

INSPECTION REPORT

VALLEY GARDENS MIDDLE SCHOOL

Whitley Bay

LEA area: North Tyneside

Unique reference number: 108636

Head teacher: Alan Spencer

Reporting inspector: Graeme Clarke
OFSTED No: 1547

Dates of inspection: 27 – 29 November 2000

Inspection number: 188707

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Middle Deemed Secondary

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 9 to 13 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Valley Gardens
Whitley Bay
Tyne and Wear
Postcode: NE25 9AQ

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Councillor Ian Grayson

Date of previous inspection: 18 March 1996

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Valley Gardens is a larger than average middle school, situated in Whitley Bay, a conurbation close to the sea in North Tyneside. The school is oversubscribed and over-capacity with 681 pupils, 98% of whom are white and the others are mostly from Indian and Chinese backgrounds. The proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals or who have special educational needs are well below national averages. Attendance is high and unauthorised absence very low in comparison with schools nationally. The attainment of the majority of pupils is well above average on entry into Year 5 where they are taught, mainly by their class teacher, in a separate classroom block. Most pupils proceed to Whitley Bay High School which is on the same site.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

There is a very good climate for learning in Valley Gardens Middle School because it promotes excellent relationships, very good behaviour and positive attitudes to work. Through an appropriate blend of specialist and good class teaching and effective management by key staff, pupils continue to make good progress and achieve high standards. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Achieves high standards, particularly in English, mathematics and science, in comparison both with other schools nationally and with similar schools.
- Implements the national literacy initiative effectively in Years 5 and 6 and successfully builds on this work in Years 7 and 8.
- Provides an effective balance of good class and specialist teaching in Year 5, and good specialist teaching in Years 6, 7 and 8, that helps pupils make good progress.
- Has leadership that empowers and facilitates effective management by key staff, who want to improve further the quality of work in the school.
- Promotes a very good climate for learning characterised by excellent relationships and very good behaviour and positive attitudes to work.

What could be improved

- Meeting statutory obligations relating to:
 - health and safety, such as risk assessments, the recording of accidents and regular checking of fire and evacuation procedures;
 - information and communication technology (ICT) in the curriculum in Years 7 and 8;
 - collective worship for all pupils.
- Monitoring and evaluation of administrative procedure and the use of information about how well pupils are doing particularly to provide extra support where needed.
- Continuity and progression within the personal and social education programme.

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 satisfactory progress overall since the last inspection in 1996. Although there has been substantial improvement in some areas raised then, there has only been little or no improvement in others. A member of staff is now designated responsible for health and safety but the local education authority's guidance on procedures is not being used. The monitoring of administrative procedures is not sufficiently rigorous; for example of fire practice and accident reporting. The review of job descriptions had been addressed satisfactorily. The quality of teaching in Years 5 and 6 (Key Stage 2) is now good overall. The ICT provision is now good in Years 5 and 6 but opportunities in Years 7 and 8 (Key Stage 3) are too limited for National Curriculum requirements to be met. The school has recently begun to analyse pupils' test results. Although it is too early to judge, this has the capacity to help raise pupils' achievement through accurate target setting. The statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship is yet to be implemented. The effective management provided by key staff indicates that the school is well placed to improve further.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in Key Stage 2 tests for eleven year olds in English, mathematics and science.

Performance in Key Stage 2 tests	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	A	A	A	B
Mathematics	A	A	A	B
Science	A	A	A	B

Key

well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

By the end of Year 6, the proportion of pupils attaining the level expected in the national tests was well above the national average in English, mathematics and science. Standards were above average when compared with similar schools. Boys' and girls' achievements are similar in all three subjects. The school met its target in English and exceeded it in mathematics. Standards have been consistently high over the past three years and have improved in line with the national trend. The results in mathematics and science at the higher Level 5 are above the average of similar schools but in English they are a little below the average. In Years 5 and 6, writing is well developed, pupils speak cogently and with confidence, and listening skills are improving. Number facts are well known and used well. There is a good base of knowledge and understanding in science. ICT skills are well above national expectations.

