

INSPECTION REPORT

THE THOMAS CORAM SCHOOL

Berkhamsted

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117559

Headteacher: Mr Colin Stevens

Reporting inspector: Brian Rowe
1695

Dates of inspection: 06 - 08 March 2000

Inspection number: 9194627

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Middle deemed Secondary
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	9 - 13
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Swing Gate Lane Berkhamsted Hertfordshire
Postcode:	HP4 2RP
Telephone number:	01442 866757
Fax number:	01442 865467
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Julie Wakely
Date of previous inspection:	November 1994

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	
Brian Rowe	Registered inspector
Gail Ellisdon	Lay inspector
Terry Bailless	Team inspector
David Benstock	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

PkR Educational Consultants Ltd
6 Sherman Road
Bromley
Kent BR1 3JH

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The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The Thomas Coram School is a mixed Church of England Voluntary Aided Middle School for the age range 9 – 13. It is one of two middle schools in the town of Berkhamsted. The school draws pupils from the town and surrounding area. The area is relatively affluent, although a significant proportion of pupils comes from less prosperous families.

There are 387 pupils on roll (205 boys and 182 girls). The percentage of pupils from ethnic minority groups is 2.8 per cent, which is very low compared to national averages. There are significantly more boys than girls in Year 7. A significant proportion of pupils joins the school in Year 7 from a neighbouring local authority to avoid the selective education system. The proportion of pupils receiving free school meals (9 per cent) has remained much the same each year, although this figure may vary slightly between year groups. This is lower than the national averages (broadly average is 10.6 – 18.8 per cent). Eight pupils live in homes where English is not the first language, speaking either Punjabi or Urdu.

An analysis of pupils' attainment on entry, from reviewing the Key Stage 1 and Year 4 (optional) national test scores and other standardised tests taken at school indicates that levels of attainment are close to the national average. One hundred and four (26.8 per cent) pupils are on the SEN register, 10 of whom have statements (2.6 per cent) which is broadly in line with national trends.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The Thomas Coram School is a good and effective school. It achieves academic standards that are as good as they should be, and, in English and science, they are better. Pupils have positive attitudes about the school and are keen to improve their own performance. They are well behaved and form positive relationships with each other and their teachers. All the teaching observed was satisfactory and a high proportion was good or better. The overall good quality of teaching ensures that pupils are learning well. The school has developed a broad curriculum to meet the needs of all the pupils. Some aspects, such as the provision for pupils with special educational needs, are particularly effective. There is a high level of care and support for pupils, and the school has begun to develop procedures to monitor and support pupils' academic and personal development. The vast majority of parents regard the school highly but there are some who report less favourably about the provision their children receive. The school has made sound progress since the last inspection and is keen on finding further ways to improve. Management is sound overall, and the school is mostly aware of its strengths and weaknesses. The school is led and managed well, in a cost-effective way, and provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Achieves levels of attainment in Key Stage 2 tests that are higher than average
- Provides a good quality of education in English and science throughout the school
- Ensures most pupils develop very good attitudes for learning
- Provides good support for pupils with special educational needs
- Successfully promotes pupils' personal development and supportive relationships throughout the school

What could be improved

- Management systems and strategic planning
- Review and monitoring systems
- Analysing and interpreting data

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The previous OFSTED inspection took place in November 1994. Overall, the school has made satisfactory improvement since that inspection.

Many of the key issues identified in the previous report have been addressed appropriately together with other important aspects of school development. These other aspects include improving the provision for pupils with special needs and enhancing the accommodation and resources for science. The school has also developed the pupils' opportunities for learning in information communication technology through providing a new computer suite, enhancing the curriculum and staff appointments and training.

The last report identified that the school needed to improve the review and monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning, clarify roles and responsibilities within the management structure and develop the school's strategic planning. The school has made some progress in each of these areas. The extent of improvement has been limited by a lack of sufficient formal management structures and precise documentation, provision of which should ensure the school's longer-term development.

