

INSPECTION REPORT

GOSFORTH EAST MIDDLE SCHOOL

Newcastle

LEA area: Newcastle

Unique reference number: 108521

Headteacher: Mr. G. Oliver

Reporting inspector: Mr. Peter Parish
4433

Dates of inspection: 14 – 15 March 2000

Inspection number: 185033

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Middle deemed secondary

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 9 - 13

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Harewood Road
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Newcastle upon Tyne

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Jean Banks

Date of previous inspection: 30 January 1995

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Number of full time pupils:	469	(larger than average)
Pupils with E.A.L:	13%	(higher than average)
Pupils entitled to free school meals:	13%	(about average nationally)
Pupils on the register of S.E.N.:	23%	(about average nationally)
Average number of pupils per teacher:	21.5	(broadly average)

The school has increased significantly in size since the last inspection in January 1995. The attainment of pupils when they join the school covers the full range from very high to low. One quarter of the pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL) are at an early stage of English language acquisition. Taken as a whole, the intake has above average attainment.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Gosforth East Middle School is a good school. The above average attainment and good progress of pupils reflect the consistency of the high quality provision which is a feature of most aspects of the teaching, curriculum, organisation and management of the school. The school's strengths far outweigh its weaknesses. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The ethos of the school is very good with a well-established and very effective climate for learning in which relationships are very impressive.
- The very good behaviour and attitudes of the pupils have a positive effect on the quality of their learning and attainment.
- Arrangements for behaviour management are very effective.
- Teaching is good. There is a high level of commitment by teaching staff.
- Standards are above average because good teaching and very good behaviour lead to high quality learning.
- The school makes good provision for pupils' welfare.
- The leadership and management of the school are good, a strong feature of which is the effective teamwork of the staff.

What could be improved

- Training and support for teaching staff who have responsibility for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and the quality of some Individual Education Plans (IEPs) to support pupils with SEN.
- Arrangements for heads of department and other middle managers to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning.
- The amount of time allocated to some lessons results in some pupils being taught for less time than that recommended nationally.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress since the last inspection in January 1995. Results in national tests at Key Stage 2 have continued to improve over the past four years and performance in all three core subjects is above the national average and above average for similar schools. The trend in improvement in all core subjects is broadly in line with the national trend. The good quality of teaching evident at the previous inspection has continued to improve. Of the four areas for action identified in the last inspection, two issues have been tackled successfully and sound progress has been made in the other two areas. The good quality of teaching has been enhanced by participation in projects concerned with improving pupils' thinking skills and teachers' questioning skills. Good use of pupil performance data has been made to identify and target additional support for pupils who are underachieving. In lessons, a wider range of activities is being used to match the different learning needs of pupils. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have developed their skills of monitoring and evaluation and are using these for school self-evaluation and lesson observation. The skills of middle managers and the other senior managers now need to be developed and refined so that they can be more greatly involved in this process. The school has made very good use of grants available to it to improve the premises. Significant improvements include the creation of a very attractive school library.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in national tests in English, mathematics and science, taken at the end of Key Stage 2.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	B	B	B	B
Mathematics	C	B	B	B
Science	B	C	B	B
All core subjects	B	B	B	B

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

In 1999, the proportion of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 gaining level 4 (the expected level for age) or above in national tests was above average in mathematics and science, when compared to all schools and also when compared to similar schools. In English, the proportion of pupils gaining level 4 or above was above average compared to schools nationally and in line with similar schools. Compared to similar schools, the percentage of pupils gaining higher levels, level 5 or above, was well above average for English and above average for mathematics and science. This picture, of above average attainment by the end of Key Stage 2, is confirmed by standards of work seen by inspectors and pupils make good progress throughout this key stage.

The Key Stage 2 results have improved since the last inspection. The trend in improvement has kept pace with improvements nationally. The targets at the end of Key Stage 2 for attainment in English and mathematics, that have been agreed with the LEA for the summer 2000, have been substantially met already. The targets for 2001 are satisfactory

considering the number pupils at the school with English as an additional language, although only a one percent improvement will be required.