In Years 7 and 8, pupils' literacy skills are further developed and by Year 8, pupils are very competent at analysis and evaluation from reading, they write well for different audiences and they speak cogently and confidently. Pupils' knowledge and understanding in mathematics and science are good overall with some examples of very good work. Pupils have good ICT skills, often demonstrated using their own equipment for work done at home.

Standards in other subjects are always in line with or above expectations. There is very good work in food technology, modern foreign languages and music. Throughout the school, pupils who have special educational needs make very good progress and achieve very well.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are strongly committed to work, well motivated, enthusiastic about school, like to become involved in a range of activities and are very positive towards each other and their teachers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very Good. Well-behaved in class and very responsible in communal areas such as corridors and the hall. There is very little bullying, and it is dealt with effectively. Pupils look after their belongings and the school's equipment and building well. There is no graffiti or litter.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent. Pupils are well developed young people who are confident with each other and adults. They respect one another, their teachers, and their teachers' expertise.
Attendance	Good. Above the average and unauthorised absence far below the position in similar schools.

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.

All the teaching seen in every year group was at least satisfactory and there were no unsatisfactory lessons. Overall, three out of every ten lessons were satisfactory, four out of ten lessons were good, and three out of ten very good or excellent. This level of consistency is an improvement since the last inspection. An effective blend of good class and specialist teaching draws well upon the expertise of teachers to support children who join the school in Year 5 and foster their progress. In Years 6, 7 and 8, all the teaching is by specialists and this makes a very clear contribution to pupils' learning new skills and the high standards of knowledge and understanding that are achieved by the end of Year 6 and into Years 7 and 8. Literacy and numeracy are taught well as part of the national strategy in Years 5 and 6, and through many opportunities taken in Years 7 and 8.

All the teachers have good subject knowledge and many are expert practitioners whose skills are well respected by pupils. Lessons are planned with great diligence. Common features are that lessons begin with a clear purpose and high expectations made known to pupils. Work and support are well matched to pupils differing abilities. Pupils with special educational needs are also given tasks closely matched to their needs and they are given additional adult help as necessary. Teachers know their pupils well. They have very good class management skills and foster very good relationships and rapport. Instances of inattention are rare and are skilfully dealt with. Good quality teaching leads to pupils learning well and making good progress in the majority of lessons

Where there are aspects of teaching that could be improved they include attention to a lack of pace, especially in individual work, and a lack of flexibility to deal with unforeseen circumstances.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Provision throughout is good except the school does not provide the full National Curriculum in ICT in Years 7 and 8. Both French and German are included in Years 7 and 8. A good range of extra-curricular opportunities is available throughout the school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Learning support assistants make a valuable contribution. The small number of pupils who do not have English as their first language make very good progress. Teachers plan lessons with clear reference to targets in pupils' individual education plans. They are revised at appropriately frequent intervals and are used well to help these pupils make good progress. Statutory requirements are met.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The taught personal and social education programme lacks sufficient structure to ensure good continuity and progress from year to year. Social development is very good, cultural and moral development is good, aided by an effectively used merit award scheme. The spiritual dimension is good in religious education but is less well developed elsewhere throughout the curriculum. Collective worship is not a daily event for all pupils.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Child protection arrangements are satisfactory. Staff are caring and know pupils well. However, the administration and checking of health and safety procedures and practices are inadequate.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	The head teacher effectively facilitates a good team ethos and enables all to play their part. Staff with management responsibilities take initiative well and work productively. All staff share a desire to see the school improve.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors have a high level of commitment to the school. The committee structure is well suited to the responsibilities they must undertake and allows them to do so very effectively.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Staff have begun to analyse assessment data more rigorously and this is beginning to help them plan better. Monitoring of delegated responsibilities and administrative procedures is not sufficiently thorough. Much evaluation is based upon the intuition of key staff.
The strategic use of resources	The expertise of staff is used well. Accommodation is used well but lunchtime arrangements intrude on the use of the hall at the time of assembly. Resources for learning are used well except that ICT facilities are not used sufficiently widely to promote learning in Years 7 and 8. Best value principles are applied well in purchasing supplies and services but are not yet used to support educational improvements.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching is good • Pupils make good progress • Behaviour is good • Pupils are expected to work hard • Parents' meetings held three times per year • The homework diary system • The professionalism of staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The right amount of homework • Information about their child's progress • Partnership with parents • Extra-curricular activities

