	1	0	0
Others	1	2	0	2

3.4 <u>The effects of the market in combination with academic selection</u>

3.4.1 Social segregation

Data presented earlier in this report have indicated the association of social class, as evident by fathers' occupations, with the level of entry into the Transfer procedure, and with the Transfer grades attained by those who entered the procedure. Evidence has also been provided to suggest that a larger proportion of C and D-graded children of fathers, whose occupations were classified as non-manual, obtained places in a grammar school, than similar children whose fathers' occupations were classified as manual. These associations were reported above, in Tables which provided data on fathers' and mothers' occupations on a school-by-school basis.

The cumulative effect of these associations at a sectoral level is reported in the following Table.

TABLE 16: AREA STUDY SCHOOLS: Year 12 and Year 8 pupils' fathers' SES by school sector: % of pupils

SCHOOL TYPE	NON-MANUAL		MANUAL	
	YEAR 12 (Entered secondary school in 1994-95)	YEAR 8 (Entered secondary school in 1998-99)	YEAR 12 (Entered secondary school in 1994-95)	YEAR 8 (Entered secondary school in 1998-99)
SECONDARY	*41*	37	*59*	63
GRAMMAR	*72*	68	*28*	32

Source: Selection Project questionnaire data

For both cohorts of pupils, placement in a secondary or grammar school was associated with fathers' SES. Approximately two thirds of pupils in secondary schools came from families classified as manual. In grammar schools, while the proportion of pupils from non-manual households was slightly lower for the Year 8 cohort compared with the Year 12 cohort, nevertheless these pupils accounted for more than two thirds of all pupils in these schools.

3.4.2 The effects on schools' enrolments

Enrolment change by sector and management type

Analysis of the aggregated enrolment levels of the secondary and grammar sectors in the area under study have shown little change in either in the percentages of pupils in each sector, or in the absolute numbers.

TABLE 17: AREA STUDY: total enrolments by school sector: (1991–8)

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
GMI								250+
GRAMMAR	2729	2751	2791	2810	2778	2834	2856	2842
SECONDARY	2001	1962	1984	1982	1932	1796	1791	1813
TOTAL	**4731**	**4713**	**4775**	**4792**	**4710**	**4716**	**4816**	**4909**

Source: DENI (Approximate data only are presented for the Integrated school in order to preserve anonymity)

Overall, there has been a slight increase in total enrolments (by about 4%) in the area since 1991. Total grammar school enrolments have very slightly increased (4%) by 1998-99, while those of the 'traditional' secondary sector have decreased more (10%). However, if the enrolment of school MI is included in the overall secondary sector, the change is slight (4%).

Levels of enrolment according to school management type have also been generally stable, except that the integrated school has taken about 85 pupils each year 'out' of the main groups.

TABLE 18: AREA STUDY: total enrolments by management type (1991-8)

|	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
CATHOLIC	1587	1580	1582	1590	1580	1547	1580	1577
NON-CATHOLIC	3144	3133	3193	3202	3130	3083	3067	3078
INTEGRATED								250+
TOTAL	**4731**	**4713**	**4775**	**4792**	**4710**	**4716**	**4816**	**4909**

Source: DENI

Overall, enrolment in the Catholic sector has remained stable since 1991. There has been a slight increase in the number of pupils attending non-Catholic schools, and the new GMI school has filled its admissions number each year since it opened.

Enrolment change within area study schools: numbers on roll

Analysis of the year-on-year numbers of pupils on roll in the area study schools since the introduction of open enrolment has demonstrated an almost universal trend of change: enrolments in the grammar schools have remained either stable or have increased, but with the exception of school MS1, the trend in the older secondary schools has been the reverse. Three of these schools have lost considerable numbers of pupils since 1991. The enrolment trend in school MS1 mirrors that of the grammar schools. The GMI school has admitted to capacity each year since its foundation. Details of these changes are presented in the graph below:

AREA STUDY SCHOOLS:enrolment numbers and numbers on roll, 1992-1998
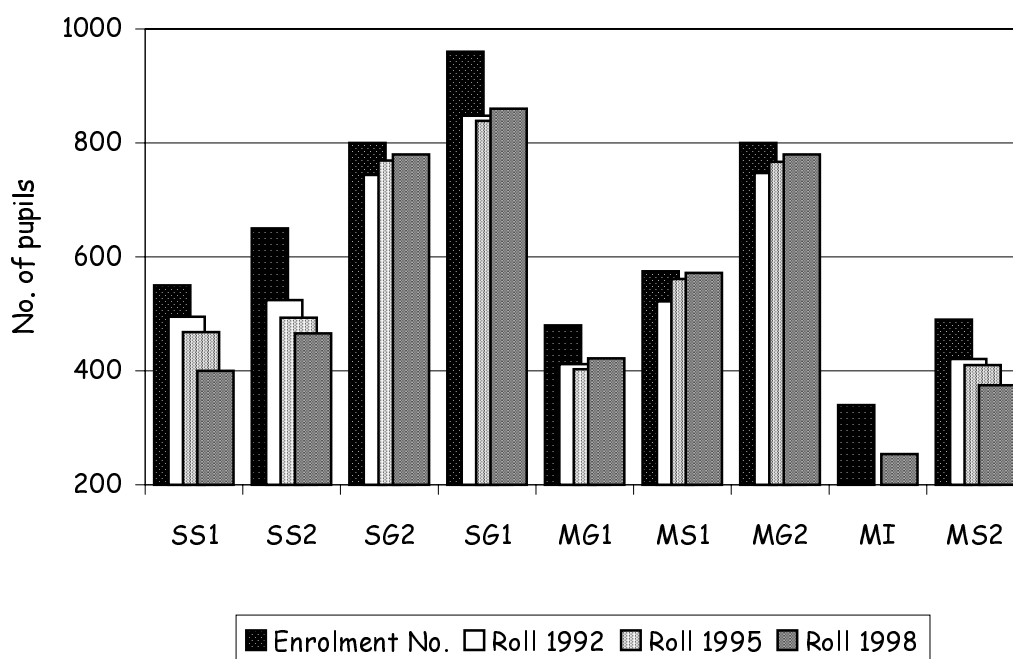
Enrolment change within area study schools: school capacity

However, in exploring the extent to which the area study schools have been at capacity, a slightly different picture has emerged. Three of the four secondary schools are well under maximum capacity, even those which were nearly full in 1991 (SS1, at 72% of capacity, SS2, at 72%, and MS2, 76%). Again school MS1 differs completely from its

secondary competitors: the number of pupils on roll in 1998 was only three pupils short of its enrolment number.

In the grammar school sector, two schools have grown to very near maximum capacity (SG2, 98% of capacity, MG2, 98%). These are the schools whose intake in 1998 was almost entirely comprised of pupils who attained an 'A' grade in the Transfer test. However, two others have remained well below capacity (SG1, 90% of capacity, and MG1, 88% of capacity). In both of these schools, the level of 'A' grade pupils has remained a good deal lower (c. 50% in SG1).

3.5 The extent and nature of competition in the study area

Contextual data from public sources, and data from area study interviews suggest that the market in the study area may be described 'vertically', between Catholic, non-Catholic and Integrated sectors, and 'horizontally' between grammar, integrated and secondary schools.

3.5.1 The 'vertical' market

 Enrolment levels in the Catholic sector are low relative to non-Catholic. This reflects the balance of the wider population. While a small number of Year 8 pupils at interview in non-Catholic schools indicated that they had considered attendance at a Catholic grammar school no school in the area, except for school MG1 and the integrated school, admits more than 10% of pupils from the 'other' tradition. A principal explained that there was 'no need' for much cross-sectoral transfer, since each sector in the area had capacity to admit those who wished to attend. Further, the religious balance of pupils at the integrated school was uneven. Its principal and several others interviewed suggested that it was chosen by some families partly because it was their 'local' school, as well as for its integrated ethos.

It seems that, on the whole, the 'vertical' markets are relatively self-contained. Each sector has generally maintained its level of enrolment since the introduction of open enrolment. The integrated school has drawn pupils from both sectors, though not equally

from both: the principal of school MS1 reported that that school's first preference applications had dropped by around 30 each year since the opening of the integrated school. Otherwise, traditional patterns of choice continue to operate.

3.5.2   The 'horizontal' market

There has been much more change in the patterns of choice between secondary and grammar schools. Three of the five secondary schools in the area, Catholic and non-Catholic, have suffered substantial decline in enrolment since 1991, and were, as indicated above, considerably below capacity.

Concurrently, in spite to the closure of boarding departments (around 300 places in one case) at all four schools, two of the four grammar schools have grown and are almost at capacity. A third has grown very slightly but remains slightly under capacity. The fourth, (SG1), though under-capacity, has remained stable in numbers, but seems to have achieved this by admitting, in 2 years out of the 3 for which data was available, more than 20% of pupils who did not achieve an A or B grade in the Transfer test. This practice was viewed very unfavourably by principals of area secondary schools. They felt that pupils, who would previously have attended their schools and would have been viewed as the 'A' stream, were now struggling in an environment 'unsuitable' to their capabilities. These principals also reported that such pupils, if they did not manage to keep up in grammar school, were likely to be 'counselled out' subsequently, at cost to themselves, their families and to the school which then admitted them.

However, the new integrated school has admitted to capacity each year since its foundation and one secondary school, MS1, has exhibited a pattern of development similar to some grammar schools. Although under capacity in 1991, it has since been routinely over-subscribed, has grown steadily since then and is now almost full. On a number of indicators, the pupils at the school exhibited different characteristics from those of pupils in the other 'traditional' secondary schools: for the Year 12 cohort, the school had

- The lowest proportion of children entitled to Free School Meals

- The highest proportion of children from non-manual backgrounds

- The highest proportion of children who entered the Transfer

- The highest proportion of children who achieved A or B grades in the Transfer

- The highest proportion of pupils entered for more than 8 GCSEs

- The highest proportion of pupils gaining more than 5, and more than 7, GCSEs at Grades A*-C

- The highest number of mean GCSE points attained.