Evidence from inspectors' observation of lessons, discussion with pupils and scrutiny of pupils' work shows that the above average standards are being maintained in Key Stage 3 by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 8. Pupils make good progress in Years 7 and 8.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	In all four year groups pupils consistently display very good attitudes to their work across all subjects. This is a strength of the school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is consistently very good in classrooms and around the school. Pupils show respect for each other. A major strength.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils see themselves as part of the school community. They show initiative, work together well in lessons and are willing to take responsibility. There are very good relationships throughout the whole school community at all levels.
Attendance	Attendance is well above the national average for middle schools. Unauthorised absence is well below the national average.

The attitudes, behaviour, relationships and personal development of pupils are very good. They are major strengths of the school and reflect maintenance of the very positive position at the last inspection. Parents very much appreciate these aspects of the school's provision. Pupils are happy at school; they enjoy their work, are enthusiastic and want to please their teachers. They are attentive in lessons, concentrate well and take pride in producing good work.

Attendance is very good. It is above the national average for similar schools. Unauthorised absence is almost non-existent and well below the national average. Because pupils like school, they attend regularly, arrive at school on time and are punctual to lessons. They respond enthusiastically to the effective incentive and reward schemes for encouraging excellent attendance. There is a very low incidence of exclusion at the school, with only one short term exclusion in the past year. The school's strengths in pupils' attitudes, behaviour, relationships and attendance have a very positive effect on pupils' attainment and progress.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 9-11 years	aged 11-13 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

Teachers plan lessons thoroughly and have clear objectives which they communicate effectively to pupils. A range of teaching methods is employed which ensures that pupils are well managed and that they remain focused upon, and engaged with, the content of lessons. Teachers have high expectations of pupils in respect of their ability to manage and organise their learning as, for example, in group work. They also expect high standards of behaviour. Learning support staff notably those working with pupils who have English as an additional language have a positive impact upon the pupils' achievements and progress. Basic skills in literacy and numeracy are taught effectively across the school. There is consistently good quality of teaching in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Excellent teaching is found in music. Teaching was satisfactory or better in all lessons observed. It was very good or excellent in 17% of lessons and good in a further 60%.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good provision. Strategies for teaching reading and numeracy skills are effective. A range of extra-curricular activities, particularly in sport and music, is offered which enrich the curriculum and pupils' skills.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Procedures for identifying pupils with SEN are effective. Weaknesses exist in some aspects of the infrastructure for supporting them. There has been a lack of stability and continuity in staff acting as the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO). There is variation in the quality and content of some individual education plans (IEPs). Nevertheless most pupils with SEN make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Pupils with English as an additional language are well supported. They learn well and make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes good provision for pupils' personal and health education. It successfully promotes awareness of their moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development. Satisfactory provision is made for spiritual development. However, acts of collective worship allow too short a period for reflection and development of the spiritual dimension of the curriculum.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes good care of its pupils. There are effective arrangements for monitoring pupils' academic progress. The pastoral care system is well organised and effective. Behaviour management is a strength.

Teachers know their pupils very well and take good care of them. The school has a very strong and effective pastoral support system and, together with the comprehensive arrangements for monitoring pupils' academic progress, they represent significant strengths of the school. Only a small number of staff have had recent staff training about child protection issues. The school has a particular strength in music. One year group (Year 6) is

offered lessons in Italian as an extra-curricular activity. This is a well-supported and successful initiative involving the local high school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	There is good leadership. The headteacher provides clear direction for maintaining and raising standards. The consultative style of management contributes to the commitment of staff to high standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils its statutory duties well. There is a high level of experience available to the school from governors. The governing body has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and priorities for development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good systems exist for monitoring teaching. Good use is made of performance data to monitor performance and target pupils requiring additional support. School self-evaluation processes are in place. There is scope for more involvement from middle managers in these processes.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes very good use of the resources available to it. Costs per pupil are below the national average. Taking account of the high degree of consistency in the good quality of provision, the school gives good value for money.

The headteacher, senior management team and governors provide good leadership and direction for the school. The consultative style of management adopted by the headteacher has contributed to the significant commitment to high standards displayed by the teaching and non-teaching staff. The effective monitoring and review procedures employed by the headteacher has had a very positive effect upon the consistently good quality of teaching. There is efficient implementation of systems within the school and this has helped to make the school a very orderly community characterised by the very good behaviour of the pupils. The school is guided by a clear vision and supported by an effective school development plan. The work of pupils is kept under review well. There is very effective targeting of support for individual pupils to assist with raising standards. The positive working relationships that exist between the governing body and the senior management team contribute to the good sense of teamwork and partnership.