The inspection team agrees with parents about those areas that please them most. Inspectors cannot agree fully with parents' views that homework, information provided about pupils' progress, partnership between school and home, and extra-curricular activities require improvement. Evidence about homework set in lessons and taken from pupils' books indicates that teachers are seeking to set appropriate amounts, but inspectors do agree that the amount of project work does build up excessively towards the end of half term. Parents are well informed about children's progress: appropriate information is given in written reports, parents' meetings each term inform parents of a range of aspects of their progress, and the head teacher and teachers willingly meet parents at any time about their children's work. Although the newsletter has not been produced for some time, the partnership with parents is strong. Parents are involved with the school through volunteer work and the parent teacher association. They are invited to functions such as special assemblies; school productions, sports day; and theme evenings. A good range of extra-curricular activities and clubs is available.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Achieves high standards, particularly in English, mathematics and science, in comparison with other schools nationally and with similar schools, and has an effective programme of literacy development.

1. Evidence from pupils' written work and information from partner first schools indicates that the school takes a larger than average proportion of pupils of higher attainment into the Year 5 classes than in most schools. By the end of Year 6 in the 2000 national tests, the proportion of pupils attaining the national expectation of Level 4 or better in English, mathematics and science is well above national averages and places the school in the top twenty-five per cent. The results are above average in comparison with similar schools. The proportions of boys' and girls' achievements are close together in English, mathematics and science. The results in mathematics and science at the higher Level 5 are well above the national average and in English they are above the average. When compared with similar schools, the Level 5 results in mathematics and science are above average but a little below in English. The school met its target for 2000 in English and exceeded it in mathematics. From the more detailed analysis of the 1999 results that is available, pupils are about two terms in advance of expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. Standards have been consistently high over the past three years and have improved in line with the national trend.
2. Literacy skills are well developed. The school implements the national literacy initiative for Key Stage 2 effectively in Years 5 and 6 and successfully builds on this work in Years 7 and 8 (Key Stage 3). Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have a very good grasp of English grammar. They know and use correctly forms and tenses of verbs and figures of speech such as simile and onomatopoeia. For example, Year 5 pupils demonstrate some very sophisticated use of synonyms and good understanding of tenses and interrogative verbs when converting narrative into the script for a play; in Year 6 they show a high level of ability in analysing and criticising a piece of text deliberately written in the wrong style for its purpose. In Key Stage 3, reading is good. Many pupils are able to interpret the text well and use expression in their voice to give it meaning. Pupils are very competent at analysis and evaluation; for example, Year 7 interpreting poems. They write well for different audiences; for example, in a Year 8 class pupils were highly motivated to write a newspaper style commentary on lively situations in a quick game of *duster hockey* that needed a clear understanding of witness and bias and the skills of journalese for good reporting. Pupils speak cogently and with confidence. Their listening skills improve as they progress through the school so that by Year 8 they take notice of what their classmates say in response to questions, and take a good part in discussion about aspects of their work; for example, in a food technology lesson when talking about their evaluation of different recipes for cakes they made.
3. Pupils' knowledge and understanding in mathematics is good overall. Mental work is good in Year 5. The great majority of pupils understand time and can make accurate conversions between the 12 and 24-hour clock, as well as understanding digital representation. Pupils have a good grasp of number facts and are able to add and subtract up to 100 accurately. They can use their knowledge; for example, by applying different strategies in a simulated computer game to work out the scores needed to win and confidently showing the class how they worked out the answer. In Year 6 pupils have a competent knowledge of aspects of shape and space. Their knowledge of ways of calculating the perimeters of common geometric shapes is above expectation. They can manipulate number facts accurately to calculate area – and more able pupils know the symbols for area calculation. However, a significant minority of pupils in lower sets have yet to understand concepts of measuring; for example, the relationship between millimetres and centimetres, and as a result they cannot use a ruler accurately. By the end of Year 8, pupils' knowledge of graphing is good and their presentation is neat and accurate. They can use graphs to interpolate data; for example, in work on square numbers to derive square roots. They know up to 10 squared but need help with squaring 11 to 15. They have a very good technical knowledge of quadrilaterals and a clear grasp of criteria for classifying them; for example, in an upper set lesson they applied complex principles to identify different shapes and combined their knowledge with accurate measuring to confirm understanding. The effective implementation of the national numeracy

