INSPECTION REPORT

SELLY PARK TECHNOLOGY COLLEGE FOR GIRLS

Selly Park, Birmingham

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103498

Headteacher: Mrs. W. P. Davies

Reporting inspector: Terence Parish
15465

Dates of inspection: 11th – 14th September 2000

Inspection number: 223929

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	11 to 16
Gender of pupils:	Female
School address:	5 Selly Park Road Selly Park Birmingham
Postcode:	B29 7PH
Telephone number:	0121 472 1238
Fax number:	0121 414 1143
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. Ann Rae
Date of previous inspection:	10th September 1995

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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The Registrar
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Selly Park Technology College for Girls is a popular, smaller than average comprehensive school that continues to grow in size and currently has 711 pupils on roll. The school draws from a wide area with many girls coming from the inner city. Over half have a Pakistani heritage and there are significant minorities of white, black Caribbean, Bangladeshi, and Indian heritage pupils. Nearly 16 per cent are from a range of cultures that includes Arabic and Bengali. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below average. Most pupils have English as an additional language but very few are at an early stage of learning English. The overall attainment pupils have when they enter the school, indicated by a range of tests, is variable, but is typically below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The overall effectiveness of the school is outstanding. Pupils leave school with much better examination results than might be expected from their abilities when they enter. Pupils want to succeed. Teaching is very good. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent and supported by very good management. The amount of money available to spend on each pupil is well above average. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Raises the standards of pupils' work.
- Develops pupils' confidence in themselves and raises their aspirations.
- Uses computers to help pupils learn and do better.
- Provides excellent study opportunities for pupils.

What could be improved

- GCSE results in science.
- The facilities available for physical education and sport.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in 1995. Improvement since then is excellent. Standards of pupils' work have improved at both key stages faster than they have improved nationally. Results at GCSE have particularly soared. The attendance of pupils has improved and many now attend out of hours too, including Saturday morning sessions for Year 11 pupils. The library and computer facilities are much better. Teaching has greatly improved overall and teachers' expectations of pupils are high. The work of the school is better monitored and reviewed. The time available for subjects has been reviewed, but there are still issues about how time and resources are best used in science and the provision for physical education.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 16 and 18 year olds based on average point scores in GCSE and A-level/AS-level examinations.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
GCSE examinations	C	B	B	A*

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

The letters in the table show that the school has performed above average compared to all schools and was in the top 5 per cent of similar schools in 1999. The results this year, 2000, cannot yet be compared with other schools, but are significantly higher than last year. The progress pupils make from Year 7 to the end of Year 11, is very high.

In 1999, National Curriculum Standardised Assessment Tests (SAT) results at the end of Year 9 show pupils' attainment in English to be close to the national average whilst mathematics and science results are well below average. In 2000, English is in a similar position whilst mathematics results have risen significantly and science results fallen a little. In recent years a gradual improvement, a little greater than the national trend, is apparent in SAT test scores. Compared with similar schools, results have been well above average.

In 1999 GCSE examinations, at grades A*-C, a higher proportion of pupils than average achieved grades A*-C in art, French and history. In English, mathematics, science, design and technology and geography, the number of pupils who achieved these higher grades was less than average. The trend of improvement in GCSE results has been well above the national trend since 1994 and has climbed even more rapidly in 2000. A significant reason for this has been the improvement in mathematics results but also the very good design and technology, history and religious education results, all of which most pupils take. However, science GCSE results fell in 2000.

Of the pupils' work seen, strengths include good presentation and confident writing in English, mental mathematics, using computers to collect and record information in science, speaking and writing in Russian and French and designing and making in technology. There are some comparative weaknesses in pupils' organisation and completion of experiments in science and in their standards of punctuation in English and other subjects.

The school sets challenging targets for improving examination results and managed to well exceed them in 2000. Pupils in the current Year 11 are determined to do even better next year because the school both encourages them to believe in themselves and provides the support that they need to succeed.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent. Most pupils like school and make the most of it.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The girls are lively, enjoy breaks and lunchtimes, but are sometimes a little slow to settle down in lessons.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The girls get on well together. They are encouraged to take responsibility for some of their own learning and do so.
Attendance	Good. A little above average and very good in Year 11 where pupils are required to attend school between examinations.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 11-14 years	aged 14-16 years
Lessons seen overall	Very Good	Very 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.