The effective review procedures employed by the headteacher in monitoring classroom practice are only beginning to be used by a small number of heads of department, indicating that middle managers now need to develop further their understanding of this aspect of their role and the associated skills. The support that the governing body gives to reviewing SEN is currently underdeveloped following the departure of a governor who was skilled in this area.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Pupils make good progress · The good ethos of the school · The high standards of behaviour · The good teaching at the school · Children are expected to work hard · The good leadership and management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Support for children with special educational needs · The behaviour of some pupils on public transport to and from the school · The range of activities outside of lessons · Information about how well children are doing

The inspection team agrees with parents' views about the many positive aspects of the school. The school does provide a good range of activities outside of school lessons. However, there is restricted access to these opportunities in the first two terms when pupils join the school in Year 5, in order to provide time for pupils to settle in to school routines. There are good opportunities for parents to be kept informed about how well their children are doing. Parents can make appointments to see senior managers and teachers at any stage during the year. Appointments are sensibly arranged to minimise disruption to lessons. Further training support is needed for staff involved with special educational needs teaching. Some individual education plans for pupils with SEN are not sufficiently precise in their targets or learning activities. There is some high-spirited behaviour by a small number of pupils on some school buses. This is beyond the jurisdiction of the school, however, the school does liaise regularly with the bus company to discuss issues of behaviour, and where appropriate takes follow up action with pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The ethos of the school is very good with a well established and very effective climate for learning in which relationships are very impressive.

1. The ethos of the school as reflected in the climate and environment for learning, attitudes to work, relationships and commitment to high standards is very good. The ethos of the school promotes and develops very good self-esteem amongst pupils and has very beneficial effects upon their personal development, learning and progress. Children respond well to the clean, pleasant and stimulating appearance of the learning environment.

The very good behaviour and attitudes of the pupils have a positive effect on the quality of their learning and on their attainment.

2. The previous inspection reported positively about pupils' attitudes and behaviour, a position which has been maintained and improved in the intervening years. The very good behaviour and attitudes of the pupils of all ages, in and out of lessons, are striking features of the school and major strengths. They make a very significant contribution to the above average standards of attainment in the school and to pupils' good progress; they help to sustain the very good ethos in school.
3. Pupils have a clear understanding of the school's rules and they exhibit very high standards of responsible behaviour to teachers and to classroom friends. Pupils are polite and courteous. They move quickly, purposefully and in an orderly fashion between lessons. They show respect for property around the school and treat books and equipment with care.
4. Throughout the school pupils show consistently positive attitudes to their work across all subjects. They are enthusiastic and eager to participate in the varied activities planned for them in their lessons. They listen attentively to teachers and to each other in lessons and always settle quickly to their work. They take pride in their presentation of work whether it is written exercises or practical activities. Pupils concentrate well in lessons. They work hard on individual tasks to complete them by the end of the lesson. Pupils with special educational needs have very positive attitudes to their work and respond well in lessons.
5. Relationships between pupils and with adults are very good. Pupils show respect, sensitivity and understanding for each other's feelings. They take an active part in whole class discussions and willingly take their turn when making contributions.
6. The high levels of attendance, consistently exemplary behaviour and attitudes to learning, together with a concern to do well in lessons, all combine towards the achievement of high standards. Unauthorised absence is almost non-existent. The vast majority of pupils arrive at the school on time. Punctuality to lessons on the part of both teachers and pupils is very good. Opportunities are taken to celebrate good attendance in assemblies. There has been only one fixed period exclusion during the last year.

Arrangements for behaviour management are very effective.

7. The school has very comprehensive and effective arrangements for behaviour management. Behaviour throughout the school, both in and out of classrooms, is consistently very good. The discipline policy establishes the framework for behaviour management and is founded upon developing positive attitudes towards behaviour and the promotion of caring and sensitive relationships. There are clear guidelines for staff and pupils. Pupils clearly understand the school's rules and respond enthusiastically and responsibly to the various arrangements and initiatives, including the house system, designed to promote and reinforce good behaviour and positive attitudes to school. The school's anti-bullying policy is effective and results in vigilance by staff and proper investigation of any allegations of incidence of bullying. A very strong pastoral care support system operates effectively with regular and frequent planned meetings of year group teachers to monitor behaviour and academic progress.