The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection, and this has ensured that pupils continue to make good progress in a wide range of activities. Overall, pupils have made progress in line with rising national trends.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11-year-olds, based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	B	A	B	B
Mathematics	B	C	C	C
Science	A	A	B	B

Key

very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Compared to national results, in the 1999 Key Stage 2 test scores attainment in English and science is above average. In mathematics, results were in line with the national average. During the last three years, overall, the school's results have improved in line with rising national trends. Results in English and science remained close to national trends and results in mathematics have declined slightly, but they did improve in 1999. Compared to the achievement of similar schools, in English and science attainment is above average whilst in mathematics results are average. The quality of work seen in lessons mostly confirms these scores. Throughout the school, the pupils are developing appropriate levels of competency in literacy and numeracy. This is especially so for the higher-attaining pupils. The levels of attainment in Years 7 and 8 are often above average in all the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Compared to their attainment on entry to the school, the pupils achieve well, surpassing the 1999 targets that the school had set itself.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Throughout the school pupils have positive attitudes towards lessons and subjects; this has a positive impact on the quality of learning and standards of attainment at the school. They settle to work quickly, concentrate well and persevere. They are keen to participate, for example by answering questions, and they show pleasure when they succeed. They happily talk with visitors about their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall. Although the inspection confirmed some parents' views that there is a small element of poor behaviour at the school, the behaviour was largely found to be good, particularly in classrooms. This positive behaviour contributes to the quality of learning and the standards amongst the pupils. Suitable procedures for dealing with inappropriate behaviour are in place.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Relationships amongst all members of the school community are very good. Pupils work and play harmoniously together. No incidents of harassment or bullying were seen during the inspection. Pupils with disabilities are integrated extremely well. There is mutual respect between pupils and staff and pupils approach staff with confidence.
Attendance	Satisfactory. The vast majority of pupils attend regularly. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average but there has been a gradual decline in overall attendance figure over the last four years. At the same time, unauthorised absences have increased. Most pupils are punctual and lessons start on time.

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.

The quality of teaching was sound or better in all lessons observed. This included about 60 per cent of the lessons when teaching was judged as good or better. In 13.5 per cent of the lessons teaching was very good. Overall, this represents a good profile for teaching and an improvement since the last inspection, when about 86 per cent of the teaching was judged as satisfactory or better. In both Key Stages 2 and 3, the profile of teaching is similarly good. Mostly teaching meets the needs of all pupils, and some good examples of work matched to pupils' ability was observed. Higher-attaining pupils are taught very well.

Throughout the school, learning is enhanced by the teachers' management of the pupils and by their high levels of expectation. There is some variation between classes in the pace of work and the expectations of the amount to be achieved. In the best lessons teachers provide challenging activities for pupils of all abilities. There are some weaknesses in the use made of assessments in some classes to inform future lesson planning. Overall, pupils have very good attitudes to their learning and are keen to succeed. In English, mathematics and science, teaching is equally sound in both key stages.

The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is good in Key Stage 2. The situation across the key stages could be enhanced and made even more effective if there were whole-

school policies in operation on literacy and numeracy to help teachers ensure a consistent approach in all subjects.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is broad and balanced, satisfying all requirements of the National Curriculum. Schemes of work are in place. Extra-curricular provision is good, extending the pupils' opportunities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Staff work imaginatively to provide equal opportunities for them to participate in the full range of the curriculum, taking into account individual needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Spiritual development is satisfactorily provided through assembly and religious education. Moral education is well promoted through role models and areas such as sex education. Social and cultural education are good and there are frequent opportunities for collaborative working, residential visits and shared activities.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. The school provides good pastoral support for its pupils. Child protection procedures comply with national recommendations. Provision for recording health and safety is patchy. There is good practice particularly within the curriculum. However, some concerns were noted during the inspection; these have been reported to the senior management. The school proposes to review, update and make more explicit its health and safety policy procedures in the near future.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher, supported ably by the deputy head has established an environment where all staff share a commitment to school improvement. The induction and support of teachers are very good; this ensures a high level of morale, confidence and co-operation between staff. Staff feel valued. Less developed are formal systems for staff appraisal and whole-school structures for strategic planning and review and monitoring. Staff do not have current job descriptions and their levels of responsibility are not sufficiently clear.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governors are committed to improving the educational provision for the pupils. There have an appropriate committee structure and meet regularly. Currently they are not sufficiently involved in shaping the direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school has recently begun to evaluate its performance but several aspects remain underdeveloped. There is not a sufficiently coherent whole-school structure for review and monitoring.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The school makes sound use of its staff, building and educational resources.