No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection. Over half of teaching is very good or better and about three-quarters of all teaching is good or better. Teaching in English, mathematics and science is good overall.

The teaching of the skills associated with literacy and numeracy is very good. The needs of all pupils are generally well met, including those of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. Pupils of minority cultural groups, within the school, are appropriately represented in all teaching groups and suffer no disadvantages.

Strengths in teaching include the knowledge and understanding that subjects teachers have, their ability to teach basic skills, including those associated with using computers, the high expectations teachers have of pupils and the clear aims of lessons. Occasional weaknesses in teaching include: using activities that neither stretch the more able in a class or adequately support the less able; insufficient use of Key Stage 2 attainment information available about pupils in Year 7, and inadequate attention paid to the individual education plans (IEP's) of some pupils with special educational needs. Many teachers and some subjects were not seen during this short inspection, but amongst those that were, modern languages, design and technology, music, history, geography and GNVQ health and social care, have particular teaching strengths.

Strengths in pupils' learning include the speed with which they learn new skills, for example singing in music, and their understanding of what they must do to improve. Occasional weaknesses in pupils' learning include hindered progress, because what they already know is not always taken into account, work they have to do is sometimes too easy for them, and a few pupils drift away from what they should be doing in lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Excellent. GNVQ adds to the range at Key Stage 4. Information and communication technology is available to all. Plenty of out of lessons opportunities. Physical education and games facilities are restricted.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator is well organised and supported well by assistants. Use of IEP's could be better sometimes.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Special support provided within Key Stage 3. Most pupils in the school have English as an Additional Language and teachers' planning and resources cater very well for them.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Very good social development. There are plenty of opportunities to meet or communicate with other people in this country and in others.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. Staff have high expectations of pupils and respond well if support and help are needed. Health and safety are taken very seriously.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and manage-ment by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent. A visionary headteacher who leads by example and tackles anything. Very good support by senior management and many enthusiastic and very capable heads of department.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. Excellent leadership by the chair who both cares deeply for the school and has the wit and wisdom to effectively support it.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Excellent, hence it is constantly improving.
The strategic use of resources	Excellent. Teachers are generally used to maximum effect, money is spent wisely to raise the standards of pupils' work. Best value is always sought.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
• The progress pupils make • The behaviour of pupils • Quality of teaching • High expectations of pupils • The management of the school	• Homework • Information about progress • Links between parents and school • Activities available outside lessons

Thirteen parents attended the parents meeting and 50 replied to the questionnaire. The team agrees with everything that pleases parents. Our judgements about what they would like to see improved are:

- Homework is set adequately, though sometimes pupils may take too long over it or have not used out of lesson time at school to do some of it.
- Information about pupils' progress is standard and more can easily be requested.
- The links between parents and the school could be strengthened through providing more opportunities, though many parents live at a distance from the school.
- There are a number of activities available outside of lessons if parents are prepared to let their daughters participate in them.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Raises the standards of pupils' work

1. When pupils enter the school their standards of attainment are currently below average, particularly in mathematics and science. In previous years standards have been lower. As pupils move through Years 7, 8 and 9 their overall standard of work improves. In 1999, Year 9 English National Curriculum SAT test results were close to the national average though mathematics and science remained well below. Compared to pupils' attainment in similar schools, all standards were well above average. Over the years since the last inspection, standards at the end of Year 9 have gradually improved a little faster than is average across the country.

2. After Year 9, when pupils begin their examination courses, standards of work improve rapidly. The average points score (numbers given to examination grades) that pupils achieve, has risen far more rapidly than it has nationally since 1994. Pupils in this school got more points than average in 1998 and 1999. It is too soon to compare results in 2000, but as they went up even more rapidly than before, it is likely that results have remained above average. The proportions of pupils who gained A*-C grades and A*-G grades became close to national averages from 1996 and exceeded them in 1999. This is also likely to be the case in 2000. The GCSE/GNVQ results of pupils were in the top 5 per cent of similar schools in 1999.