There were also some differences, compared to other 'traditional' secondary schools, for the Year 8 pupil cohort in school MS1. The school had:

- The lowest proportion of children entitled to Free School Meals

- The highest proportion of children from non-manual backgrounds

- The highest proportion of children who achieved A or B grades in the Transfer

The explanation for these differences are not clear. It may lie in a number of factors: MS1 is a mixed school, is located in the suburbs and serves a wide hinterland as well as admitting children from the local town; it attracts pupils from a greater number of primary schools than any other local secondary school. The teaching staff believe that, in the local area, the school has an excellent reputation, based on high academic and behavioural standards, and on an ethos of working to develop the potential of all pupils, including those with special educational needs.

In the competition between grammar and secondary schools in the area, it is clear that the balance of advantage lies with the grammar schools. Secondary school staff report a parental perception that 'grammar school is a more socially acceptable option' and a senior secondary school teacher commented that 'there is no competition: they take who they want and we get the rest'. In both Catholic and non-Catholic sectors, most secondary schools have lost pupils since 1991, and in this process, have had their ability range skewed towards pupils with higher levels of special learning needs. School SG1 exemplifies this grammar sector advantage: although 10% under capacity, it has maintained its enrolment by admitting fairly large proportions of pupils without an A or B grade at Transfer.

Even with this sectoral advantage, grammar schools mentioned the difficulties caused for them by the variability of demand for places year on-year. For single-sex schools this was partly due to the year-on-year balance of boys and girls coming through from Primary 7, and to the varying numbers of each achieving high grades in the Transfer test.

Also important, however, was the impact of knowledgeable parents 'playing the Transfer game'. If, in the ELB Transfer Booklet, or by reputation, a school was recorded as having only admitted children with A and B1 grades in the preceding year, parents with B2 or C1-graded children would play safe and apply elsewhere. Thus, one school, which the previous year had admitted only A and B grade pupils was having to admit in 1999-2000 a number of pupils graded C2 and D, simply in order to maintain enrolment:

'there is always the risk of …. sending out that message that with (this) school, you can only get in if you have an A or a B. And some parents actually came back to me and said, "we didn't put the school down and we didn't see any point in doing so"'.

According to a number of teachers, this practice of tactical choice had become much more important, as had coaching for the test, because of the closure of boarding departments in the grammar schools, because these had formerly provided an avenue into the sector for lower-graded, fee-paying pupils.

Probably, the number of such problems in any one year is limited, but such a situation is likely to cause difficulties, not only for the grammar school directly affected, but also for the secondary school/s, to which otherwise these pupils might have gone.

3.6 <u>The relative status of schools in the area</u>

Interview data suggested the existence of a 'pecking order' of schools in both Catholic and non-Catholic 'markets', although the nature of this order varied. In both, grammar schools were the preferred parental option. Principals in the secondary schools, and to a slightly lesser extent the integrated school, strongly confirmed their own 'lower' status in the eyes of parents.

Between grammar schools, the extent of competition largely depended on the numbers of local pupils who 'passed' the Transfer test. In the Catholic sector, the 2 grammar schools were advantaged over the secondary school and the integrated school, but neither grammar school believed itself to be in competition with the other. Each felt that its position was based on different ethos and provision, which appealed to distinct groups of parents. This seems to be borne out somewhat by evidence from the occupational categories of parents of Year 8 pupils (presented above). For example, at MG1, much higher proportions of 'professional' parents were reported. However, enrolment figures suggested that MG1, at 88% of capacity in 1998, was a less preferred option for parents than MG2 (at 98%). Staff at the secondary school, MS2, believed that the opening of the integrated school had affected their enrolment detrimentally.

In the non-Catholic 'market', the general advantage of the grammar schools also prevailed although both reported their enrolments being adversely affected by recent changes in home-to-school transport regulations. School SG1 had lost more than 20 pupils per year from a more distant area. As single-sex schools, the gender balance of Primary 7 pupils in the area was an important factor year-on-year in determining their enrolment, but they were clearly not in competition with each other and only to a very limited extent with the Catholic grammar schools. Each perceived its main rival to be the mixed grammar school in the neighbouring town.

However, interview data from all non-Catholic school principals, confirmed by recent enrolment patterns, suggested that a clear hierarchy of secondary schools, including the integrated school, had developed in that sector. Local parents were believed to prefer it and school MS1 (both mixed) over the single-sex secondary schools. A teacher in school MS1 explained his perception of the situation:

'this is a personal view, there is a terribly snobbish value in the area, there is a pecking order, and ideally the majority of people in this area want their children to go to grammar school, and there are a lot of grammar schools in the area. They don't want them to go to secondary school, but what don't go to grammar schools, we certainly seem to catch. ….. at least they can come to this school, it's not as bad, it's considered much better than (the other) secondary schools'.

School SS1, in particular, believed that it had lost many pupils over the years to all its competitors. These included SG1, MI and MS1; the principal of school SS1 viewed a

main competitor as being school SG1, for the C-grade pupils. The principal acknowledged that while,

'this is causing us problems, it is equally causing them problems. There's no animosity between us and ….. if I were the Head there, I don't know what I would do, do you fill your quota or do you restrict it to As and Bs? It's a very difficult situation.'

3.7 Pupil attainment in the Area Study schools

Since the early 1990s, DENI has published annually the levels of pupil attainment at GCSE, A and vocational levels on a school-by-school basis. However, the data on which the following analyses are based have been generated within the Selection project, partly from the questionnaires to Year 12 pupils in the schools under study, and partly from the GCSE attainment of these pupils, provided by their schools. The availability of these data has allowed us to undertake analysis at the level of individual pupils, of schools and between the secondary and grammar sectors.

3.7.1 School-level GCSE attainment of Year 12 pupils (1998-99) in the area study schools.

These data were provided by most of the schools in the area study, in advance of the publication of School Performance table in early 2000. One school (MG1) did not provide information, and one school (MI) had no Year 12 pupils.

These data may be read in conjunction with that presented earlier about the levels of these pupils' Transfer attainment in 1993-94. As might be expected, for the Area Study schools as a group, there were significant differences between the secondary and grammar sectors on a range of indicators of GCSE attainment.

TABLE 19: AREA STUDY SCHOOLS: Year 12 pupils' GCSE attainment (1998-99), by school sector

	SECONDARY	GRAMMAR
Mean no. of GCSEs taken	7	10
Attained 5+ GCSEs at A*-C	34% of pupils entered	91% of pupils entered
Attained 7+ GCSEs at A*-C	21%	84%
Mean GCSE average points	4.1	6.1

Source: School-provided data

Analysis using these indicators was also undertaken at the school level.

TABLE 20: AREA STUDY SECONDARY SCHOOLS: Year 12 pupils' GCSE attainment (1998-99)

	SS1 (50 pupils)	SS2 (60 pupils)	MS1 (106 pupils)	MS2 (69 pupils)
Mean Number of GCSEs taken	7.3	6.3	7.4	6.9
Mean Number of GCSEs at grade C+	2.4	2.4	4.2	3.7
% of pupils achiev. 5+ GCSEs at grade C+	18	18	46	39
% pupils achiev. 7+ GCSEs at grade C+	10	8.3	31	26
GCSE average points	3.6	3.9	4.5	4.3

 Source: School-provided data
NOTE: In 1999, the N.I. secondary school average for the percentage of pupils attaining 5+ GCSEs at grades A* - C was 33.

Broadly there seemed to be two groups of secondary schools in terms of GCSE attainment: SS1 and SS2, and MS1 and MS2. Although the mean numbers of subjects entered did not vary much between the groups, on the 4 indicators of attainment, there were significantly different levels of achievement. Pupils in MS1 and MS2 on average gained almost twice as many GCSE 'passes' at Grade C and above. More than twice as many of their pupils, on average, gained the GCSE 'gold standard' of 5 or more passes at Grade C and above, and about three times as many gained 7 such passes.

TABLE 21: AREA STUDY GRAMMAR SCHOOLS: Year 12 pupils' GCSE attainment (1998-99)

	SG1 (96 pupils)	SG2 (91 pupils)	MG2 (112 pupils)
Mean Number of GCSEs taken	9.4	9.3	9.9
Mean Number of GCSEs at grade C+	8	9	9.1
% pupils achiev. 5+ GCSEs at grade C+	87.5	89	96.4
% pupils achiev. 7+ GCSEs at grade C+	74	86.8	89.3
GCSE average points	5.7	6.5	6.2

NOTE: data were not available for school MG1
Source: School-provided data
NOTE: In 1999, the N.I. grammar school average for the percentage of pupils attaining 5+ GCSEs at grades A* - C was 95.

In the grammar sector, pupils in school SG1 had on average lower levels of GCSE attainment than their peers. These differences were significant on the 7+ GCSE indicator.

3.7.2 GCSE attainment and family SES

Evidence presented earlier in this report showed the association between family SES, as measured by fathers' occupational group, and attainment in the Transfer test. The same analysis has been undertaken for the GCSE outcomes of the Year 12 pupils in the Area Study schools.

TABLE 22: AREA STUDY SCHOOLS: GCSE entries and attainment of Year 12 pupils (1998-99) by fathers' social background:

	NON-MANUAL	MANUAL
Mean no. of GCSEs taken	8.7%	7.8
Attained 5+ GCSEs at A*-C	72%	53
Attained 7+ GCSEs at A*-C	64	42
Mean GCSE average points	5.5	4.6

Source: School-provided and questionnaire data

These data showed a significant association, across the whole Year 12 cohort, between fathers' social background and GCSE attainment. Pupils from non-manual backgrounds entered, on average, an extra GCSE subject, and a much greater proportion of them attained the GCSE 'gold standard' of 5 subjects at grades A*-C.