Teaching is good. There is a high level of commitment by teaching staff.

8. The quality of teaching is good at both Key Stages. In all lessons the teaching is satisfactory or better. In 60% of lessons teaching is good and in a further 17% it is very good or excellent. Excellent teaching is found in music. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Examples of very good teaching are found in English, mathematics and science.
9. Teachers plan lessons thoroughly and have clear objectives which they communicate effectively to pupils. Teachers show interest in developing their skills and many have been engaged in projects that enhance teaching. A range of teaching methods is employed in lessons which ensures that pupils are well managed and that they remain focused upon and engaged with the content of the lesson. This was seen in science where the involvement of the department in the CASE project (Cognitive Acceleration in Science Education) has helped to develop effective questioning and discussion strategies. Teachers have high expectations of pupils in respect of their ability to manage and organise their learning, as in group work in English, and work on computers in French. Teachers also expect high standards of behaviour. Learning support staff, notably those teaching pupils with English as an additional language have a positive impact upon the pupils' achievements and progress. Basic skills are taught effectively across the school.
10. The teaching of English, including basic skills in reading and writing is good at both Key Stages. Teachers set clear objectives and have good subject knowledge. They have good strategies for the teaching of reading and make effective use of good resources for learning. Good pace is established in lessons such as the literacy hour in Year 5 and Year 6. These features contribute significantly to the high standards achieved and the good progress made by the pupils.
11. The teaching of mathematics is consistently good with some teaching of a very high standard at both Key Stages. Teachers plan and prepare their work thoroughly. They teach basic skills of numeracy effectively. Lessons are well structured with clear learning objectives explained to pupils. Teachers have a secure and confident subject knowledge; they promote demanding work. Teachers manage pupils well and control their classes very effectively. In Year 8, teaching about the

characteristics of a circle was very successful in realising all of the lesson objectives because the quality of questioning and feedback to pupils ensured that all pupils were involved in an understanding of how formulae were devised.

12. Teaching in science is good. Good teaching is characterised by detailed planning with lesson objectives clearly outlined and shared with pupils. Lesson outlines are usually written on the board and referred to at the end of the lesson. Teachers have good subject knowledge. There is effective classroom management and positive relationships are evident. Teachers use good questioning techniques, where questions are open-ended and encourage pupils to interpret information to arrive at the answer. Pupils at both Key Stages show interest and sustain concentration in lessons. They are co-operative and work well in groups. They are able to manage equipment and time well when doing experiments, for instance, in Year 8 when finding the range of colours displayed by universal indicator solution in different acids and alkalis.
13. The excellent teaching of the music teacher resulted from expert subject knowledge, high expectations, well-paced exposition and the use of pupils to demonstrate and to tutor other pupils.

Standards are above average because good teaching and very good behaviour lead to high quality learning.

14. Standards in English, mathematics and science are above national averages at the end of Key Stage 2. In 1999, compared to similar schools, the percentage of pupils gaining higher levels, level 5 or above, was well above average for English and above average for mathematics and science. In 1999, the attainment of boys and girls in mathematics and science was broadly similar. In English, girls attain higher standards than boys in national tests; however the difference between the performance of boys and girls is less than differences in performance nationally. Standards in all three core subjects exceed national expectations by the end of Year 8. The Key Stage 2 results have improved over the last four years. The trend in improvement has kept pace with improvements nationally.
15. In English, at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils attain standards which are above national expectations. Pupils in Year 5 demonstrate knowledge of explanatory texts. Pupils in Year 6 read books such as *Jabberwocky* fluently and rhythmically. Year 6 pupils can explain their understanding of rhyme and rhythm in poetry. Standards of writing are above average. Pupils are able to annotate an explanatory text and change active sentences to the passive form. At the end of Year 8, in Key Stage 3, standards are above national expectations. At Key Stage 3 pupils speak with confidence in discussion and are able to articulate a point of view on deer hunting. Others are imaginative in their invention of meanings for Shakespearean words. Much of the work seen at Key Stage 3 was oral and pupils expressed views and spoke to the class with assurance. Reading lessons are well planned and pupils participate in a variety of activities. They demonstrate good engagement with the books. They read with good understanding and can express their opinion on the reading materials both orally and in their reading diaries.