The school has recently improved the provision for science and information communication technology. Governors have submitted plans for improving the changing room accommodation to the appropriate authorities over a period of three years. As yet, endorsement of these plans has not been forthcoming and the accommodation remains

poor and unacceptable, as pupils are unable to take showers after lessons. The school is at the early stages of applying best-value principles.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children like school• Pupils make good progress• Teaching is good• Parents are well informed about pupils' progress• Comfortable with questions and problems• High expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Behaviour• Homework – inconsistent• Working more closely with parents• Range of extra-curricular activities

The inspection team endorses the positive views of the parents. Some parents have reservations about whether all questions and problems are dealt with to their satisfaction. With regard to issues raised for what parents would like to see improved, the inspectors do not agree with the view that the behaviour is unsatisfactory. Overall, the school makes a good provision for extra-curricular activities. The inspectors do agree that the setting and marking of homework are inconsistent between teachers.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Achieves levels of attainment in Key Stage 2 tests that are higher than average

1. On entry to the school, pupils' attainment is close to the national average. The current Year 5 cohort has slightly more lower-attaining pupils than expected but in Year 6 there are proportionally more higher-attaining pupils. The average level of attainment varies between years. In several cohorts there are fewer average-attaining pupils when compared to a normal distribution of ability. The divergence in the ability level of the intake is made even more complex as a significant number of pupils join the school in Year 7 from neighbouring local authorities to avoid the selective education system.
2. By the time pupils take the end-of-Key-Stage-2 tests they have been at Thomas Coram for only two years as compared to four years in the usual two-tier system of primary and secondary schools. For a number of years the pupils have achieved levels of attainment that are consistently higher than those of other schools nationally and also better than those of schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The high levels of attainment are due to effective teaching and good curriculum planning. Teachers have high expectations of the pupils, who in turn develop good attitudes to learning and are keen to improve. This progress is being supported by the use of targets given to individual pupils to help them focus on where to improve. This is a relatively new initiative and is in the process of development.
3. During the last three years, both boys and girls have consistently achieved above the national average in English, although in 1999 the gap between the school's results and national results narrowed. In mathematics, the actual levels of attainment have increased slightly but not at the same rate as national trends have risen. In 1999 the results were an improvement on the previous year. It is a similar picture in science, where both boys and girls have improved their performance but not at the same rate as national trends. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls at Thomas Coram.
4. Pupils enter the school with average levels of ability and leave achieving at above national averages. This indicates the school is adding value to the achievement of pupils in English, mathematics and science. The work seen in lessons and in pupils' books confirms the attainment indicated by the end-of-key-stage test results.

Provides a high quality of education in English and science throughout the school

5. Pupils achieve good results in the National Curriculum tests in English and science at the end of Key Stage 2. Their performance in tests over the last four years is well above average. The school is successful in maintaining high standards across the school. For example, in Years 7 and 8 (Key Stage 3) internal test and teacher assessment results are equally high. The work pupils are currently doing confirms these standards. A high proportion of pupils in both key stages is in line to exceed the expected standards for their ages. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.
6. Standards in speaking and listening are very high. In lessons pupils' verbal responses show very good acquisition of language. Ten and 11-year-olds in a Year 6 class contributed confidently to discussions about animal names and had the vocabulary to give extended responses. When the teacher in a Year 8 class presented pupils with examples of emotive language, they were quick to suggest the possible effectiveness of its use. By 13 (Year 8), most pupils are very articulate and have an extensive vocabulary that enables them to express ideas and evaluate text, such as the language

and techniques used in texts such as “The Wind in the Willows”. Pupils of all ages contribute effectively to the plenary part of lessons. It is easy for visitors to engage pupils in conversation as their verbal skills and confidence are so high. Pupils have very good attitudes to reading and writing. Even younger readers are familiar with a wide range of authors and types of books. They read for pleasure as well as for information and they can talk about books in a knowledgeable manner. Older pupils can comprehend quite difficult texts such as those written by Shakespeare.

