

Sandal Endowed Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108270
Local Authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	356335
Inspection dates	14–15 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Terry McDermott

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	237
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Steve Nuthall
Headteacher	Mrs Nichola Russell
Date of previous school inspection	3 October 2007
School address	Barnsley Road Sandal, Wakefield West Yorkshire WF2 6AS
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Fifteen lessons were observed. All eight teachers were seen teaching, most of them twice. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, staff and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at its methods for tracking pupils' progress, at a range of school documents including its policies, minutes of governing body meetings, monitoring records, an extensive sample of pupils' work and reports from the School Improvement Partner. Seventy-seven responses from parents and carers to the Ofsted questionnaire were received and considered, along with questionnaires completed by staff and pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The effectiveness of actions taken by the school to address rates of progress being made by pupils over the last three years that are apparently significantly slower than average.
- The effectiveness of actions taken by the school to improve attendance.
- The accuracy of the school's self-evaluation since no areas for improvement were identified in provision or leadership and management.

Information about the school

This average-sized school is part of a hard federation with a nearby infant school. Its roll is rising. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is slightly above average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic heritages is a little below average and rising. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average, though the proportion with a statement of special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The school has suffered significant staffing and budgetary difficulties in recent years. A new headteacher has been in post since September 2009. Almost all teachers are new to the school since the time of the last inspection. The school holds Healthy School status and is an accredited Heartstart school. A pre-school breakfast club is run by the school, along with a range of after-school activities.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. It is improving rapidly under the skilful and determined leadership of the recently appointed headteacher and assistant headteacher. It has successfully consigned all of its earlier difficulties firmly to the past. The school now has some outstanding features, including the following outcomes for pupils: their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; the extent to which they feel safe; the way in which they adopt healthy lifestyles; and the extent of their contribution to the school and wider community. These are underpinned by excellent partnerships with parents and carers and outstanding arrangements for the promotion of community cohesion. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils' welfare are meticulous. All aspects of the school's work have improved since the last inspection, dramatically so in the last year. These improvements have been very rapid and, as yet, have not had enough time to show their full sustained impact on pupils' attainment.

The quality of teaching is good overall and accounts for pupils' good progress throughout the school. Improved teaching is enabling older pupils to overcome previous underachievement and they are often making remarkable progress. Several outstanding lessons were seen and these were pacy and challenging. Learning sometimes slows when teachers spend too long talking about what pupils are going to be doing instead of letting them get started. Occasionally, all pupils in a class are given the same instructions or the same tasks to complete. In these instances pupils' learning needs are not met accurately enough and their progress is slower than it might be. Pupils find the curriculum challenging, interesting and exciting. It includes high-quality art, music and French for all pupils. This added richness to pupils' experiences contributes greatly to the marked improvement in attendance. The range and uptake of extra-curricular activities is excellent. The care, guidance and support all pupils receive are good, and are central to their emotional and physical security. Adults in the school know pupils and their families well through their close community ties. Specific interventions are provided when it is noted an individual or group needs additional help. These are proving to be beneficial but as yet the methods used by the school to record and evaluate their effectiveness are still developing. Parents and carers strongly appreciate and support the work of the school, in particular the high-quality work being carried out to support those pupils who are most vulnerable due to their circumstances.

School self-evaluation is largely accurate because it is linked to the outcomes reached by pupils. Staff morale is high, and all adults in the school are fully committed to doing their very best for the pupils in their care. Senior leaders know which aspects of provision require development, and what to do to make the changes. The school has good capacity to make further improvements.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that lessons consistently move forward smartly, maximising the time pupils spend actively engaged in learning and minimising the time they spend passively listening to instruction or explanation.
- Ensure teachers always plan work that matches pupils' ability and especially challenges the more able rather than just expecting them to complete more work.
- Ensure that all work done to support individual pupils or groups is evaluated systematically and recorded accurately to ensure it is having a positive impact on pupils' outcomes.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Achievement and enjoyment of school are good. Pupils learn well in lessons because they listen attentively and have very good attitudes to learning. Attainment on entry to school is generally as expected or a little above average. Progress in the past, although satisfactory, has not been fast enough to raise attainment and pupils routinely left Year 6 with broadly average standards. Improved teaching and sharper assessments ensure pupils now make good progress. Although on occasions learning slows in lessons when work does not closely match pupils' needs, the school's comprehensive and accurate assessment and tracking system clearly shows that many pupils in Year 6 have made outstanding progress as they recover the deficit from previous years. As yet, there has been insufficient time for changes to have a full impact on attainment but standards observed by inspectors are now rising quickly. In Year 6 an above-average number of pupils are now reaching the higher level 5 in both English and mathematics. Pupils from all groups, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those from minority ethnic backgrounds, are promptly identified and supported and make good progress over time.