3. In 1999, the subjects in which pupils did better than the national averages were art, French and history. In other subjects pupils generally did better or much better than pupils in similar schools. In 2000, almost all subjects improved. It is not possible to compare their results with national ones in 2000, but the proportions of pupils who got A*-C grades in many subjects exceeded the national averages of 1999. Of particular note is mathematics, where proportions of higher grade GCSE results soared from around 30 per cent of girls to 50 per cent. The inspection found that this improvement is due, in large part, to enthusiastic and dedicated teachers working well together, sharing good ideas and helping and supporting each other. Design and technology and religious education also significantly improved through very good management and enthusiasm by teachers.

4. By the end of Year 9, in English, pupils can produce interesting pieces of writing in a range of different styles. They can use a wide variety of words correctly within sentences and paragraphs. Writing is legible and attractively presented and spelling most often correct. The inspection of pupils' work indicates some very good teaching with marking a good feature and standards of pupils' work, in the higher sets, above average.

5. By the end of Year 11 pupils' writing is fluent and they can plan, draft and re-draft. They can use a wide range of vocabulary and expression to convey meaning. They use computers confidently to help prepare and present their work. Teachers' marking is consistently good with constructive comments and reference to the grades awarded – why that grade is given and how it might be improved. Pupils are confident in talking and use words precisely. Most make significant contributions to discussions. They can read aloud fluently with appropriate expression and sufficient pace. Teachers and learning support assistants provide good role models.

6. In mathematics, by the end of Year 9, pupils' work, from higher ability bands, indicates standards that are average. For example, pupils' number skills, calculating percentages, solving equations and constructing graphs. Pupils' progress in these is also good. Problem solving skills, for example used to investigate many-sided shapes, are above average and pupils have made very good progress in this area by the end of Year 9. However, there is little evidence of work in statistics and probability and this is a weakness. Pupils' work from lower ability bands is below average, but as their attainment on entry in Year 7 is well below average, their progress is at least good by the end of Year 9.

7. In mathematics, by the end of Year 11, the progress pupils make is very good in upper and lower ability groups and good in middle ability. Standards of work range from above average in the upper ability to just below average in the lower ability. The overlap in the middle groups ranges from average to below average. High attaining pupils can deal with complex number patterns and describe them algebraically. They are fluent in number work and use calculators to a high standard. They are weaker in applying what they have learnt to new problems, being more competent and secure when re-working familiar questions. They build successfully on work done previously, for example trigonometry and sine and cosine rules. Their standards in statistics and probability are above average. Teachers' marking is at least adequate and supportive comments are better than usual. Middle ability pupils are generally numerate. They can tackle straightforward calculations but have difficulties in problem solving. Their standards in using and applying mathematics are lower because they have too few opportunities to practice them. Graph work has variety, but is a little simplistic. Teachers' marking is up to date, but contains few supportive comments. Lower ability pupils can present findings and information in a clear way, for example in the 'decorating a bedroom' project. They can cope with simple number work, but cannot check their answers by asking themselves if the answer is reasonable. They do well in work on shapes and angles. Their work on statistics and probability is the weakest in terms of standards, but they show good progress in general understanding.

8. Raising the standards of pupils' work consistently over time, as this school does, is a reflection of very high standards of leadership and management. This is expressed at all levels of the school, but particularly by the headteacher, who has a vision that is always just beyond the horizon and the chair of governors, who does much to steer the ship.

Develops pupils confidence in themselves and raises their aspirations

9. The success of the school in raising the standards of pupils' work, particularly in GCSE examinations, has given pupils confidence in themselves. Doing well is considered by them to be normal. The examination results of 2000, above even the high expectations that the school and pupils had, is considered a challenge by current Year 11 pupils who want to do even better.

10. Doing well in examinations is one aspect of school life. The girls have also had their eyes opened as to how they might move on and use those qualifications as a step to further study and careers. Increasing numbers of girls are taking advantage of opportunities for further study available to them. Partnerships with local colleges and universities enable pupils, who may find it difficult to travel further from home, an avenue for further education. Work experiences and careers advice are good and well thought of by the girls. The school is

working towards a Level 3 award (the highest) for work experience from the Education and Business Partnership in Birmingham.