7. Standards in writing are good. By Year 6 pupils can complete extended pieces of writing. They use grammar and punctuation accurately. They show effective use of imaginative vocabulary. Spelling and grammar are accurate and their use of punctuation is advanced for their age. By Year 7 (Key Stage 3) pupils write for a range of purposes and audiences: letters, newspaper reports, stage directions and scenes for plays, biographies, poetry and extended stories. Many Year 8 pupils write in a varied and interesting range of styles. Whilst handwriting is good overall, it varies between excellent and barely satisfactory.
8. In science there is good development of the scientific processes of enquiry and investigation. At Key Stage 2, pupils are clearly aware of how to work in scientific ways and apply their prior learning. Pupils have a better understanding of fair testing than that expected for their ages. Year 6 pupils know how light travels, how it can be reflected and the properties of reflecting surfaces. Pupils regularly record results and write up their investigations. This good start continues into Key Stage 3. In a Year 8 class pupils developed their understanding of the particle theory of matter. They used appropriate language to illustrate their knowledge of the nature of matter and the implications of smells, diffusion and mixing different particles. They write up their experiments with good annotated diagrams and they record and interpret data. Discussions show that older pupils have a good understanding of a range of scientific topics and have developed an extensive scientific vocabulary. The standard of their written work is above average and the higher-attaining pupils achieve very high standards for their age.
9. Pupils’ high standards in literacy and numeracy skills contribute to their learning across the English and science curriculum. For example, in both English and science pupils use their research skills to good effect. The high levels of competence in reading allow them to access sophisticated text, for example on Internet web sites. In science they use their numeracy skills to make accurate measurements, record data and interpret graphical relations to make predictions.
10. The high quality of teaching ensures most pupils have good attitudes to learning and make progress as they advance through the school. Teachers prepare lessons carefully. They clearly identify learning intentions and, by often sharing these with their classes, provide pupils with a clear sense of purpose in their learning. Most teachers group pupils carefully and plan activities that are well matched to pupils’ attainment. Teachers have good rapport and relationships with their pupils. Their management of pupils’ learning is usually good. Lessons start briskly and continue at a good pace. Pupils are industrious and their rate of learning is good. A notable strength at both key stages is that teachers have high expectations of their pupils.
11. Teachers in both key stages use a variety of appropriate methods and structure their lessons well to sustain pupils’ interests. Good questioning is a feature of many lessons. For example, in a Year 5 literacy lesson on the use of brackets for punctuation, the teacher kept focusing pupils’ attention on examining the text through a series of probing and challenging questions that stretched the pupils’ thinking and led to good quality work. Pupils respond well to the challenge. In a Year 6 science lesson the teacher kept reinforcing pupils’ understanding with well-directed questions that were used to assess the extent of their learning.

Ensures most pupils develop very good attitudes for learning

12. The pupils' overall attitudes to the school are very good. This compares very well with the judgement made at the previous inspection. Enthusiasm for the school in all years is good, and most are invariably keen and eager to come to school.
13. The pupils show high standards of interest and involvement in all activities. This was most evident from the various individual interviews that inspectors carried out with pupils from all year groups. This interest and involvement was found in subjects such as a Year 6 science lesson on the passage and reflection of light. In this lesson pupils listened carefully, responded quickly to questions and were diligent and purposeful whilst carrying out written tasks. These good attitudes to learning were also evident in a Year 8 French lesson when pupils took their work very seriously and were able to work effectively both independently and in pairs. The majority of pupils concentrate very well in all lessons and on whatever else they are doing.
14. Behaviour in classes and generally around the school is also good, and again compares favourably with the last inspection. Some parents raised concerns about the behaviour of pupils, especially boys, but the inspectors found no evidence that behaviour adversely affects pupils' progress. The orderly movement of pupils between lessons and their personal discipline when joining and leaving school are good. The absence of oppressive behaviour, sexism or racism in the school is a notable feature. The good behaviour contributes to the good attitudes pupils develop towards their learning.

Provides good support for pupils with special educational needs (SEN)

15. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) are well supported throughout the school, and this contributes to the progress they make. Pupils with SEN make especially good progress in their literacy skills, and many have made very good progress in their reading ability. During the inspection, in most lessons pupils made progress in line with their peers. However, progress was most effective when individuals or groups were supported by a classroom assistant or withdrawn from lessons for specific help. Progress in relation to prior attainment is good across the whole curriculum. The progress of pupils is carefully monitored and recorded by the SENCO but there is little value-added analysis data created by the school.
16. Teachers know the pupils well and are aware of the targets on their Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Most of the targets relate to literacy skills and behavioural issues. In the best lessons, teachers' planning incorporates work to match the targets on the IEPs. Teachers are usually careful to ensure that pupils of all abilities can access the tasks and make progress with the work set. In some subjects, pupils are grouped by ability and this supports both the lesson planning, and the effectiveness of the teaching and learning by the pupils. This strategy also ensures pupils have good attitudes to their learning and are keen to improve. The school ensures that pupils with special educational needs have equal access to the curriculum and extra-curricular activities. The integration of pupils with physical disabilities is outstanding.
17. Procedures for diagnosing and assessing pupils are managed effectively and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Classroom learning assistants are deployed appropriately and managed well. The IEPs are regularly reviewed and SEN statements are reviewed annually in line with statutory guidance. Close links are maintained with parents, who reported very positively about the provision for pupils with special needs. The progress made by pupils with SEN and the use made of designated finances are not reported appropriately in the governors' annual report to parents. The SEN policy is