The differences on these indicators between the attainment of pupils within each sector did not vary greatly according to fathers' social background. In grammar schools as a group, 92% of pupils from both non-manual and manual backgrounds achieved 5+ GCSEs, and in secondary schools the equivalent figure was 34%. At the 7+ GCSE level, there was a small variation within the grammar sector in favour of pupils from non-manual families (86%, compared with 80%), but in the secondary sector 22% from each type of background achieved this level of attainment.

For the Year 12 cohort as a whole, these between-sector differences in attainment according to social class, which are not mirrored within each sector, suggest that the main influence on GCSE attainment was the relationship of family background with the attainment of an A or B Transfer grade and thence, the type of school attended.

3.7.3   Value added according to school sector (C, D and 'Other' graded pupils in secondary and grammar)

However, the analysis above has been aggregated to the school level. At present, it is not routinely possible, from published documents, to trace the development of individuals, or of groups of pupils, nor to compare their GCSE outcomes with their Transfer grade or

status. It is not possible either, therefore, to discover routinely the extent to which the type of school attended may be more or less beneficial for any pupil groups: the extent to which placement in a secondary or grammar school may provide comparative 'added value' to such groups.

However, through this study, data on Transfer status/grade and GCSE attainment have been gathered, for those pupils who went through the Selection procedure in 1993-94, who transferred to post-primary education in 1994-95, and who were in Year 12 in 1998-99. Transfer information was provided by the pupils; GCSE attainment data were provided by the participating schools. (However, please note that one school, MG1, did not provide these data). The analysis will be applied to those groups who were present in both school sectors, i.e. pupils who did not obtain either an A or B grade in the 11+. Traditionally, these pupils would not have been deemed 'suitable for an academic education'.

We have analysed these data comparatively across the secondary and grammar sectors to establish the extent to which one or other type of school may provide 'added value' to these pupil groups. The analysis has been conducted at 3 levels:

- for all pupils in both sectors who obtained Grades C or D as a result of the Transfer procedure and pupils who opted out of the procedure.
- For all pupils in both sectors who obtained a C grade in the Transfer
- For all pupils in both sectors who either obtained a D grade in the Transfer, or who opted-out.

3.7.4   Access to GCSE

TABLE 23: AREA STUDY SCHOOLS: GCSE entries by pupils (1998-99) who did not obtain an A or B grade in the Transfer test (1994-95)

SECONDARY (275 pupils)			GRAMMAR (45 pupils)	
No. of GCSEs entered	No. of pupils	% of pupils	No. of pupils	% of pupils
0	4	1.5	4	9
1	6	2	-	
2	1	.5	-	
3	2	1	-	
4	2	1	-	
5	18	7	-	
6	34	12	-	
7	92	34	-	
8	74	27	5	11
9	33	12	8	18
10	8	3	21	47
11	1	.5	7	16

While the range of subjects entered was the same for both sectors, the percentages of students entered at each level of entries are quite dissimilar. Perhaps surprisingly, almost 10% of those at grammar schools entered no GCSEs, more than 6 times the percentage of that group in the secondary sector. Otherwise, as might be expected, greater proportions of grammar school students were entered for the highest numbers of GCSEs. It is also clear, however, that in secondary schools, the large majority (84%) of pupils lower-graded in the Transfer have had access to at least five GCSE examination entries.

Interview data from secondary school teachers and from pupils indicated the importance to secondary pupils of having access to the same public examinations as grammar school pupils. Two main reasons were given: pupils and teachers claimed such access was helpful in rebuilding pupils' damaged self-esteem following 11+ 'failure'. A pupil said 'it doesn't matter what sort of school you go to – you do the same exams later'. The other, mentioned by teachers, was that a GCSE grade, even one lower than C, 'counts' – the attainment of several such grades provided access to valued courses in Further Education, which might eventually lead to entry to Higher Education.

As indicated above, these data can be further sub-divided. The next table presents these data for only pupils who were C graded in the Transfer test.

TABLE 24: AREA STUDY SCHOOLS: GCSE entries by pupils (1998-99) who obtained a C grade in the Transfer test (1993-94)

SECONDARY (47 pupils)			GRAMMAR (41 pupils)	
No. of GCSEs entered	No. of pupils	% of pupils	No. of pupils	% of pupils
0	1	2	3	7
1	1	2	-	-
2	-	-	-	-
3	-	-	-	-
4	-	-	-	-
5	1	2	-	-
6	3	6	-	-
7	8	18	-	-
8	22	47	5	12
9	10	21	7	17
10	1	2	20	49
11	-	-	6	15

The mean number of subjects taken by these pupils in the area study schools was 7.5 for secondary school pupils and 9 for grammar school pupils. As in the previous table, the percentage of entries for C grade pupils was highest in the grammar sector for the highest number of subjects entered, and highest at the level of no entries. However higher proportions of secondary school pupils were entered for 8, and 9 GCSEs, and, of this group, 96% were entered for at least 5 subjects.

TABLE 25: AREA STUDY SCHOOLS: GCSE entries by pupils (1998-99) who obtained a D grade in the Transfer test (1993-94), or who opted out of the test.

SECONDARY (228 pupils)			GRAMMAR (4 pupils)	
No. of GCSEs entered	No. of pupils	% of pupils	No. of pupils	% of pupils
0	3	1	1	25
1	5	2	-	-
2	1	.5	-	-
3	2	1	-	-
4	2	1	-	-
5	17	8	-	-
6	31	14	-	-
7	84	37	-	-
8	52	23	-	-
9	23	10	1	25
10	7	3	1	25
11	1	.5	1	25

The mean number of subjects taken by these pupils in the area study schools was 6.9 for secondary school pupils and 7.5 for grammar school pupils. Again, most of these lowest-graded pupils had access to at least 5 GCSEs, and, in the secondary sector more than a third had entered at least 8. Their attainment is presented below. It is perhaps noteworthy that almost 14% of these pupils in the secondary sector and three-quarters in the grammar sector entered 9 or more subjects. Of the 10 pupils who entered 10 or 11 subjects, 6 in the secondary sector (all pupils at MS1) and 2 (pupils at SG2) in grammar schools obtained more than 7 GCSEs at Grades A*-C.

3.7.5   GCSE attainment for pupils not attaining an A or B grade at transfer

In this section, for each of the sub-groups within each sector, some indicators of attainment at GCSE are presented, including the current 'gold standard' benchmark of 5 or more passes at Grades A* to C.

TABLE 26: AREA STUDY SCHOOLS: summary of 1998-99 GCSE attainment of pupils not attaining A or B grade in Transfer.

	SECONDARY			GRAMMAR		
	11+ C grade	11+ D& Other	All: C,D & Oth	11+ C grade	11+ D& Other	All: C,D & Oth
5+ GCSEs @ A*-C	25 pupils (53%)	69 pupils (30%)	94 pupils (34%)	36 pupils (88%)	3 pupils (75%)	39 pupils (87%)
Mean GCSE total points	36	29	30	54	54	54
Mean GCSE average points score	4.57	4	4.1	5.47	5.5	5.5

Source: school-provided data

These results present evidence to suggest that in the area under study in 1998-99, compared to their secondary school peers, more than twice the proportion of grammar school pupils, who had not obtained either an A or B grade in the Transfer, attained 5 or more GCSE grades A* to C.

For pupils with Transfer C grades, the grammar school advantage on all three indicators appeared to have been less than for the group as a whole. For this group of pupils, placement in a grammar school did not seem to confer quite such a large advantage in attaining 5+ GCSE passes at A* - C, (88% : 53%). It was, nevertheless, substantial and the margin for total GCSE points reflected this advantage. However in the average score per pupil, the across-sectoral difference is rather less, suggesting perhaps that in the secondary schools in the area, clusters of pupils may have attained just below the C grade 'pass' level on average.

The data suggest also that in the secondary sector, there was differential attainment on these indicators between C-graded Transfer pupils and Ds and Others. Nearly twice as many C-graded pupils placed in secondary schools attained the 'gold standard' compared with Ds and Others in those schools, whereas in grammar schools the difference was much less. Pupils graded C, D or Other, of course, comprise the bulk of the enrolment in the secondary sector, rather than relatively small groups within grammar schools.

This relatively higher attainment of C-graded pupils vis-à-vis Ds and Others may also reflect the difference in the proportions of these children within the secondary sector (47

Cs: 227 Ds and Others). Given that in all the Area Study secondary schools, pupils were either streamed or banded in Key Stage 3 according to Transfer grade, supplemented by in-house tests, many of the C grade pupils were likely to have been placed in the 'top' groups, and subjected to higher levels of teacher expectations for success.

In grammar sector, there was less difference between C-graded Transfer pupils and Ds and Other on the 5+ GCSE indicator, and virtually none in the mean scores. These pupils, of course, comprise only a small fraction of the grammar school cohort, and it may be that the general expectations of academic success, in addition to the social class differences between the sectors, provided an environment in school and at home which helped to drive up attainment levels.

Overall, on the basis of an extremely limited analysis, it appears that placement in a grammar school enhanced GCSE attainment levels for pupils who were lower graded in the Selection procedure, or who opted out. This conclusion, of course, cannot take account of the extent to which their results in the Transfer test may or may not have been reliable, either as an indicator of their primary school attainment or as a predictor of future attainment.

3.8 School leavers' destination data: Further and Higher Education

These data were provided annually until 1996-97 by DENI in the School Performance Tables but have not been included since then. The figures are provided because of the perceptions of teachers in the Area Study schools that, for parents and pupils, post-16 provision within the same school was considered to be an attractive option in marketing terms. Pupils at interview also viewed the issue of access to Further and Higher education as important to them.