11. The school is also outstanding in the number of projects and initiatives it becomes involved in. These provide opportunities for many pupils to do work that can be local, national or international. Such work can be prestigious and allows pupils' work to be 'shown off' which enhances pupils' confidence in their own abilities and that of their peers. Local projects include the Gospel Choir, the Response Action Group (for community support), the Community Carnival and Safe Routes to School. Projects linked to raising academic standards include the University of the First Age, Young Engineers and the Spanish Language Project. International links are particularly diverse and unusual. They include the Brunei Garden Project, the Asia – Europe Classroom Project and Singapore Health Projects. Many other projects include teachers who are encouraged to participate in national and international events. This both publicises the good work being produced by girls in the school and broadens the outlook that teachers have.

12. A regular event that is very popular with older pupils and places them in the limelight of developments in the use of computers within education, is their presence at the BETT computer show in London.

Uses computers to help pupils learn and do better

13. Technology College Status and the many initiatives the school has become involved in have enabled excellent computer facilities to be developed at Selly Park. These are used successfully within computer lessons, within many subject areas and as substantial support for out of lessons learning.

14. Knowledge, understanding and the necessary skills, in the use of information and communication technology, are developed in Years 7-9 through computer lessons. These are managed by a well qualified head of department. Word processing, presentation, databases, spreadsheets, control and understanding of the Internet are covered appropriately. At Key Stage 4 all Year 10 pupils now follow a full GNVQ or GCSE course in information technology. The GNVQ course is an innovative one provided on-line, over the Internet. The first lesson of this course was seen during the inspection. Pupils were of a lower ability set, but well able to read information from the screen, follow instructions and enter answers. They were well supported by teaching and non-teaching staff who have modified some of the material to make it more suitable for pupils in this school. Materials on CD-ROM provided an adequate back up to on-line work as the Birmingham Grid (Internet connection) had earlier failed. Pupils in Year 11, if they chose to do so, are continuing with another GNVQ or GCSE IT.

15. During the inspection very good practice was seen in the use of computers. For example, in science, computers were used to measure the amount of oxygen given off during photosynthesis and in the entering of information and plotting of graphs. In mathematics, in year 10, pupils were using a computer program to check solutions to quadratic equations they had been working on. In Russian, Year 9 pupils were using questions to practise and improve their work when using the Cyrillic alphabet. The same pupils, in French, accessed worksheets from the school Intranet and were able to work at their own pace. The very good use of information and communication technology in history is one of the factors leading to the high standards at GCSE.

16. The use of computers by pupils extends outside lessons. The two learning resource centres, one for Key Stage 3, the other for Key Stage 4, are available before and after school and during lunchtime. Year 11 pupils can also utilise them on Saturday mornings. They are well managed by a Learning Resource Manager and well maintained by a Systems Manager. Consequently, pupils use them frequently because they both work consistently and contain useful material for further work and study through access to the school Intranet. Pupils consider them extremely useful in their quest to improve their standards. Pupils from Key Stage 3 wanted their own learning resource centre because of the heavy demands on the previous one by older girls. The pupils also experience the fruits of their labours being transmitted across the world. For example, the display, photographs and text, created to show off their Brunei Garden Project, was sent electronically from school to Korea at the request of the British Council.

17. The school is well placed to develop the appropriate use of ICT further and significant video conferencing facilities are in the pipeline.

Provides excellent study opportunities for pupils

18. The curriculum is well thought out and is richer than seen in many girls' schools or larger mixed comprehensives.

19. At Key Stage 3 the National Curriculum is taught with the addition of drama as a separate subject. The modern language opportunities are particularly diverse with French, Spanish, Russian and Urdu available. Upper and middle ability pupils can follow two languages from Year 8. Modern language GCSE results are very good. During the inspection very good teaching and learning were observed in modern languages with teachers' excellent command of languages supplemented by very good use of information technology. The visit to Spain, organised to support Spanish learners, is also well presented and documented, indicating good learning went on, as well as opportunities to experience another culture and have a little fun. Health education is included in Year 7 and study skills in Year 8. There are substantial opportunities for personal study and the inspection team found pupils took them. In discussion with inspectors, pupils also agreed personal academic tutors, provided within curriculum time, were helpful and a good use of time.