in need of upgrading and should identify more fully the monitoring and quality assurance procedures, the use made of funding and the allocation of resources.

Successfully promotes pupils' personal development and supportive relationships throughout the school

18. The personal development of pupils and their relationships with each other and with their teachers and other adults are very good and are yet a further strength of the school. The last inspection report commented positively about pupils' personal development, and this is still very much in evidence. The pupils are personally well aware of the impact of their actions on others. They respect each other's views and are mostly polite to each other. It was most noticeable the number of pupils who stood aside and opened doors for visitors, staff and even their own peers.
19. The majority of pupils in the school show considerable initiative and have a good grasp of their personal responsibility in growing up as decent citizens. The school has the confidence to allow pupils, who take it in turn, to show visitors around the school. They undertake this task very effectively and are good ambassadors for the school. Pupils are confident at school. They take an active part in school life and see themselves as part of a family community. For example, they regularly contribute in assemblies, when they perform to the whole school. In a Year 6 English lesson about the construction of arguments, they supported each other's learning through discussion and worked well co-operatively. Many pupils are able to work independently to good effect.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Management systems and strategic planning

20. The headteacher, who is fully supported by the senior management team, has ensured there is a shared commitment to improve amongst staff. They have also created a positive climate for change so that the school can continue to make improvements in the future. Staff are highly valued, and the morale in school is high. The headteacher has been particularly successful in inspiring, influencing and motivating a successful and dedicated staff team. The school has made sound progress since the last inspection in several areas of school life.
21. The school does not have a clearly documented management structure with appropriate systems of line management and levels of delegation for specified roles. Job descriptions have not been written for staff, and much of the prioritising is through a process of informal discussion. This is not a sufficiently robust strategy to identify priorities, utilise the human resources fully and take action effectively. It is possible that, by not recording intentions clearly important issues will become sidelined through the pressure of daily demands. This is evident, as some of the key issues raised during the previous inspection have not been fully implemented.
22. The school development plan is constructed by the deputy headteacher after consultation with staff. The plan has much merit, and it identifies key areas for development, but has been written with only a limited process of formal review involving staff and governors. The plan identifies appropriate immediate targets for the school's development, but does not focus sufficiently on raising pupils' attainment or improving attendance. There are few measures in place to ensure that subject and year group action plans reflect whole-school vision and targets. Currently, there are inadequate systems for review and evaluation built into the development-planning cycle. The plan does not include sufficiently detailed success criteria, financial implications, staff training needs or review procedures. The school has made progress in a wide range of

initiatives but the consistency of implementation of the key issues from the previous inspection is too variable to be completely effective.

23. There is not an effective appraisal structure in place to discuss and negotiate both individual staff targets and areas for subject and whole-school development. The school is not well placed to meet forthcoming legislation on performance-management requirements. Many staff with management roles have been effective and efficient and have ensured that good improvements have taken place within their areas of responsibility.
24. The governors are fully aware of their responsibilities to meet all statutory requirements and for the overall performance of the school. They are committed to the school's improvement and work hard in a well-organised committee structure to ensure development. Many of the governing body are new to their role. The governing body does not have a sufficiently strategic view of the school's development. Currently, there is an over-dependence on the school to provide the governors with evaluations of the school's development and progress. The governing body has not sufficiently developed its independent strategies for reviewing the school's strengths and weaknesses.