16. In mathematics, standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are above average when compared to all schools and to schools with similar intakes. Inspection findings confirm the national test results at the end of Key Stage 2. By the end of Key Stage 2 many pupils use different strategies for addition in 4-digit numbers and understand the importance of place value. They use and understand mathematical terms such as equivalence, numerator and denominator and order fractions by magnitude accurately. They are developing a good understanding of mathematical relationships and mathematical reasoning. Most pupils can construct nets of standard shapes and successfully complete practical exercises in making shapes such as cubes and triangular prisms. They can describe the properties of isosceles triangles. They record data and draw conclusions. They exhibit above average facility and attainment in mental and oral work. Pupils with SEN make good gains in knowledge and understanding about “rounding up and down” and “the difference between”. Attainment at the end of Year 8 is also above national expectations. By the end of Year 8 higher attaining pupils solve numerical problems with confidence. Most pupils complete exercises in rounding and estimating accurately and understand significance and significant figures. They show a very good understanding of number relationships and attainment is above average in using and applying mathematics. By the end of Year 8 many pupils know and understand formulae relating to the circle and most complete constructions, record data and draw conclusions from their work accurately. They use calculators effectively. Lessons follow the format for delivery of the National Numeracy Strategy.
17. In science, standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are above national expectations. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils demonstrate good understanding of scientific concepts. They are able to outline the main characteristics of living things. Pupils demonstrate good skills in handling and using equipment. In Year 8, by the time pupils leave the school, they are attaining levels above national expectations. By the end of Year 8 pupils have good recall of scientific terms. They are able to describe the main functions of the circulatory system. They have good investigative skills and can design experiments to provide a fair test. Pupils have good understanding of concepts such as acidity and can apply their knowledge to investigative situations.
18. Progress of pupils with special educational needs is good because they have positive attitudes to their work and their behaviour in lessons is very good. They listen attentively to their teachers and work hard to achieve the targets set for them. They work well, but with varying success in completing their tasks both in the classroom and in their withdrawal groups. Because their attitudes and behaviour are very good their learning skills are developing well.
19. The needs of pupils with English as an additional language are being met and they make good progress because they receive good support. Teachers are aware of their needs and work sensitively with the pupils where necessary to help them understand key words or concepts.
20. The attainment of higher attaining pupils is effectively extended through a range of ‘challenge’ projects. An example of this is the project work in Year 8 on energy sources. The project allows pupils to combine learning in geography and science with the development of presentation skills in information technology lessons to produce a computerised slide show on different types of energy source. The project allows for extended writing and the development of research skills as well as skills

of extracting and summarising key points. Some students are able to include information researched from the Internet in their projects.

21. Pupils make good progress and respond positively to teaching. They show interest in their work and are able to sustain concentration and work independently. For example, in a Year 7 mathematics lesson, pupils made very good progress in gaining and applying skills of estimating and rounding because of their excellent attentiveness and behaviour founded in their enjoyment and interest in their work. There are many other examples where pupils' positive attitudes lead to enhanced learning. The senior management and staff at the school have succeeded in creating a climate for learning where high standards are expected. The commitment to high standards is reinforced through regular achievers' assemblies where a range of pupils' achievements including academic performance is celebrated.

The school makes good provision for pupils' welfare

22. There are comprehensive arrangements to monitor academic progress and pupils with particular problems. Good systems for tracking pupils' performance and targeting additional support are in place. This work is led effectively by the deputy headteacher. The school uses 'Assessment Manager' software to record pupils' key performance data. As a result, specific groups of pupils who would benefit from additional support can be easily identified. Information about pupils to be targeted is communicated to all staff through the circulation of a register of support needs. This allows effective support strategies for those pupils showing signs of disaffection, as well as highlighting higher attaining pupils who need further challenge. Procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs are well established.
23. The school's pastoral support system is well organised; it identifies pupils with long and short-term difficulties and ensures that appropriate information is disseminated to all appropriate staff. Personal development is monitored within the overall pastoral support system. There are effective procedures to ensure adequate health and safety standards and for monitoring and recording attendance. Behaviour management is very effective in school; pupils understand the system and the consequences of good and bad behaviour.