strategy for Key Stage 2 is leading pupils to apply their numeracy skills successfully throughout the curriculum; for example, measuring and reading graphs in science, weighing and timing in food technology and interpreting data in geography. However, some aspects of numeracy are less well developed in Key Stage 3; for example inadequate attention to precise measuring and cutting leads to difficulties for some pupils in design and technology where the quality of fit and finish is not as fine as it could be.

4. Standards in science are good overall. Pupils are achieving well in a range of work covering biological and physical science. Pupils use prior learning and their skills of observation to interpret phenomena and bolster their knowledge and understanding. For example, Year 5 pupils confidently offer plausible explanations in work relating heart rate to exercise, and Year 6 pupils can explain viscosity in terms of particle theory. Conversely, some Year 5 pupils found difficulty with aspects of work on human reproduction because they did not understand concepts such as fertilisation and embryo. Pupils in Year 7 are forming a good understanding of more complex concepts; for example, about neutrality and the pH scale in their work on acids and alkalis. By Year 8, they have a good grasp of chemical reactions gained from using well-developed laboratory skills in practical investigations. They handle equipment safely, note observations accurately and draw sensible conclusions that help them form word equations to describe the reactions observed.
5. Pupils have good ICT skills. In Years 5 and 6 pupils benefit from a mix of discrete ICT lessons and use of ICT in other lessons; for example English in Year 5, to develop and apply a range of skills including word processing and graphics work particularly. By the end of the key stage their skills are above expectation. Pupils do not have the same range of opportunities in Years 7 and 8 because the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum are not met. However, many have access to computer equipment at home and demonstrate a high level of competence when using it to present homework and project reports.
6. By the end of Year 8, standards in art, design and technology, geography, history, physical education and religious education are always in line with or above expectations. There is very good work in food technology where pupils have a strong grasp of the design process, good practical skills, good understanding of underlying processes, and can make a good evaluation of their products. In modern foreign languages pupils are well used to listening to and speaking both French and German with confidence and competence. They have a good vocabulary and can apply principles of grammar and syntax appropriately in their work. Pupils contribute heartily to music through singing, percussion work and playing, and as a result have a good understanding of rhythm, notation and harmony.

Provides an effective balance of good specialist and class teaching in Year 5, and good specialist teaching in Years 6, 7 and 8, that helps pupils make good progress.

7. Forty-six lessons or parts of lessons were seen in all year groups and all subjects with an emphasis on English, mathematics and science. All teachers were seen teaching at least once. There was a small over-emphasis on Year 5 in order to compare the quality of work in the Year 5 facility with the rest of the school.
8. All the teaching seen in every year group was at least satisfactory and there were no unsatisfactory lessons. There is a clear improvement in the level of consistently good teaching since the last inspection. Overall, three out of every ten lessons were satisfactory, four out of ten lessons were good, and three out of ten very good or excellent. The very good and excellent lessons were in English, mathematics, science and food technology. Pupils in Year 5 are taught by their class teacher in a separate classroom block for most of the time, and by specialists for the remainder. This provision in this facility is an effective blend that draws well upon the expertise of class teachers and specialists to give good support and foster the progress of children joining the school. In Years 6 7 and 8, all the teaching is by specialists and this makes a very clear contribution to pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. In turn, this leads to the high standards that are achieved at the end of Year 6 and into Years 7 and 8. Literacy and numeracy are taught well as part of the Key Stage 2 national strategy in Years 5 and 6, and

through many opportunities taken in Years 7 and 8. ICT is not yet exploited systematically in Years 7 and 8 to support learning throughout the curriculum.