20. At Key Stage 4 National Curriculum requirements are fully met. In addition a range of GNVQ courses is offered. GNVQ art and design and GNVQ health and social care are not uncommon in schools, but GNVQ IT and GNVQ Manufacturing are. The information technology course has been commented on earlier. Manufacturing was also inspected and the pupils' work found to be of at least satisfactory standard with the mass-produced table a very good product for this course. Excellent technology department planning is producing rising standards, as seen in this years, 2000, examination results. Computer aided design and manufacturing is also supported within the resistant materials area of design and technology with a computer controlled milling machine used well by pupils. Food technology is an option well supported by a range of modern equipment and standards are good. During the inspection, textiles technology was visited and very good examples of bags, made by pupils seen, a design that enabled modules to zip together was very well thought out. Very good use was also made of industrial components such as eyelets and poppers rather than 'making do' and producing an inferior product.

21. An innovation this year is the possibility that the most able pupils in Year 10 mathematics can take GCSE a year early and then pursue A/S level mathematics in Year 11. This has followed on from another very good use of information technology, through the laptop project.

22. Key Stage 4 pupils can also study out of normal lesson time within their learning support centre. This is also extended for Year 11 pupils to Saturday mornings when they are supported by the headteacher and deputies and other managers and teachers. The restriction is to Year 11 because of their particular needs in their final year and also because of numbers. Typically 60 pupils can attend. Pupils and teachers told inspectors that they considered this extra time helped standards of work to improve. Year 11 pupils do not have study leave after Easter as is the case in almost all secondary schools. They have planned revision time between examinations. This could not be inspected, but in the opinion of inspectors this is a simple addition to the curriculum that can only be of benefit to pupils.

23. In addition to the subjects taught within lesson times and supported in additional times the school is involved in many projects in which the students become involved. Some of these have been discussed earlier. Another, available on Friday afternoons when lessons finish earlier, is the Young Engineers club. In discussion, Key Stage 3 pupils thought this was good and interesting. It provides a very good role model for girls because they come into contact with post-doctoral female scientists. Another initiative in science that enriches the curriculum is CASE (Cognitive Acceleration through Science Education), that is now in Year 7 and Year 8.

24. The only significant weakness within the curriculum is the provision for physical education and games. This is discussed in the next section.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

GCSE results in science

25. In 1999, science GCSE results were below the national averages in the proportion of pupils attaining an A*-C grade and in the average points score pupils were awarded. This picture was not very different than that in English and better than that in mathematics. If 1999 science results are compared with those of other similar schools they are very high. This is also true if the attainment of pupils when they began their GCSE courses in 1997 is taken into account. Pupils at Selly Park did much better in science than pupils in other similar schools.

26. In 2000, GCSE results cannot yet be compared with national averages as figures have yet to be confirmed. However, the schools' overall GCSE results went up significantly, English results improved a little, mathematics results improved dramatically. Science results fell significantly. If the national picture is similar to last year these poorer results will still be within those attained by the top 25 per cent of similar schools.

27. The issue of GCSE results in science is therefore very recent and set against some substantial rises in other subjects. The question is: "Why did the science results of 2000 not follow the school trend upwards and actually fall quite substantially?"

28. By the end of Year 9, in science, pupils' standards of work vary from below average in the lower sets to some that is well above average in the higher. The presentation and style of work varies in the lower sets, with some classes writing interesting answers to questions and explaining experiments whilst others provide more limited responses on many worksheets. Work is sometimes left unfinished even when commented on by the teacher. Marking is variable and usually provides grades and a word or two of advice. The work on

the knowledge aspects of science, magnetism, breathing, acids and alkalis is quite extensive. The standard of recording of results from experiments and plotting of graphs is at least satisfactory. The middle ability pupils produce lots of work and their standard of factual answers is most often average. Their work on chemical reduction, heat expansion, pressure, diffusion and forces is in line with what is expected. However, their presentation of work is not as good as it could be, with some experiments indifferently written up and inaccurate drawings of things such as electrical circuits. The marking of books does not always foster high standards in this area. Higher ability pupils produce work that is above average, some well above average. Their presentation of work and recording and graphing of results of experiments, by hand and computer, is very good. They also hypothesise about the possible reasons for observations and test their ideas out. They are training to be scientists. Teachers' marking of these pupils' work is far more thorough, written comments stretch pupils to do more and ask questions of pupils' ideas and answers.