TABLE 27: SECONDARY SCHOOLS: % of leavers going to Higher Education, (1994/5-1996/7)

SCHOOL	1995	1996	1997
SS1	1	4	5
SS2	4	3	5
MS2	2	14	24

Source: DENI School Performance Tables
NB School MS1 has no Sixth Form

TABLE 28: SECONDARY SCHOOLS: % of leavers going to Further Education, (1994/5-1996/7)

SCHOOL	1995	1996	1997
SS1	34	34	33
SS2	60	59	41
MS1	61	48	42
MS2	42	30	5

Source: DENI School Performance Tables

TABLE 29: SECONDARY SCHOOLS: % of leavers going to Further and Higher Education, (1994/5-1996/7)

SCHOOL	1995	1996	1997
SS1	35	38	38
SS2	64	62	46
MS1	61	48	42
MS2	44	44	29

While individual schools have increased the percentages of pupils moving on to further or higher education, overall the secondary sector trend has been for diminishing numbers of young people to continue with education beyond school. Except for school SS1, in which levels of continuing education have been low relative to the other secondary schools, all other schools have identified a sharp decline between 1995 and 1997.

TABLE 30: GRAMMAR SCHOOLS: % of leavers going to Higher Education, (1994/5-1996/7)

SCHOOL	1995	1996	1997
SG1	44	55	63
SG2	63	69	65
MG1	45	73	50
MG2	50	74	65

Source: DENI School Performance Tables

TABLE 31: GRAMMAR SCHOOLS: % of pupils going to Further Education, (1994/5-1996/7)

SCHOOL	1995	1996	1997
SG1	31	31	23
SG2	33	24	25
MG1	41	21	32
MG2	31	17	25

Source: DENI School Performance Tables

TABLE 32: GRAMMAR SCHOOLS: % of pupils going to Further and Higher Education, (1994/5-1996/7)

SCHOOL	1995	1996	1997
SG1	75	86	86
SG2	96	93	90
MG1	86	94	82
MG2	81	91	90

Source: DENI School Performance Tables

In the grammar sector, while increased proportions of pupils have moved into Higher Education, overall decline in the percentages of pupils moving into Further Education, have, except for MG2, meant that the overall proportions of those continuing beyond second-level education had diminished slightly between 1995 and 1997. This reduction had been much less marked than in the area secondary schools.

3.9 General issues

A number of other issues, some unanticipated, emerged from the interview data.

3.9.1   Pupil capacity and knowledge.

In particular, respondents frequently remarked on what they perceived to be changing levels of incoming pupils' capacity to learn, or lower levels of prior knowledge and understanding. These may be related to broader aspects of education reform since the late 1980s, as well as to the pressure put on teachers in primary schools to assist as many pupils as possible to achieve high Transfer grades.

In two grammar schools, interviewees believed that current assessment systems, from Key Stage 2 on, had created an instrumental attitude to education, which neglected its broader purposes. One Head of Year 8 believed that:

'the whole training of the mind and the opening of the mind and the ability of the mind to read the past and ……. to listen to what the present is speaking, I think is being eroded. ….. The narrowing of the system of education (has reduced pupils' capacity) to develop their own appreciation and reflection and developing thought, and critical ability in order to have something to choose all for themselves.'

In the other school, the principal argued that:

'my own feelings about the curriculum in primary school is that they're trying to do too much ….. I suppose the intentions are honourable, fine. The outcomes are something different. …. It's all very well talking about skills, but skills without the foundation or a body of knowledge are useless. To what do you apply the skills if you haven't a foundation or body of knowledge? And the skills of persistence, endeavour or tenacity in learning are ones which I think would be more valuable in teaching children, rather than a quick dip in and out of everything which is so superficial.'

Staff in a number of schools believed that levels of basic skills in Year 8 pupils had diminished. The comments of one principal were echoed by several others:

'We think children by a large are not as literate or as numerate as they used to be since the introduction of the Northern Ireland curriculum. We're assuming it's because of the insistence on the spread of subjects they're doing and they don't have the same time to concentrate on some of the basic things and we're having to pick up on that and be aware of that in the school.'

Other schools had also noticed changes in pupils' attitudes to school and to learning:

'the differences we find in the youngsters coming to us are attitudes and behavioural. …. Form teachers are dealing with much more case material than would have been the case five or ten years ago. I suppose really what it means is that traditional concepts of authority are breaking down and that's manifesting itself in the behaviour at school.'

Many of these teachers related this more 'difficult' behaviour to social change more generally, and the increase in family break-up, in particular.

3.9.2   Pupils' experiences of Transfer

In interviews with Year 8 and Year 12 pupils many pupils commented on vividly on their experiences before, during and after the Transfer procedure. Some of the issues they raised are dealt with in the following sections. In this section we report their perceptions of what had clearly been the most memorable aspect of these experiences: the pressures, anxieties and (for many) disappointments of the Transfer. Even those in Year 12, for whom these memories were now well in the past, spoke frequently of these feelings. Two main aspects of experiences will be dealt with in this section:

- Feelings in the period of preparation for the test.
- Feelings about hearing the results of the test and its aftermath.

The pressures of preparation

A few pupils had felt quite comfortable about taking the test:

'I wasn't really nervous at all. Because we had done so many papers, I thought, I can do it, I'm alright.' (Secondary School)

However, almost all of those interviewed had felt very pressurised by the level of their families' and teachers' expectations of them:

'There is a lot of pressure put on you for all of that … really from the teachers.' (SS)

'There's too much hype. Your family and teachers and school ….they all say this is one of the most important exams you'll do.' (SS)

'They put you under pressure for the practice tests – they'd sit you down and tell you it was the real one and you had to do your best. If you didn't, …they'd give you an 'eating' at the end of the day for it.' (SS)

'I stayed in after school to do tests and my primary school teacher never gave us the marks, so she told us they were atrocious. That was to make us work harder.' (Grammar School)

'I think that was the message that the teachers were pressurising you to go in and do your best.' (SS)

'If you passed you got to a grammar school. That was the whole thing. You had to pass to get to a grammar school.' (SS)

'They did make it out to be a wild big deal. You had to pass. They put a lot of pressure on us. It's a lot of pressure at that age.' (SS)

'It was very nerve wracking, before and after.' (SS)

'Just worried.' (SS)

'Very nervous.' (SS)

'Couldn't sleep.' (SS)

'I was nervous and shaking. I couldn't sleep the night before.' (SS)

'I was so worried about getting a good mark so as to go to the same school as my friends.' (GS)

'I was very, very nervous …I was actually sick the night before. It was terrible.' (SS)

'I remember before it started, the boy beside me …started crying.' (GS)

'I thought it would be easy enough but it didn't seem that way at the time. I worked for it but I didn't know how to answer the questions, the techniques.'(SS)

A few pupils also acknowledged the pressure on teachers for their pupils to 'succeed' in the test:

'There is a lot of preparation for it. The primary school teachers work awful hard. ….. And they sort of force the pupils to work hard as well.'

'It puts pressure on the teachers as well. To get the pupils to work because the parents expect them to pass, and then when something goes wrong the teacher can be blamed.'

Most of those who spoke of these direct pressures agreed that they had come mainly from their primary school teachers, rather than from their parents. However, for several, their understanding of the test's importance to their families and themselves was reinforced by the additional private coaching which they undertook in addition to the preparations made in their primary schools.

Getting the results

Approximately 68% of pupils in Year 12 in the Area Study schools in 1998-99 had taken the Transfer test in Primary 7. Of these, more than half had not gained an A or B grade. Many of these pupils also clearly remembered getting their Transfer results:

'I was up really early in the morning.' (SS)

'I was sitting at the Bible …before the postman came.' (SS)

'Mum really thought I had passed.' (SS)

'If you get bad results it's a big disappointment. You don't know what's happening.' (SS)

'Waking up on the morning of your results and expecting to get something better but you didn't. It wasn't very nice when all your friends were running around getting As.' (SS)

'I cried myself to sleep that night.' (SS)

'The results being published and feeling the failure and embarrassment at primary school.' (SS)

3.9.3   <u>Opted-out pupils</u>

In several of the secondary schools, an important unanticipated issue emerged. This related to the impact of the current Transfer procedures on large numbers of their pupils who had opted out of the tests. As might be anticipated, this was not mentioned by any grammar school teacher. Both teachers and pupils commented that, in many Primary 6 and Primary 7 classrooms, children who had opted out of the tests did not receive much attention from their teachers, nor did they have much productive work to do. Such comments included:

'Sometimes the children would say, "we can't do that, because we did nothing in P7"'.

'I did a project …….. I had to work at it on my own.'

'The ones at our school who didn't have to do the tests ….they didn't have to work that hard.'

'The people who didn't do it were just dropped off to the side and left to colour in throughout the year. I thought it was unfair. We weren't taught very much.'

'We went to different classes and did spellings and made drawings of things while they did practice work.'

'Our teacher didn't exactly work with them at all. She just gave them a pile of worksheets to do during the day because she was concentrating on us.'

'We were taken out of the class and given spellings to do.'

'The other ones (those opted out) went to a different class and we met them after break.'

Pupils also reported other forms of differential treatment by teachers of opted out pupils:

'my teacher didn't like me very much …..because I didn't do the test.

'I did the practice tests even though I wasn't doing the exam (but) no-one cared what I got.'

'my teacher would have paid more attention to them (entered for Transfer) than she would have me. So like if we were doing our practice test and you had got something wrong you had to find out (yourself) where you went wrong. …… I would always say, "could you help me, Miss H.", and then you would ask her again and she'd leave it and then you wouldn't get it and then I used to go home crying because I didn't know.'

A Year 12 grammar school pupil, whose opted-out classmates had been sent to join the Primary 6 class while test preparation was going on, suggested that these forms of segregation created a more permanent social divide:

'When the test was over there was a gap between us and those ones (who had opted out). They seemed to stay in the same group and wouldn't associate with you. They thought they weren't as smart as us, even though we tried to make friends with them.'