The leadership and management of the school are good, a strong feature of which is the effective teamwork.

24. There is good leadership. The headteacher provides clear direction for maintaining and raising standards at the school. The school has a clear vision statement that emphasises striving for excellence. It is backed up by a series of key statements relating to important aspects of an effective school. The statements cover ethos, resources, curriculum and teaching, assessment and attainment, community and pupils and leadership and management. Each key statement is supported by a list of objectives indicating what the school intends to provide. These provide a good basis for giving the school direction. The aims and operation of the school fully reflect the fact that the school has a high proportion of children from different ethnic groups.
25. Good and developing systems exist for the monitoring of teaching. The headteacher observes the lessons of all teachers at least once each year. This is supported by

effective systems of appraisal through a professional development interview. The school has recently been successful in gaining the Investors in People award. Systems for the induction of newly qualified teachers (NQTs) are effective and good mentoring arrangements are in place. Staff involved with mentoring have good contacts with local universities and are experienced in supporting students in initial teacher training. They have also been engaged in projects to look at teaching and learning approaches and are therefore well placed to support NQTs.

26. The monitoring systems have been further enhanced through the training the headteacher and deputy have received in school self-evaluation. This was put into practice effectively in a two-day review of the school carried out jointly with LEA inspectors in November 1999. As a consequence, the leaders of the school have a very good understanding of the majority of strengths and weaknesses of the school.
27. The school development plan is clear; the priorities of the plan form a suitable basis for further improvement. The plan is appropriately structured and detailed so that responsibilities and resources are outlined. Subject development plans are in place and conform to the same structure as the main plan, giving a consistent approach. There is good consultation and involvement of staff and governors in the construction of the plan and this has contributed to a wide commitment to improvement. Planning processes occur within a well thought out cycle over the year.
28. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties well. There is a high level of experience available to the school from the governors. There is a very good working relationship between the headteacher and chair of governors, who has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
29. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have continued to develop their skills by an appropriate attention to in-service training. Both have participated in an 'Investment in Excellence' programme for personal development. The headteacher has undertaken training through the Leadership Programme for Serving Headteachers (LPSH).
30. The school is an efficient establishment. Standards of financial planning are thorough and high. Finances are effectively used to support educational priorities. The way in which the school invested additional resources to employ a full time teaching assistant to support children with EAL is an example of this. The attractive development of the library from a LEA grant provides another example. The school makes good use of specific grants. The school found additional funds to enhance a security grant and very effectively improved both the security and appearance of the school entrance area. Teachers' expertise and experience are used effectively within the school. Resources for learning and accommodation are very well used. A rolling programme for improvement to the internal decoration of the school has been maintained so that the school is in good decorative order.
31. All pupils benefit from, and have equal access to, the curriculum provided by the school. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Pupils with EAL are well supported across both Key Stages, are able to access the whole curriculum, contribute to oral work in class and are successful readers.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Training and support for teaching staff who have responsibility for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and the quality of some Individual Education Plans (IEPs) to support pupils with SEN.

32. Although pupils with special educational needs make good progress, show positive attitudes to their work and behave very well in lessons, the arrangements for their support have some shortcomings. There is scope for improvement. The school has had four separate special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs) over a period of four years. This turnover in staff was due to the promotion of the SENCOs to other schools. The lack of stability and continuity in this aspect of provision for SEN has resulted in insufficient whole school training in matters related to SEN. The present SENCO, who has been in post for 6 months, has not yet received any substantial training for her position. There has been some specific training about methodology for promoting differentiated teaching and learning activities.
33. At present there is no named link governor for SEN following the recent departure of a governor who was skilled in this area. There is currently no working group for advancing issues concerned with SEN, however matters concerning pupils' special education needs are discussed at staff meetings and procedures for identifying pupils with SEN are well established and effective.
34. Individual Education Plans are in place for pupils on the Special Educational Needs register. There is variability in the quality of IEPs. Some do not provide clear learning goals and are not subject specific with prioritised targets and focused learning objectives. At times, targets are too broad to be very effective. They do not contain sufficiently precise details of the steps required to take learning forward. There is some confusion amongst pupils about the IEP system. The views of pupils are not included in IEPs and there is limited information about what pupils can do well. The present staffing arrangements, however, are well placed for positive development and improvement in this area.