29. In Years 10 and 11 all pupils' work in science is well presented. Standards range from below average to well above average between the lower and upper ability groups. Written work from pupils in the lower groups shows very good presentation of work on cells and conductors and insulators. There is not over-use of worksheets and opportunities are given for writing up practical experiments. Work on magnetism uses worksheets too extensively. Pupils' work from the middle ability groups is of average to above average standard. There is some very good work on elasticity, electrical circuits and distillation. Teachers' marking of work is adequate, but does not provide much comment. Work from the higher ability groups is much better, with mathematical analysis coming to the fore. For example, pupils' work on velocity and acceleration. The use of graphs is more frequent and of a higher standard. Pupils show a good understanding of evaporation, the gas laws, the periodic table and enzymes. Marking is thorough.

30. Pupils are taught in classes reflecting their abilities, but these activities within the lessons do not always recognise the wide spread of ability within the class. Consequently, sometimes, more able pupils are not stretched and pupils who find concepts more difficult not sufficiently supported. If experiments do not reach a conclusion or are hindered by the nature of the equipment, or room used for them, this compounds problems and pupils do not learn as well as they might.

31. Though all science teachers were seen teaching during the inspection, only a small sample of lessons were, but more pupils' work was scrutinised and the overall judgement is that science teaching is good. It ranges from satisfactory to excellent.

32. The head of science is well experienced and administrates the department well. She has determined that the physics element of science is the one which pupils do less well in. This has also been recognised in earlier years and an additional teaching appointment was made in September 1999 to help improve matters.

33. The inspection noted several things, other than occasional weaknesses in teaching, that affect pupils' learning and attainment in science. Taken alone they are not so important, but considered together the judgement is that they are significant.

- The time available for science teaching is not generous and a little below average.
- Science class sizes at Key Stage 4 are typically 30 pupils.
- Practical group sizes within classes are often 3 or 4 pupils.

- Teachers within the science department have several jobs to do in the school.
- Extensive use is not made of computers to class teach or provide support for scientific knowledge and understanding within the laboratory.

34. The time available for science teaching was judged too short at the time of the last inspection. It has since been reviewed by governors and advisers and found to be satisfactory by them.

35. One reason for class sizes of 30 pupils, in science at Key Stage 4, is the use of an additional teacher in a team teaching role. It is intended to extend this role and take on individual pupil support and mentoring. In a team taught lesson that was inspected the contribution of one teacher was not significant enough and, though the lesson was satisfactory, it was not efficient.

36. Pupils often work together to do experiments in most schools. Group sizes can vary, but a group of four pupils is generally too many, as individuals may not contribute and others be held back. Both these weaknesses were observed during the inspection in experiments on photosynthesis and on stretching springs.

37. Within the science department, the only teacher with just a management responsibility for science is the head of science. The second in the science department is also responsible for GNVQ. An able teacher of science has significant pastoral responsibilities. Neither of these multiple roles is obvious from job descriptions. Consequently, teachers may not be clear in which direction their priorities lie and this may hinder raising standards further in science.

38. Computers are used very well in science as collectors of information, for example in a photo-synthesis experiment, or as a tool for the analysis of results and plotting of graphs, for example in the spring experiment. There is a wide-range of CD-ROM material available within the department. However, there was little evidence, during the inspection, of specialist science software being used to help teach difficult concepts, for example frequency and wavelength relationships in sound and light. Neither is there adequate large screen or projection hardware within the science department to easily allow class viewing of such software, microscopy, or information from an Intranet or Internet.