Given that very many pupils also reported that they did much less schoolwork for the last half of Primary 7, after the tests were over, by the time these opted out children, generally more than half of the intake, arrived at secondary school, many had spent approximately 18 months without undertaking sustained school work. Secondary teachers argued that these pupils were doubly disadvantaged by such practices: they

were often lower ability children, who had now lost the capacity to work at school.

One principal suggested that such situations were compounding a serious problem:

'the problem of self-esteem is happening much further down the primary schools. ... Children are coming out with the expression, "oh, I am not going to be doing the Eleven Plus because I am too stupid", ...and sort of opting out. Now in a sense that is almost a self-realisation. There is a problem, a whole issue there.'

3.9.4   Impact on primary school provision in Primary 6 and Primary 7

Concurrently with the apparent neglect of many opted-out pupils in upper primary classes were pupils' reports of a very heavy emphasis on preparation for Transfer. All the pupils interviewed recounted the priority given in lesson time, and before and after school. Many had attended school for extra lessons in the early morning, after school, at weekends, and during the summer holidays. All spoke of 'big books' of practice tests taken home to be completed, in addition to work done at school:

'We didn't do that much work in P7 because we mostly went to the canteen to tests every morning for ages.'

'I spent most of my P7 time doing the tests to transfer.'

'I was fed up with it because every time you went to school, they would say that you had to do another test, and if you didn't get it all done, you had to stay for extra time.'

'We started doing practice tests straight after Christmas in P6. We did that all the way through the term .....and, we got some to take home over the summer.'

'I remember last year and the tests and all we had to do. We had to do a lot of tests at the end of the year. When we were in P7 we had to do more. We would do real hard ones, you know. We thought they were really easy at the start and then it got harder and harder. And then in P7 there were even harder ones.'

'And we got extra classes too during the holidays. We had to come down to the school at twelve o'clock and take a test.'

'We didn't do extra classes but we done a wild lot of tests.   .... Then after the Eleven Plus we just done nothing.'

It seems likely that this heavy emphasis on preparation for Transfer distorts the upper primary curriculum, and may be responsible for some of the comments made by post-

primary staff about perceived lower levels of pupils' knowledge and understanding. As reported above, it was also perceived by pupils to impose very high levels of pressure on them. Many of those pupils who had practised for the test but who did not gain high grades, reported very high levels of disappointment, especially those whose friends had done 'better'.

3.10 Impact of open enrolment, in conjunction with academic selection, on secondary schools

In the Area Study secondary schools there was a high level of consensus about the generally detrimental impact on secondary schools. Interviewees believed that pupils, teachers, schools and the sector generally had been badly affected by the impact of open enrolment since 1991. There was also general consensus that the local grammar schools had benefited at their expense.

3.10.1 Effects on secondary school pupils

Most concerns about pupils were related to issues of self-image, self-esteem and confidence to learn. All of the secondary schools believed that a major task for them during Key Stages 3 and 4 was to try to rebuild damaged confidence and to persuade pupils of their self-worth. This was one of the reasons given by teachers for the importance of access to GCSE for their pupils. It offered a 'second chance' and was the same examination as that taken by pupils at grammar schools.

Comments illustrative of these views included:

'I've been to primary schools where I was quite upset to find that pupils who were coming to me (in grammar school) were selected out and praised in front of the others, and I thought that was the most divisive thing I had ever seen. I just thought that was terrible, and that was in the primary school.'

'Those children are second rate. There is a hierarchy of attitude from their peers, from their parents, from all and sundry. That is the biggest damage, that's our biggest job in this school, apart from teaching, is to boost their confidence.'

'There is no question that when some boys get here they do perceive themselves as not good enough. ….. They perceive themselves to be not as good as their friends who

have gone elsewhere. We really need to start working on that fairly quickly and we do that at all levels, from the lowest ability right up.'

'one of the things that has cropped up …has been the children coming in, particularly those who have taken the Transfer and have not succeeded, with, you know, very low self-esteem. … That is one that they are always going to carry with them through their life. …. It is one where we are constantly battling against. … Certainly in this school, people aren't going to label them as being second class, even though to the outside world that might be the case'

'Our pupils perceive themselves to be worse than their cohorts in the grammar sector, and they, I imagine, …would see themselves to be better.'

'I think (children) would very much feel, you know, they are a second class citizen. … That can be a devastating impact on a child, …and then people are going off in lots of different directions to different schools.'

'Some children will feel, especially if their friends …..have been separated off into grammar school, they do feel inferior.'

The issue of intensified feelings of 'failure' through being separated from their peers was often raised. Conversely, in a grammar school which admitted children with lower Transfer grades, a teacher believed that such children did not feel their 'failure' as badly if they secured a grammar school place.

Pupils, too, especially those in Year 12, recorded many such comments about their own feelings of 'failure' and being thought 'inferior':

'When a grammar school pupils walks past you, they look down on you.'

'I'm not sure if our school has a bad reputation, but a lot of people do look down on us.'

'The local schools call us the "integral idiots".'

'Some of them went to the grammar schools and think they are better, …the way they speak ….'

'People go and do the test and you feel like you're a failure and you feel really terrible, and then maybe your best friend passes and goes to a different school …'

There was some confirmation of such perceptions of secondary school 'second best-ness' from a few pupils in grammar schools. This was mainly to do with

opportunities for later life chances although some comments related to perceptions of differing teacher expectations of secondary school pupils:

'it was important to pass ... for the school you would go to ... it was deciding your whole life to a certain extent, depending on the school you would go to.'

'it was important to come to a grammar school, because we were encouraged to do our A levels, whereas at a secondary school we would go to the local college.'

'it sort of decides your future, cause if you fail it, you go to a secondary school and you can't stay on and go to university. .… In here they push you more and .… Over there they let you do what you want.'

'I reckon you wouldn't have tried as hard (there). Here, you're obviously with smarter boys and you're trying to stay with the grade ...'

'You can't get the top grades over there in subjects. They only do the lower tiers in the exams. ..…   All the pupils have .…it brings everybody else down.'

'It's harder for them because they don't know …as much stuff as we would have learnt, and then if they go on to the Tech., like, the boys from here will obviously be smarter than them boys, and will get on better.'

'You have to have some way of breaking them up. To separate smart from stupid. You can't have stupid people coming in here and doing crap.'

While it was also evident from pupil interview data that most of the Year 8 and Year 12 pupils had settled well into their schools, and were often enjoying their learning, many felt resentful about their experiences of Transfer and the pressures, anxieties and disappointments they had suffered. Most felt that the system was very unfair. It would have been insensitive to seek information about the extent to which they felt permanently 'damaged' by their perceived failure, but a teacher illustrated an aspect of persisting low self-image:

'I can remember in August with all the kids coming in for their GCSE results and a girl who got an A* and a few Bs and Cs handing back .…saying, "I got the wrong results". That's a fairly consistent feeling .…it's so ingrained in them. .… That's very frustrating, the lack of confidence that they carry with them, even though you've actually made them quite confident in themselves as people.'

One principal also spoke of the longer term effects many of them might suffer:

' You have children almost divided into categories of better and worse, you know, more desirable and least desirable in terms of their …existence as human beings in (this town). I think what happens is in terms of progression after school, you know, that that sense of failure for our pupils at age eleven, or at Year Twelve, that follows right through for them even on the terms of things like uptake of adult education courses, of courses of that other level.'

It was certainly the case that in several Area Study schools, teachers at interview offered the unsolicited information that they had 'failed' the Eleven Plus, even though they had clearly subsequently overcome any handicap that this might have caused.

3.10.2 <u>Effects on secondary schools and teachers</u>

Some of these effects, including the effects on school enrolments, have already been detailed in earlier sections. In this section data are drawn from interviews.

Many secondary school staff felt strongly that the current arrangements for school choice operated unfairly to the advantage of grammar schools. A particular concern was that some local grammar schools routinely admitted pupils who, before open enrolment, would probably have attended their schools. As reported above, a common feeling was that the grammar schools selected whoever they wanted; the remaining pupils came to their schools. Year-on-year they suffered uncertainty about admissions numbers and three of the schools had lost large numbers of pupils, with considerable knock-on effects. In one school, concurrent with the research interviews were the meetings to determine which four teachers should be made redundant. In the same school, the problems of declining teacher numbers were highlighted by a head of department who was routinely unable to hold departmental planning meetings: of the three teachers who worked in his subject area, two were also heads of other departments and the third was a vice-principal with a heavy administrative load. In these schools, pressures of declining resources created problems in all aspects of school activity.

A general view among secondary school principals and teachers (and supported by analysis above) was that the profile of their intakes had become skewed towards pupils of lower ability, often with special needs, and that, in tandem with this, they

were admitting more pupils from more deprived families, and more pupils presenting behavioural problems. Their comments included the following:

'because of the removal of that upper band, we are getting proportionately more children who are further down the ability range. … So we are becoming a school who is looking to cope with the lower ability bands.   … and without a shadow of a doubt we have a massive increase of children from socially difficult circumstances. .. we have doubled the proportion of children on free school meals.'

'(some years ago) each year out of an enrolment of about 120 we would have had about twenty pupils going to grammar schools to do A level work … by 1994 we were certainly noticing the fall off in relation to that. … I know this year we are talking maybe one or two pupils interested in going on to A level, … who we think might get the calibre of results to do that.'

'Some of the things which might have been geared more towards the pupils (we used to have) … with higher levels of ability, we are now no longer able to do. .. We withdrew two years ago from the local public speaking competition ….because our pupils really just did not have a chance. … So reluctantly, the decision was taken that we just didn't have the calibre of pupils in the school. …That caused us a great deal of distraction and concern.'

'The quality of the pupils has declined, and that is again because of the enrolment policy of local grammar schools, very definitely.'