9. Lessons are planned with great diligence and their quality reflects teachers' good subject knowledge and expertise as practitioners. Teachers' have high expectations and skills that are known and well respected by pupils. Lessons commonly begin with teachers making the purpose of the lesson clear to pupils. Pupils are often helped with differentiated work matched to their abilities and pupils with special educational needs are well supported by attention to their individual plans and additional adult help as necessary. At the end of the majority of lessons teachers remind pupils of the work, and reinforce through short and often skilful questioning, what has been learned. This is an effective system and is working well. The good quality of teaching in the majority of lessons clearly helps pupils learn well and make good progress. Teachers and pupils are punctual in the very great majority of lessons and they make good use of time.
10. Consistent classroom routines are a strong point. Teachers know their pupils well and, by employing very good class management skills, they foster very good relationships and rapport. The merit award system is used well to foster endeavour and high achievement. A lot of praise and very interesting teaching ensure that pupils remain focused on the work in hand. Instances of inattention are rare and are skilfully dealt with.
11. There is no significantly weak teaching, but where there are weaknesses they include a loss of pace and flexibility. On only a small number of occasions when pupils are engaged in extended individual work, as in art and design and technology, the pace of the lesson flags and as a result some pupils do not make as much progress as they could. When unforeseen circumstances occur, as during some mathematics work in Key Stage 2, attempts to adhere to the scheme lead to some pupils feeling confused because teachers lack sufficient experience and adequate guidance to deal flexibly with the situation.
12. The co-ordination and administration of special educational needs provision are very effective. Pupils who have special educational needs are very well supported. The formal arrangements required to review and revise their individual education plans at appropriately frequent intervals are securely in place and are used well. Individual education plans are kept up-to-date and teachers plan lessons with clear reference to targets in them. Learning support assistants and teachers work well together to help in a clearly co-ordinated way. As a result, pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well.
13. A reasonable amount of homework is set regularly and is used to consolidate the work done in lessons. Parents and form tutors help reinforce the value of homework through a homework diary system that generally is working well. Only on a few occasions, such as towards the end of half term, does the amount of project-based homework build up to overload pupils.

Has leadership that empowers and facilitates effective management by key staff, who want to improve further the quality of work in the school.

14. The head teacher provides an effective facilitative leadership that fosters a good team ethos. Senior and middle management, the heads of subject departments and the heads of year, are empowered to take initiative and to work responsibly and productively. Governors have a high level of commitment to the school. They have a very appropriate committee structure that allows them to undertake their responsibilities very effectively. There is a clear corporate desire to want to improve the quality of work in the school.
15. Subject areas are generally effectively co-ordinated. All the heads of department have a clear view of the quality of work in their area that is gained from regular meetings, looking at pupils' work and some classroom observation. A clear methodology to improve setting arrangements in Year 5 and allow easier transfer of pupils takes place through observing work in adjacent sets. A more systematic programme to monitor the quality of teaching as part of the new performance management arrangements is planned and already some experience to build upon has been usefully gained from implementing the national literacy and numeracy strategies.

16. The heads of year work well together to form a very effective pastoral team that successfully co-ordinates the work of form tutors. They are accomplished in dealing with aspects of school life such as using the merit award scheme to celebrate endeavour and achievement, leading year group assemblies, and administering the record of achievement system. They have effective arrangements in place for liaison with partner first schools and the local high school. They effectively arrange to keep parents informed about their children's progress; for example through the homework diary system, annual reports and termly meetings. The programme of parents' meetings is comprehensive: in the autumn covering how children settle into the beginning of the year, and then in spring and summer the focus shifts more onto academic matters. Most parents value the way they are kept informed about their children's progress.
17. The expertise of staff is well deployed. Pupils in Year 5 clearly benefit from the arrangements for mainly class teaching supported by specialists when appropriate. The specific expertise of specialists is very effective in raising standards at the end of Key Stage 2 in Year 6, and through Key Stage 3 into Year 8. Accommodation is used well but lunchtime arrangements intrude on the use of the hall at the time of assembly and the school intends to consider alternatives when reviewing the arrangements for collective worship. Resources for learning are used well except that ICT facilities are not used sufficiently widely to promote learning. Best value principles are applied well in purchasing supplies and services but are not yet used to support educational improvements.

Promotes a very good climate for learning characterised by excellent relationships and very good behaviour and positive attitudes to work.