The facilities available for physical education and sport

39. The lack of outdoor space and inadequate provision for indoor sports was criticised at the time of the last inspection. It has not yet improved. Just prior to this inspection, the school was informed that a space suitable for a sports hall has been made available to them adjacent to the school site.

40. Limited resources are now better used than at the time of the last inspection. Most lunch times are taken up with netball, hockey, rounders, badminton, tennis, aerobics and, recently, trampolining. Two evenings each week are set aside for school matches and the school has teams in local athletics, badminton and netball. However, the time available for physical education and games lessons is below average and this may affect the standards of those pupils who do not take up opportunities outside of lessons. The lack of facilities makes it difficult to be otherwise.

41. Some parents would prefer it that the pupils did not go off the site to do sports and have little enthusiasm for physical education within the school. Other parents recognise the need for their daughters both to exercise more and to have better opportunities to join in sporting activities.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

42. To further improve the standards of pupils' work the headteacher and governors of the school should:

(1) Monitor Key Stage 4 science closely, with a view to ensuring GCSE standards improve in line with others in the school and, in particular:

- improve the use of worksheets and the quality of all marking in science.
- consider how teaching time, class and group sizes are related and may best be managed by the current teachers or additional teachers
- change the science department structure and job descriptions so that they better support raising standards in science.
- investigate how computer hardware and software might support the teaching and learning of science, beyond that which is already done.

(Paragraphs: 25-38)

(2) Improve provision for physical education and sport within the school by:

- Pursuing funding for adequate buildings without delay.
- Persuading more parents of the importance of physical education and sport as part of their daughters' education.
- Increasing the time made available for physical education and sport, for all pupils, as facilities for them improve.

(Paragraphs: 39-41)

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	20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
8	49	16	27	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	Y7 – Y11
Number of pupils on the school's roll	711
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	395

Special educational needs	Y7 – Y11
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	12
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	114

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	563

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	33

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.8
National comparative data	7.9

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.7
National comparative data	1.1

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 3

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	1999	N/A	139	139

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Girls	78	46	47
	Total	78	46	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	56 (77)	33 (35)	34 (32)
	National	63 (64)	62 (60)	54 (56)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	28 (57)	18 (17)	9 (14)
	National	28 (34)	38 (36)	23 (27)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Girls	83	44	45
	Total	83	44	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	61 (44)	32 (35)	33 (37)
	National	64 (54)	64 (61)	60 (60)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	34 (29)	16 (20)	8 (10)
	National	31 (24)	37 (35)	28 (27)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest reporting year	1999	N/A	116	116

GCSE results		5 or more grades A* to C	5 or more grades A*-G	1 or more grades A*-G
Numbers of pupils achieving the standard specified	Girls	60	111	115
	Total	60	111	115
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	51.7 (50.5)	95.7 (88.1)	99.0 (99.0)
	National	47.8 (46.3)	88.4 (87.5)	93.9 (93.4)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	43 (41)
	National	38 (37)

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

Vocational qualifications		Number	% success rate
Number studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all those they studied	School	42	98
	National		82.5

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	55
Black – African heritage	4
Black – other	0
Indian	32
Pakistani	388
Bangladeshi	53
Chinese	0
White	67
Any other minority ethnic group	112

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	1	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: Y7 – Y11

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	45.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: Y7 – Y11

Total number of education support staff	15
Total aggregate hours worked per week	485

Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y11

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	78.5

Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y11

Key Stage 3	25
Key Stage 4	18

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000

	£
Total income	2 164 036
Total expenditure	2 164 514
Expenditure per pupil	3 044
Balance brought forward from previous year	1 470
Balance carried forward to next year	992

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	450
Number of questionnaires returned	50

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	52	40	0	4	2
My child is making good progress in school.	44	50	4	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	36	2	6	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	36	0	16	8
The teaching is good.	48	44	2	4	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	30	40	2	18	8
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	46	42	0	12	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	72	20	2	4	2
The school works closely with parents.	24	50	2	18	6
The school is well led and managed.	40	46	4	8	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	40	0	12	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	40	38	0	14	6

Other issues raised by parents

Lack of provision for physical education raised at parents' evening.