'Yes, (open enrolment) has depressed the profile of the top performers. The most academically able children have gradually reduced over the years. We would occasionally have a child at a C1 …. (historically), we might have had a third As and Bs.'

'We have a massive increase of children from socially difficult circumstances, … an increase in the more difficult behavioural difficulties. Proportionally there's been an increase in opt outs.'

Such changes were thought to have affected the whole school:

'Open enrolment was the cause and it changed the ethos in a way because you lost that top succeeding band in a way and that affected the morale of the teachers to some extent as well.'

Secondary school staff felt that because in the public perception their pupils were viewed as 'second class', this label was also applied to their schools, and to themselves. This was greatly resented:

'I sometimes feel about teachers – that teachers in the secondary school almost have low self-esteem as well. That somehow the work they do is not as valuable – that they are not appreciated as much as grammar school teachers. And my own experience would have been at teacher meetings for French (moderation) that somehow the elitism that I was talking about between pupils in grammar and secondary, that always existed at the teaching level as well. …. Anyway, it was my perception that teachers in grammar schools would have felt superior to teachers in the secondary school.'

'We're made to feel second best. There is the frustration that we're seen by too many people persistently to be second best. This is not a second best school. In fact, the parents came to me the other day saying don't even apologise for your school, it's a wonderful school, but we're made to feel second best.'

'Even on things like now being called non-grammar schools, there are grammar and non-grammar schools in the Province. That hit me very hard and I must say I'm very cross about that. I don't want to be called for what I'm not, but what I am. If you want to call me a secondary school, that's fine by me because in many respects we're better than grammar schools, but don't call me what I'm not. I'm not a non-grammar.'

'We're constantly telling secondary school teachers they're less worth and their school has less worth. You can't have that. We dealing with the majority of kids still, and we're dealing with the most difficult kids to teach and to motivate. We don't need to be told that we're second rate.'

SECTION FOUR

OPINIONS ABOUT THE SELECTIVE SYSTEM

The data presented in this section are all drawn from interviews with teachers and pupils. Respondents were asked for their views on the benefits and disadvantages of selection as it currently operates in Northern Ireland, and were asked to indicate any possible means of improvement. For reasons of clarity these opinions have been subdivided into three groups. These are:

- Views about current arrangements for Transfer (two sections)
    - Views about the operation of current arrangements for open enrolment
    - Views about the testing procedures currently used to select pupils for secondary and grammar schools
- Views about whether an academically-selective system should be retained.

4.1 Views about current arrangements for Transfer

From the data collected, two sets of issues emerged but views about these were not always linked: for example, it was evident that some interviewees were satisfied with the arrangements for open enrolment but felt that the current system of testing should be modified. Almost nobody interviewed believed that the current testing system was ideal and several suggestions were made for its improvement.

4.1.1   Views about the operation of current arrangements for open enrolment

In general, views about the present arrangements for school placement varied according to school sector. Although teachers in a grammar school which admitted a larger proportion of C and D – graded pupils spoke of some of the difficulties generated for the school by this wider ability range, and some believed that they should be excluded by a 'better' test, none of them suggested that their schools should be prevented from admitting such pupils.

These were not generally the views of secondary teachers:

'The whole criteria side is wrong where the government decided they would not allow schools to accept 1st preference kids first. Government is trying to make secondary schools take grammar school rejects. Open enrolment should disappear now. It isn't open enrolment. The government are squeezing and squeezing a combination of (admissions) criteria and the transport changes. There's no such thing as open enrolment.' (MS2)

'I don't think the average to slightly above average kids, the Cs and most of the Ds should be at grammar schools. We are much more successful with those types of kids in this type of school than they are in a grammar school. We are very successful with the kids who have failed in the 11+, who get Cs and Ds and the occasional B, who all think that they're failures. We are very successful with those kids, if they're motivated and their family supports them, we are very successful. We are not successful with ....children who don't get an A and go to grammar school and fail there. We are particularly unsuccessful doing anything with those kids, we can't pick them up a second time round. (MS1)'

'You have the situation now where there are grammar schools who are taking quite a big intake of C grades, even some D grades, and what's happening there, to my mind, those children are not being catered for at all, that those children, pardon the expression, are bums on seats for five years, financed for five years, then they boot them out after GCSE.' (SS2)

'if those schools are there for the most able children, then only the most able children should be there. .... They should (only admit) a quota on ability, say, As and Bs, ...about 30%-35%, to me seems sensible.' (MS1)

'The lowering of the quality of intake in grammar schools has had a very seriously bad effect on the secondary schools wellbeing. ....The education system for most kids isn't properly organised. Either we have a selective system or we haven't. It's hybrid, it's not working.' (MS1)

'there are people who get into a grammar school here wouldn't get into a grammar school in other parts of the province, and therefore in some ways our schools may be seen as second best.' (SS1)

4.1.2 Views about the testing procedures currently used to select pupils for secondary and grammar schools

Uniformly, respondents, both those who supported and opposed the idea of selection, disliked current testing arrangements. Some questioned the reliability of the tests, others felt that the form of testing put too much pressure on children at too early an

age, and others believed that two short test sessions did not allow many children to show the breadth of their capability:

'At the minute, it's (the upper primary curriculum) too wide, there are too many (children) getting through the net. … They (primary schools) could leave a lot of irrelevant material and focus on literacy and numeracy and let's use that as a very definitive gauge. …. The current system of testing distorts and taints the whole primary school curriculum, especially with the nonsense of coaching in P6 and P7 and even (in some schools) P4 and P5. That certainly is a nonsense.' (SG2)

''(the present arrangements mean) that children who aren't capable of an academic education end up there because they've been tutored or because the questions suited them …and conversely ….that children who deserve to be there are late maturers. I'm not sure that currently the process serves all pupils in the best possible way it could. … the level of children's maturity goes against them. … (SS1)

Several made suggestions about improvements:

'(we should be) looking at performance and monitoring that as progression rather than just monitoring the test.' (SG2)

'we need a system that looks at a child's developments in Key Stage Two where there can be an ongoing system of regular in- school testing on nationally agreed tests and the government can decide where the cut off point is. They can say, "that's the children who would have A". It would give all the children an equal opportunity without the pressures of externally set exam. It would hopefully do away with this gross coaching' (SG1)

'The difficulty is how you make the selection. Whether you make it a combination of teacher assessment and parent information, or whether you make it later than age 11, I don't know.' (SS1)

Several teacher respondents referred to the Craigavon system, in which selection is delayed until age 14, and speculated that pupils' added maturity might both relieve their anxiety about selection and might made test outcomes more valid and reliable. This view about the appropriateness of delaying selection was shared by a considerable number of others who did not refer to Craigavon.

Otherwise, the most commonly-offered suggestions for improvement of current procedures referred to some form of continuous assessment of pupil performance throughout Key Stage 2.

Some Year 12 pupils also offered views about the testing system and ideas about how to make it 'fairer':

'some people really freak out in exams, or they can have a bad day.'

'you could be a maths genius and when you come to that test ….you've got a bad grade and you have to come here, but you're really good at maths and you could have gone somewhere else.'

'It's too big an exam to do at that age. It's the sort of exam you would want to do …when you've learned a bit more.'

'I think there should be more a number of tests. Not just the Eleven Plus, because if you make a mistake in one day, like, it has effects for the rest of your life and you don't do A-levels.'

'Because children when they are eleven, they're too young, they get nervous about it at that age. It shouldn't be decided on one exam for you to go to the grammar. There were plenty of people at primary school who didn't pass but it was only because of their exams. They were good enough to go to the grammar.'

'It just doesn't feel right being based on two exams. I mean, if it was based on more than that. Like an average, or whatever. Then it would be more sort of fair. ….. If it was just on a teacher's report over the seven years on the pupil. Yeah, if the grammar schools chose from that.'

'You could be recommended from the primary school for hard work and behaviour and all that stuff.'

4.2   Should academic selection continue to exist in Northern Ireland.

All of those interviewed were asked for their views as to whether post-primary education should continue to be based on some form of academic selection. If they favoured the ending of selection, they were also asked to comment on the likelihood of change taking place. Views were divided in both sectors, but in general, teachers in secondary schools favoured the ending of selection, while those in the grammar sector argued that some form of selection was inevitable. Pupils also offered their views on the current system.

4.2.1   Pupils' views

As reported above, many grammar school pupils perceived themselves to be advantaged by attending a grammar school. Other than criticising the pressures of the tests, only very few commented negatively on the issue of selection. One Year 12 girl felt that 'it is very hard on the ones who fail' and another pupil would have preferred 'everyone at the same school'. Otherwise, most accepted the perceived benefits to them of having succeeded in the existing system.

Most secondary pupils, on the other hand, wished for change. The issue of 'fairness' cropped up frequently:

'I think smart people and not so smart people should go to the same school.'

'It's not fair. I think we should all be the same and just choose what school you want to go to.'

'All schools should be the same, because it's not fair to make 10 and 11 year olds do it.'

' I would do away with it ... like the schools in England who don't do the 11+ and put all the pupils in the same schools.'

'(A better system) would be to go to a comprehensive system ...where you can work hard rather than exams taken by eleven-year-olds.'

'I don't think a test that has a wee bit of maths, English and science in it can predict the way your future's going to be ....to be honest.'

'You should be given a choice of what school you want to go to without having to sit an exam.'

'I don't think it's a good system, because kids at the age of eleven are sitting doing the work and if they don't understand something, they panic, ... And I think it's wrong. They should change it.'

'At the end of the day, you go to a grammar or secondary school but you come out with the same exams. It's stupid.'

'I think it's bad. I don't think you need the pressure of the tests, and then when you get your grade, it shows people are smarter than you, and you feel disappointed in yourself. I wouldn't want for anyone else to go through it.'

4.2.2   Secondary teachers' views

'I feel that there is probably still a place for a grammar school education (with) an education that can be offered in the secondary school that is more vocational and technical. The difficulty of course is the National Curriculum thing.'