18. A very strong work ethic in which everyone strives to do well permeates the school. Aided by good teaching and an effective merit award system, pupils' attitudes are excellent or very positive in about seven out of ten lessons. Pupils are very well behaved, work hard on their tasks and take care of their work. Relationships are excellent. The secure and friendly atmosphere that teachers promote leads to a high level of respect. Pupils are generous and complimentary when evaluating each other's work, and they respect their teachers and their teachers' expertise. Pupils develop confidence and represent themselves and the school very well.
19. Pupils act very responsibly around the school - their civilised behaviour, in classrooms, in the dining hall, in the grounds and in corridors is most noticeable. They look after learning resources and the fabric of the building. There is no graffiti or litter. Behaviour falls below expectations in only a tiny minority of lessons but teachers use good class management skills to improve it appropriately. There is no oppressive behaviour such as racism. Neither is bullying an issue – and whenever incidents occur, only very rarely, they are dealt with quietly and effectively.
20. The provision for pupils' social and cultural development is good. Pupils learn well together as a result of activities arranged in lessons where they have to collaborate and cooperate. Out of school clubs are popular – many pupils willingly take part in activities; for example, in art, computing, cooking and a range of sports. The school offers a wide range of opportunities for the study of local and other cultures and traditions; for example, in foreign languages' work, making music from Java and Bali, and learning about aspects of Ramadan as part of the religious education curriculum. Many educational and social visits are arranged. Pupils are currently building upon a recent visit to the nearby Bede's World Centre to further their knowledge and understanding of local history and related religious traditions. There are opportunities each year to participate in visits abroad that are very popular.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Meeting statutory obligations relating to health and safety, such as risk assessments, the recording of accidents and regular checking of fire and evacuation procedures.

- 21 The school has clear and effective procedures to deal with child protection issues. Within lessons where practical activities are undertaken, such as in science, design and technology, food technology and physical education, teachers ensure that proper precautions are taken to deal with hazards and improve safety. However, some formal procedures have not been followed, notably those relating to an audit of health and safety matters and associated assessment of risks, to recording and maintaining an accessible record of accidents, to checking fire alarm systems, drills, and extinguishers. The school should attend to these matters promptly.

Meeting statutory obligations relating to information and communication technology (ICT) in the curriculum in Years 7 and 8.

- 22 There are no discrete lessons in Years 7 and 8. Neither is there a clear approach to developing ICT through work in other subjects, nor are sufficient opportunities provided to use ICT to promote learning. Despite the age of some of the equipment in the school, it is capable of being used to enhance pupils' skills, but its availability is not exploited. Nevertheless, pupils often demonstrate their ability and a high level of skills by using their own equipment to present and enhance their homework. The need now is to address this situation.

Meeting statutory obligations relating to collective worship for all pupils.

- 23 The spiritual dimension is good in religious education lessons but is less well developed elsewhere throughout the curriculum. Pupils are helped to understand key components of major world religions and to consider beliefs and feelings as they learn through studying religion. However, opportunities are missed to exploit instances of awe and wonder that arise in lessons. The statutory regulation for a daily act of collective worship, which is "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character" is not met. Assemblies take place after lunch three times a week, either in year groups or with the whole school together. The content is mainly secular, and whilst making a clear contribution to aspects of pupils' personal development, reinforcing a sense of belonging and promoting the school's values, assemblies make only a minor contribution to spiritual development. Furthermore, lunch arrangements frequently intrude into the period for assembly, so time is lost reducing its value. The school should consider how, for each day for all pupils, arrangements can meet the criteria for collective worship.

Monitoring and evaluation of administrative procedure and the use of information about how well pupils are doing particularly to provide extra support where needed.