Arrangements for heads of department and other middle managers in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning.

35. The effective review and monitoring procedures employed by the headteacher in monitoring classroom practice are only beginning to be followed by a small number of heads of department, indicating that middle managers now need to develop further their understanding of this aspect of their role and the associated skills. This is an area identified in the school development plan.

The amount of time allocated to some lessons results in pupils being taught for less time than that recommended nationally.

36. The current timing of lessons during the school day has some shortcomings. The school operates a five period day. Lessons in the morning are mostly 1 hour long whereas lessons in the afternoon are 55 minutes in length. In Years 5 and 6, the slightly shorter lessons make it difficult to fully cover the structure of the literacy

hour. At Key Stage 3, the total amount of teaching time is less than the recommended 24 hours for middle schools.

37. In Years 7 and 8, some lessons are split into two to provide a carousel arrangement for teaching science, mathematics and French. This results in a 30 minute session. This time is eroded when there is an assembly immediately before the lesson and on these occasions teaching only lasts for 25 minutes. The short length of these lessons restricts the range of learning activities. In some sessions the time taken to introduce the lesson and draw the lesson to a conclusion represents a disproportionate amount of the time available.
38. In Year 6 pupils have five daily lessons each week in which the full structure of the literacy hour is followed. In Year 5, due to a one-year transitional arrangement, only three out of the five lessons each week follow the structure. There is therefore some discontinuity with the pattern of provision in the feeder first schools and in Year 6 at the school.
39. Assemblies do not fully comply with requirements for an act of collective worship because insufficient time is given for personal reflection by pupils.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

40. The school should now
 - (1) improve the training and support for teaching staff co-ordinating provision for pupils with special educational needs and the consistency of good practice in the writing and use of Individual Education Plans to support pupils with SEN;
 - (2) develop the role of middle managers in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning;
 - (3) improve the use of curricular time by seeking greater uniformity in the length of lessons throughout the school day.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	35
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	9

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	14	60	23	0	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y99 – Y2000
Number of pupils on the school's roll	469
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	49

Special educational needs	Y99 – Y2000
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	107

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	63

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	17
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.4
National comparative data	6.0

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.4

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	55	55	110

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	41	44	48
	Girls	44	43	49
	Total	85	87	97
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (68)	79 (61)	88 (71)
	National	70 (64.1)	69 (57.9)	78 (68.6)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	40	44	45
	Girls	44	42	49
	Total	84	86	94
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (61)	79 (63)	86 (70)
	National	68 (64.2)	69 (64.2)	75 (70.4)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	3
Black – other	0
Indian	7
Pakistani	11
Bangladeshi	25
Chinese	1
White	422
Any other minority ethnic group	

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups		

This table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y[] – Y[]

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	21.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: Y[] – Y[]

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	161

Deployment of teachers: Y[] – Y[]

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	82.2
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Average teaching group size: Y[] – Y[]

Key Stage 2	27.2
Key Stage 3	23.4

Financial information

Financial year	98/99
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	£
Total income	747,938
Total expenditure	757,391
Expenditure per pupil	1,676
Balance brought forward from previous year	40,487
Balance carried forward to next year	31,034

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	469
Number of questionnaires returned	213

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	40	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	53	40	4	1	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	48	2	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	53	13	1	1
The teaching is good.	50	45	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	34	50	11	3	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	29	4	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74	23	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	38	51	8	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	62	33	3	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	35	5	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	39	41	10	1	9

Other issues raised by parents

Written comments were included with 21 (10%) of the questionnaires returned. The majority of respondents commented positively on the standards of work and behaviour achieved by pupils at the school. Many praised the commitment of the headteacher and teachers at the school. A small number of parents, particularly those with pupils in Year 5 expressed the wish for better parent-teacher consultation at an earlier stage in the year. Some parents stated their concerns about special needs provision at the school. At the end of the parents' meeting a small number of parents raised a question about the standards of behaviour of a minority of pupils on the public service buses to the school.