'I think it has tremendous advantages if you are academically able … but within the secondary school arena, then I think people would very much feel, you know, that they are a second-class citizen.'

'I wouldn't have the Eleven Plus …it bewilders me.'

'I think all pupils should be in the same school and learn the same stuff.'

'Well, I think I would have to show my colours here and hang my hat on the fact that I think we have to get an all-inclusive system. We have to get a system where you get a much more comprehensivisation approach to things.'

'The only solution to our situation is to move down the line of radically changing the system.'

'Now, fair enough, within a school which is all-ability ….you are still going to get the elites and you are still going to have the very weakest with the very best, and that spectrum is going to be so much broader, but I think it is certainly better that at least they have the contact with each other, …and they have the ability to grow up with each other, and to realise that that is what they are going to face in the outside world.'

'successful secondary schools are an embarrassment to the government because it throws up things they can't work with. The vast majority of the problems are to do with grammar school enrolments. …the myth is that it is only grammar schools that succeed with the most able kids. Properly run comprehensive schools in their proper niche can be extremely successful …. as good as any good grammar school. …it would be an ideal scenario for rural areas of the province would be, if at all possible, be allowed to have all-ability schools.'

'I don't think there is any easy solution to it. Yes. The solution. Comprehensive. In theory, yes, comprehensive education, but I am not sure, because to make comprehensive schools work and be truly comprehensive, they have to be big.

'I think it's very difficult and certainly a comprehensive system I would think politically would be a non-starter, because I think there is still a very strong lobby.'

'(Change), I know, will be very hard to do because there is such a strong lobby within the grammar school sector but …from this point of equality, of fairness, or equality of opportunity, and inequality, I think that is really something we have to look at.'

'I do think it needs debated fairly extensively and it often would seem that those who have the power to change are probably not for changing, and therefore I think it will

be an uphill struggle for a long time yet. But I do think that it needs to be radically looked at.'

'I don't see any easy solution, I think it's so deep in society that this division happens at eleven.'

The basis of these teachers' views appeared to vary. Very many expressed their desire for change in terms of justice, fairness and equality of opportunity. Others were mainly concerned at the damage they considered had been done to their pupils' sense of self-esteem and motivation by their experiences of Transfer and how this might affect their later development. Others also referred to this, but saw it as something of an interference to their pupils' schooling, as a cause of waste and delay to their learning and development. Several teachers commented adversely on the impact of the Common Curriculum on some secondary pupils – the requirement for a broad 'academic' curriculum was considered to be de-motivating. Their preferred option would be for the re-introduction of more vocational and practical subjects for those pupils more suited to these.

Secondary teachers who favoured ending selection, however, were characterised by a lack of confidence in the capacity of the education system to hear, or to act on their views. Phrases such as, 'they'll never listen to us', or 'it's all fixed in advance', were commonly used. They also appeared to feel that to argue for the introduction of an all-ability system of schooling was somehow discreditable – that because of adverse publicity about some schools in England, there would no longer be any public confidence in such a system.

In general, there was a strong perception that the forces of conservatism were, as they had been in the past, stronger than the forces for change, so, while many respondents hoped for change, there was considerable pessimism about the possibility of any shift of policy.

4.2.3   Grammar teachers' views

'I was thinking about it and in principle, I'm in favour of comprehensive education.'

'I don't think that we can avoid selection. I feel that selection is a natural part of life'

'Selection at 11+, I don't have a problem with.'

'I don't believe in comprehensives. I believe in horses for courses. I believe there are schools that can perform certain functions for certain youngsters and they should do that. I have a great respect for secondary schools, I do not think (people) should value grammar schools ahead of secondary schools.'

'the major disadvantage is you have this ... social segregation.   ....the division in this area is not so much on the basis of the religious divide .. it's on the basis of the social divide of grammar and secondary. .... In our cross-community project, involving all the schools ... the problems that might follow on from contact between the pupils is not on the basis of whether they go to a Maintained or Controlled school ...but is much more on the basis that ...one set of young people are perceived as being better than another set of young people.' (SG2)

'When you come to the nitty-gritty ... I think it's very difficult (to move to a comprehensive system) because ...you're in favour of the best possible comprehensive education, all the money that is involved ....and a good comprehensive school really needs to be bigger to provide all that is required. I think it's to do with size and money and (having) principals who can manage something as diverse as that. Heads here are used to managing a group of A-type children.'

'if they give a pupil teacher ratio of ten to one and told us to go comprehensive, I'd have no problem with it, provided they let me run it the way I wanted to, but that's not going to happen either, is it?'

Although most grammar school teachers favoured the retention of a selective system of post-primary schooling, overall they shared their secondary colleagues' sense of powerlessness and pessimism about whether their views would be heard. Although they clearly believed in the value of their work to the pupils they served, there was a sense that only a minority of public opinion shared this view. The fact of this research being undertaken, and its associated publicity, seemed to be viewed as 'the writing on the wall' for the grammar schools.

This pessimism may perhaps be attributed to the situation that, in both sectors, teachers seemed to be under great pressure, particularly to improve or maintain pupil performance in public examinations. Further, while the general need for parental support to enhance pupil learning was always emphasised, many teachers seemed to be anxious about very detailed scrutiny of their work by some parents and wary of the interventions of individual parents. All respondents spoke of much heavier work loads, taking more work home, greater accountability, and, in schools with declining

enrolments, of having to teach more hours, or a wider range of subjects with diminishing resources. In-service training opportunities were reported to have reduced for a variety of reasons, yet teachers felt that frequent innovations during the 1990s, both curricular and administrative, had been imposed without their consent and had placed heavy burdens on their time, knowledge, skills and energy. It may be inferred, perhaps, that the respondents' feelings of pessimism that their views would be ignored may be a reflection of their previous experiences of policy change and of other demands on their energy. Many teachers seemed to be tired and perhaps disillusioned.

SECTION FIVE

CONCLUSION

This research into the effects of open enrolment combined with academic selection for post-primary education has identified, in one local area, a number of important issues which are probably relevant for the education system more widely.

5.1   Social segregation

In the study area, it is clear from a number of analyses, using a range of data, that there is social, as well as academic segregation between the secondary and grammar sectors. Overall, levels of FSM entitlement were much higher in secondary schools, and analyses of pupils' family backgrounds showed higher percentages of children from manual backgrounds in these schools. This social segregation is likely to be the outcome of the association between pupils' family SES with both their entry or opting out of Transfer, and with the Transfer grade eventually attained. On both of these indicators, higher percentages of children from non-manual backgrounds entered the Transfer, and, having entered, gained grades A and B.

Separate analysis of the Year 12 and Year 8 pupils cohorts revealed that higher proportions of Year 8 pupils had opted out from the Transfer procedure. Even so, judged by the number of these children who had entered the Transfer test, over half of the Year 8 pupils in secondary schools may have aspired to a grammar school place.

Of the pupils who entered the Transfer procedure but did not attain an A or B grade, school placement by sector was also associated with fathers' social class status. Many more of these children from non-manual families had obtained grammar school places, compared with children of manual fathers (six times as many in the Year 8 group). Further, a much smaller proportion of the Year 8 group with manual backgrounds had obtained grammar school places than their Year 12 school fellows.

The introduction of new regulations for free home-to-school transport was reported to have affected schools in both sectors, but, given the social segregation which existed

in the area, these regulations are likely to have affected more adversely the choice options of lower income families, whose children were more likely to attend secondary schools.

5.2   Competition

There were many issues arising from competition for pupils between schools in both secondary and grammar sectors. In both, attention was paid to issues of school reputation and ethos. Several schools had also worked to develop a 'niche' within the local market, although there was some variety of emphasis in these.

All schools reported their concern to attract pupils from as wide a range of primary schools as possible and all had links with growing numbers of primary schools. In general, grammar schools admitted pupils from a greater number of primary schools than did secondary schools. However, more secondary than grammar schools had introduced areas of curriculum or other specialisms as part of their attempt to maintain enrolment. In the light of the generally declining levels of enrolment in the secondary schools, it may be questioned whether the costs of these efforts are outweighed by their benefits in attracting additional pupils.

The research did not have the opportunity to explore parents' reasons for making their choice of post-primary school. However, pupils' responses to this question revealed that, as expected, for most pupils the main determinants of choice were whether they had entered the Transfer procedure and the eventual Transfer grade attained. Beyond that, pupils reported the importance of their own views in the final choice of school and identified a range of what may be described as 'pull' and 'push' factors which shaped their choices. These varied to some extent between the secondary and grammar sectors: for secondary school pupils there was considerable evidence of the importance of family connections with the school.

5.2.1 <u>Aspects of the differential impact of open enrolment in combination with</u>
<u>academic selection</u>

The data obtained suggest that, since the introduction of open enrolment, the grammar schools have on the whole benefited at the expense of secondary schools. In the area under study, all four grammar schools had 'new' capacity to admit local pupils as a result of the closure of boarding departments during the last ten years. This has had serious effects on both the numbers and profile of pupils admitted to individual secondary schools.

5.2.2 <u>School intakes in the secondary sector</u>

In general, the area secondary schools had lost significant numbers of pupils since 1991. Three of the four older secondary schools were considerably under capacity, and in consequence had experienced teacher redundancies and a range of other budget-related difficulties.

In addition, in three of these four schools, the entry profile of pupils admitted had changed since 1991. Larger numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals were being admitted and fewer pupils with Transfer grades of C or better were applying for places. Instead, these pupils were gaining places in local grammar schools, or in the new integrated school. This 'creaming off' of what had formerly been the upper stream classes had skewed secondary schools' intakes towards pupils of lower ability, thus creating more demands on schools' financial, administrative and teaching resources to support special educational needs. Again, these changing demands were set in a context of budget pressures due to declining enrolments. Such problems were particularly acute in two of the schools.