24. Much evaluation is based upon the perspectives formed through the day-to-day work of key staff. However, the monitoring of delegated responsibilities and administrative procedures are not sufficiently thorough. Consequently, guidance is used inadequately and there are breaches of standing procedures, such as those relating to accident reporting, fire drills, and health and safety practice.
25. In relation to monitoring pupils' progress, a rigorous analysis of assessment data has begun to inform planning more objectively and is at an early stage of development. There is a wealth of information that is accumulating about individual pupils' performance in tests and examinations. At present it is used to help create sets for English and mathematics teaching. The school is starting to set targets for individual pupils and is planning an approach to track their work throughout the curriculum. Class teachers, form tutors and pupils all play a part but at present the targets for individuals are based more upon intentions to work harder and improving presentation than directly focusing on attainment. A systematic approach for using data from assessing pupils' work to set targets for improving attainment is in its infancy. Reviewing how it is

being used has not yet effectively begun. The need now is to monitor and evaluate developments to see how well they are being used and to share success.

Continuity and progression within the personal and social education programme.

26. The school has developed a personal and social education curriculum that appropriately covers aspects of citizenship, relationships, health and drugs education. The co-ordinator is responsible for the programme and form tutors have a high degree of flexibility in the way they order and implement topics. Although there is a clear structure for planning work within year groups, some tutors exercise considerable autonomy in their interpretation of the content. The weekly or twice weekly sessions make an effective contribution to pupils' personal development because, as with teaching subjects of the curriculum, tutors ensure lessons are well planned and well managed, and records kept. However, the personal and social education programme lacks sufficient structure to ensure good continuity and progress from year to year. For example, although collaborative planning within Year 5 ensures coherence, there is no formal handover to Year 6, and the content of schemes in Years 6 and 7 and 8 has a high level of overlap without building-in the different depths of treatment required. The need now is to add guidance to the programme so that continuity from year to year is evident, and so that when topics are covered more than once the progressively greater depth of treatment required is indicated. The development plan for the programme would benefit from more details relating to a time frame for topics, persons responsible, resources available, success criteria and evaluation arrangements.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

27. In order to address these issues, the governors and staff of the school should:
- Meet the statutory requirements relating to:
 - health and safety aspects of the welfare of pupils; (paragraphs 21, 24)
 - ICT in the Key Stage 3 curriculum; (paragraphs 5, 8, 17, 22)
 - collective worship for all pupils. (paragraphs 17, 23)
 - Ensure that arrangements are in place for thorough monitoring and evaluation of:
 - administrative procedures; (paragraphs 21, 24)
 - the use of information about pupils' attainments and related targeted support. (paragraph 25)
 - Improve the guidance for teachers to ensure that there is clear continuity and progression from year to year within the programme for teaching personal and social education. (paragraph 26)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	46
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
11	20	41	28	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	Sixth form
Number of pupils on the school's roll	681	
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	16	

Special Educational Needs	Y5 – Y8	Sixth form
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4	
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	77	

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	95.7
National comparative data	93.3

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	Less than 0.1
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
	2000	89	81	170

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	79	82	87
	Girls	75	70	78
	Total	154	152	165
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	91 (86)	89 (83)	97 (94)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	77	76	85
	Girls	66	55	76
	Total	143	131	161
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	87 (85)	85 (83)	95 (89)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	5
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	669
Any other minority ethnic group	2

Exclusions in the last school year

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

This table gives the number of exclusions, 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)	32
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: Y5 – Y8

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	48

Deployment of teachers: Y5 – Y8

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	82.5
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Average teaching group size: Y5 – Y8

Key Stage 2	26.6
Key Stage 3	24.9

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	1117384
Total expenditure	1116521
Expenditure per pupil	1692
Balance brought forward from previous year	27974
Balance carried forward to next year	28837

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	679
Number of questionnaires returned	458

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	52	42	4	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	46	51	2	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	40	54	3	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	53	11	3	1
The teaching is good.	49	47	1	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	30	53	11	2	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	54	39	5	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	37	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	32	52	12	1	4
The school is well led and managed.	40	50	3	2	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	44	2	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	41	48	8	1	5

Other issues raised by parents

- Concern over potential reorganisation to a two-tier system (now alleviated following a decision by the LEA at the time of the inspection).
- Lack of transparency of procedures for choosing pupils to participate in educational visits when they are oversubscribed.
- Shabby floor coverings in the entrance and corridors.
- Lack of swimming in the curriculum.
- Concern of possible health risk caused by a lack of suitable facilities for older pupils to store books, leading to them carrying heavy bags.
- Lack of co-ordination with other local schools over the choice of staff training days.