Review and monitoring systems

25. The school has begun to establish review and monitoring procedures but these are not within an established or structured framework and lack the necessary rigour and consistency to be fully effective in improving elements of teaching and aspects of pupil performance. Consequently, the school is not sufficiently developing as a self-reviewing institution. Much of the more formal monitoring has been undertaken by some of the middle managers. The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching through direct observation of lessons is a recent initiative in the school. As this process of classroom observation is at such an early stage of development, it is too soon to judge its influence on the quality of teaching and learning and its ability to identify staff training needs.
26. There is a commitment by all staff to provide an effective learning environment and to raise standards for all pupils, but, currently, monitoring responsibilities are not targeted specifically at raising pupil achievement. There is an inconsistency of approach and response by staff throughout the school to the agreed policies and practice. Monitoring and evaluation systems are not sufficiently robust to ensure that the points for action identified in the areas for improvement are always adequately implemented.

Analysing and interpreting data

27. The school has begun to analyse pupils' performance data and review the standards of work to set realistic targets for improvement. This process is not sufficiently prioritised to ensure that full use is made of the performance and assessment data that exists in school to identify issues and trends in pupils' attainment and attendance. For example, attendance rates have declined over the last four years yet little detailed analysis has taken place to identify the reasons or devise an action plan to reverse the trend.
28. The management structure does not specify who has the task of storing and interpreting performance data as a key management role. Currently, insufficient use is made of the data that exists to inform subject actions plans or the whole-school development plan. Little in-service training has been provided to develop this expertise in school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

In order to raise level of achievement further, the governors and staff should now:

Develop the management systems and procedures by:

- Developing the strategic function of the senior management team so that they are better informed to support colleagues and provide constructive critical evaluations of the school's progress;
- Effectively involving governors in strategic management and monitoring;
- Improving the review process for constructing the school development plan to ensure full involvement of governors and staff in identifying strategic priorities for all areas of the school;
- Developing formal line-management structures throughout the school with clearly defined roles and responsibilities, individual staff targets and up-to-date job descriptions;
- Introducing an appraisal system that helps staff set clear targets for development.

(paragraphs: 20 - 24)

Improve the review and monitoring arrangements by:

- Clarifying and strengthening the monitoring responsibilities of senior and middle managers, targeted specifically towards raising achievement;
- Assuring a more comprehensive and rigorous implementation of policies to ensure greater consistency of practice and addressing any weaknesses in teaching and learning where they exist;
- Building on the recent initiatives of observing teaching and learning in order to share good practice and identify areas for development;
- Providing subject co-ordinators with adequate release-time from teaching as part of a structured programme of review and monitoring throughout the whole school.

(paragraphs: 25 26)

Develop the use made of interpreting data by:

- Ensuring that full use is made of the performance and assessment data that exists in school to identify issues and trends in pupils' attainment and attendance;
- Delegate the task of storing and interpreting performance data as a key management role;
- Using all available performance information to inform lesson and curriculum planning and help set both cohort, and individual-pupil, targets;
- Providing in-service training to develop expertise in school.

(paragraphs: 27 28)

Other less significant issues the school should incorporate into its action plan

- Improve the procedures for recording health and safety issues.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	37
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	23

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	14	46	40	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	Y5 – Y8
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	387
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	35

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Y5 – Y8
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	10
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	104

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	8

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	50
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.2
National comparative data	6.0

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.89
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	52	58	110

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	35	35	42
	Girls	50	43	51
	Total	85	78	93
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (79)	71 (60)	85 (85)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	37	36	36
	Girls	50	42	42
	Total	87	78	78
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80	72	72
	National	68	69	69

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the earliest reporting year

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	8
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	1
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	5	
Other minority ethnic groups		

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y5 –Y8

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	20
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19
Average class size	29

Education support staff: Y5 – Y8

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	110

Financial information

Financial year	98 - 99
	£
Total income	756329
Total expenditure	755102
Expenditure per pupil	1961
Balance brought forward from previous year	54729
Balance carried forward to next year	55956

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	300
Number of questionnaires returned	188

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	39	49	10	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	26	63	6	2	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	21	56	15	5	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	17	49	27	6	1
The teaching is good.	23	63	4	1	8
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	49	9	3	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	49	39	7	3	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	41	48	7	2	2
The school works closely with parents.	31	49	15	3	2
The school is well led and managed.	30	51	4	6	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	29	52	10	3	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	55	13	2	3

Other issues raised by parents

- A number of parents were very positive and appreciative of the school.
- Some parents were concerned at the high level of teacher turnover
- There is no soccer training – but there is a soccer team
- No orchestra, school plays or musicals recently
- Much of the extra –curricular activity is cancelled
- There are no showers after PE and games lessons
- Consistency of communication with parents