These difficulties were not experienced by all of the secondary schools to the same extent. One of these schools had grown in size and was over-subscribed. However, it too, reported the skewing of the ability range of its intake.

All of these schools also reported a higher incidence, since 1991, of pupils with behavioural problems, and pupils from 'difficult' families. They believed that their work as teachers was often not supported by the families of their pupils.

The opening of an integrated school in the area was believed to have compounded some of these problems of declining enrolment.

5.2.3   *School intakes in the grammar sector*

Levels of enrolment in the grammar schools had not been affected in the same way or to the same extent. However, they were not uniform across the sector. There were two groups of school in the period under study: ones which had grown, were at capacity and admitted mainly A and B-graded Transfer pupils. The other schools were slightly under capacity and generally admitted larger proportions of C (and a few D) graded Transfer pupils. Historically, these would probably have been fee-payers in grammar schools, or would have attended secondary schools. These children were more likely to be from non-manual families than the C and D-graded pupils placed in the secondary sector.

One of these schools in the second group reported a higher incidence of pupil behavioural problems, and was in the process of considering the introduction of a wider range of subjects for GCSE to provide for some less academic pupils.

While the study was unable to quantify the numbers of post-11 pupils transferring out of grammar into secondary schools, all of the secondary school principals interviewed reported that they were asked to admit pupils who had been 'counselled out' of grammar schools. They were unhappy about this situation: they believed that these children should not have been admitted to grammar school in the first instance, and argued that, if admitted to their schools, these pupils often caused considerable problems.

The levels of GCSE attainment and the extent to which their pupils entered Further and Higher education across the grammar schools reflected these enrolment patterns.

5.2.4   *GCSE attainment levels in secondary schools*

Levels of attainment on the indicators used were not uniform across this sector. Pupils in two of the schools on average gained almost twice as many GCSE 'passes' at Grade C and above than their peers in the other secondary schools. In these two schools, more than twice as many of their pupils, on average, gained 5 or more GCSE passes at Grade C and above, and about three times as many gained 7 such passes.

5.2.5   *GCSE attainment in the grammar schools*

Although much higher overall than in the secondary sector, GCSE attainment levels were not uniform across the grammar schools. Pupils in the school which admitted the largest proportion of lower-graded Transfer pupils had on average lower levels of GCSE attainment than their peers. These differences were more marked on the 7+ GCSE indicator.

The analysis of the results of C and D-graded, and opted-out Transfer pupils who were in Year 12 in 1998-99, showed that those placed in grammar schools who were entered for GCSE attained higher levels of performance than their peers in secondary schools. However, in grammar schools, higher proportions of these C, D and opted-out pupils were not entered for any GCSEs.

5.3   Other general issues

5.3.1   *Effects on pupils*

For pupils in the area, the importance of success in the Transfer procedure has been magnified since the introduction of open enrolment. This has resulted in an increase in the pressures on primary teachers to get their pupils to 'pass the Eleven Plus'.

Pre-Transfer experiences

Uniformly pupils reported high levels of pre-Transfer test practice within schools at the expense of the 'normal' curriculum, and outside school hours. Levels of private coaching for the Transfer were also reported to be high and were seen as detrimental to many pupils by teachers. These pressures on pupils were reported to have had many adverse effects. These included high levels of anxiety in pupils (and concomitant levels of disappointment for those who did not succeed in the Transfer) and distortion of the upper primary curriculum, which may be responsible for the comments of post-primary teachers about perceived lower levels of incoming pupils' capacity to learn, or lower levels of prior knowledge and understanding.

The experiences of opted-out pupils

This issue emerged unexpectedly as a result of comments by some secondary school teachers. Those comments were followed up and confirmed in interviews with both Year 12 and Year 8 pupils, both opted-in and opted-out. For many pupils opted-out of the Transfer procedure their experiences of schooling from the middle of Primary 6 until their eventual transfer to post-primary school were of being marginalised and neglected within their class groups. Teacher emphasis was given to practice for Transfer testing and teacher attention was given to those who would be taking the test. This study was unable to assess the extent of this problem overall, but it seems clear that, in a number of primary schools, up to half of their pupils may receive little attention or interest, and are asked to do little substantial learning for the last eighteen months of their primary schooling. Data suggested three main adverse effects of this practice:

- The reduced opportunities for these children to learn and develop
- The resulting reduced motivation of these children to engage with learning
- The psychological segregation of these children from their 'smarter' peers, and their sense of being less worthy

Longer-term consequences of being unsuccessful in the Transfer

For more than half of the Transfer entrants who did not gain a grammar school place, many longer term consequences which adversely affected their later learning were also reported. These included feelings of failure, damaged self-esteem and self-image, and low levels of confidence in their ability to learn. Many reported separation from their primary school friends who had gone to grammar schools, and others believed that they and their schools were considered inferior. There was some evidence from pupils in grammar schools which supported these beliefs.

Although often enjoying their secondary school experiences and anticipating productive careers, many still felt resentful about their experiences of Transfer and the pressures, anxieties and disappointments they had suffered. Most felt that the system had been unfair to them.

The results of coaching for Transfer

Some grammar school teachers believed that growing numbers of those admitted to their schools, including children who had attained A grades at Transfer, had been coached 'beyond their real ability'. For a number of these teachers, this indicated the unreliability of the Transfer test, and they wished for more rigorous and reliable testing procedures so that such children would not be eligible for a grammar school place.

Principals and other grammar school teachers focused more on the issue of how to support such children once they had been admitted. In several of the grammar schools, mechanisms to provide such support had been developed. These included smaller teaching groups and the provision of withdrawal support for literacy and numeracy. Principals in two schools indicated that there was some pressure from a number of their teachers to counsel such children out of grammar school as they were 'unable to cope'. However these principals expressed the view that, having admitted these pupils in the first place, the school had a responsibility to support them as long as they were working well, and, in any case, budgetary pressures made it important to retain as many pupils as possible.

5.4   *Effects on teachers and schools*

The issue most widely reported was that of the relative status of schools. The main 'division' was that between secondary and grammar schools. However, enrolment, entry profile and other data provide clear evidence for the existence of a number of 'pecking orders' of schools within different groups: some schools enjoyed a relatively higher status and higher esteem than others of the same type.

In the grammar sector, the entry profiles of schools MG1 and MG2 provide evidence of relative status, and in the secondary sector, schools MI and MS1, both over-subscribed, show characteristics different from the other three secondary schools. Paradoxically, MS1 was also the school which undertook no public relations activities. However, without data from parents about the reasons for their preferences, it is not possible to say with certainty what the bases of these differences were.

In general, teachers' opinions on these issues was related to the school sector in which they worked. While grammar school teachers mainly supported the principle of selection and the existence of separate schools, most secondary teachers believed that the current Transfer system, in conjunction with open enrolment, operated unfairly to the advantage of grammar schools, and pupils and teachers in those schools. The situation of school SG1 was often cited as evidence of this 'unfair competition'. They felt that they, their pupils and their schools were generally perceived as being 'second class', compared to grammar schools. They believed that this perception was held by grammar school children and teachers, as well as by the general public.

Many of them also believed that teaching in the secondary sector was more demanding than in the grammar sector, and that it had become even more demanding as a result of the introduction of open enrolment. The psychological damage done to many of their pupils by 'failure' in the Transfer test, the skewing of the ability range of pupils admitted to their schools, in conjunction with increased levels of social and behavioural difficulties meant that the teaching task confronting them was much more challenging than that faced by grammar school teachers. In addition, most of them

were being forced to meet these challenges in a general situation of declining enrolments and therefore declining resources.

5.5   Opinions about the need for change and the possibility of change

Teachers' and pupils' opinions about these issues was mixed, and in general, was associated with school sector.

There was general agreement that the current arrangements for selection were inappropriate, although the grounds for these views varied. For some, the current tests were unreliable: too many children could be coached into grammar school. The views of many others criticised the preparation for testing and the pressures generated as a result of this, the age at which children were tested, and the harmful effects of 'failure'.

Secondary school teachers, in particular, criticised current arrangements for open enrolment, on the grounds that it operated to the advantage of every grammar school, including any which might not have a high academic reputation. Many such teachers argued that if academic selection were to continue, grammar schools should only be allowed to admit A and B-graded Transfer pupils. They criticised the social segregation which accompanied the current arrangement, and argued for parity of esteem between secondary and grammar schools.

On the principle of selection, opinion generally varied according to sector: most secondary teachers and pupils were opposed to it, while most of those interviewed in grammar schools believed that it was necessary and should be retained (but improved). However, each group of teachers believed that the weight of opinion lay with the 'opposition'. Grammar school teachers felt that the position of grammar schools had been undermined, while secondary teachers believed that the strength of the grammar school lobby would prevent any change.

Those opposed to selection were also generally reluctant to suggest a preferred alternative system of post-primary education: while the logical consequence of the

points they were making was some form of all-ability schooling, bad publicity about some schools in England appeared to make them reluctant to use the word 'comprehensive'.

A feeling shared by both teacher groups was one of powerlessness and pessimism. Most seemed to believe that, even in the event of any decision being made to change current systems of selection or open enrolment, there was little chance of their experiences being acknowledged, or their views being heard or acted upon by policy makers.

References

Adler, M and Raab, G M (1988) Exit, Choice And Loyalty: The Impact Of Parental Choice On Secondary School Admissions In Edinburgh And Dundee. Journal of Education Policy, 3 (2), 155 - 179.

Echols, F H and Willms, J D (1995) Reasons For School Choice In Scotland, Journal of Education Policy, 10 (2), 143 - 156.

Waslander, S and Thrupp, M (1995) Choice, Competition And Segregation: An Empirical Analysis Of A New Zealand Secondary School Market 1990 - 1993, Journal of Education Policy, 10 (1), 1 - 26.