Pupils have highly developed personal attributes of respect, consideration and tolerance, and respond quickly to guidance from the teacher. They listen attentively to each others' views and opinions, and often learn from each other because they know that different or unusual interpretations will not be subject to ridicule. They can be trusted to work productively when not directly supervised. This was seen to outstanding effect in a Year 6 literacy lesson when pupils used their observation skills and their imagination to make independent interpretations of the well-known Peter Jackson portrait of Grace Darling's 'Row Boat Rescue'. Concentration was total, understanding grew rapidly, and confidence soared. The different challenges set by the teacher were met, as pupils worked at their own levels to complete their work successfully.

Pupils enjoy coming to school because, as one said, 'the stuff we learn about is dead interesting, and fun too'. Overall, their attendance is average, but this is rising rapidly. Pupils say firmly that there is no bullying, but they know what to do should it occur. They can explain with certainty why they are safe in school. Pupils are confident that the school deals quickly, fairly and effectively with any issues that might arise. The awareness of the dangers they may face outside school and what steps to take to avoid them is good. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to lead healthy lives and describe with confidence the effects of exercise and diet on the body. It is clear from pupils' discussions that they are very proud of their school and the part they play in helping it to improve.

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Many are keen to represent the school in a wide range of sporting and cultural activities. Their involvement in activities in the immediate local area, for example at 'Soul Portobello, is strong. Their understanding of the different cultures they are likely to meet within the United Kingdom and across the globe is excellent. They have a wide range of direct contacts with different schools locally and in Somerset, have good knowledge of societies in France and Japan, and take part in celebrations of other faiths. When they leave school at the end of Year 6 pupils are well-balanced, confident and thoughtful young citizens with average levels of attainment. They are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of their education and their lives.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Teaching and learning are good. A significant proportion of teaching observed during the inspection was outstanding. Teachers are enthusiastic and add humour and enjoyment to learning. Classrooms are colourful yet calm places. Examples of pupils' written work are prominently displayed to motivate and inspire. Lessons usually go at a brisk pace that motivates pupils although this occasionally slows and interest wanes. Recently qualified teachers bring vibrancy and energy to the classrooms. Staff are quick to spot if a pupil needs extra help in the lesson and offer help to clarify any misunderstandings and include pupils in assessing their own work. Scrutiny of pupils' books showed that marking is regular and celebratory, but does not always give clear advice on how to get better.

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Teaching assistants are deployed effectively and play an important role in supporting different groups of pupils to make good progress over time. They are instrumental in ensuring that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are able to gain the same benefits as all other pupils from the wide range of what the school offers.

The exciting curriculum, including a wide range of extra-curricular enrichment activities, is a key reason why achievement and personal development are good. Planning effectively combines subjects and includes a strong focus on building pupils' basic skills while ensuring that they absorb the values of tolerance, compassion and respect for the individual and the environment. Every pupil in the school is able to undertake a residential experience every year. These opportunities have been recently implemented and the full extent of their impact on outcomes remains to be seen. The school has allocated funds to update information and communication technology equipment to ensure pupils have opportunities to keep up to date with their skills.

The school knows the pupils and their families well. Regular newsletters and consultations underpin the strong links between school and home. These allow the school to identify and address any personal issues which might arise. Arrangements for supporting those pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable are positive and effective. The expert work of the learning mentor is particularly noteworthy in this area and is recognised as such by parents and carers. Robust arrangements are effectively raising attendance. Transition arrangements are well managed and ensure that pupils transfer into school, from one class to another, and on to secondary education, with the minimum of fuss or misunderstanding. The small pre-school breakfast club gives those pupils who attend a well-balanced and nourishing breakfast, and makes for a good start to the day. The after-school club is similarly well attended and helps, for example, pupils with their homework and creative activities. All aspects of provision typify the school's underlying attitude of 'If it's good enough for one, it's good enough for everyone.'

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The new headteacher quickly identified what was needed to stop the long slide of decelerating progress and falling attainment. Her robust actions have ensured that all pupils in this school now get 'a good deal'. Though progress is now consistently good and for some older pupils outstanding, the long-term impact of underachievement will take some time to fully eradicate. Monitoring is much sharper and the school is starting to give more attention to checking the impact of change on outcomes. All staff support this drive to improve. Morale in the school has been transformed, as has the school's reputation with

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parents and carers. A great deal of responsibility for improvement still rests squarely on the shoulders of the headteacher and the assistant headteacher. However, dynamic and committed middle leaders are rapidly becoming accustomed to their new roles and starting to play a bigger part in monitoring and evaluation.

Procedures for safeguarding are meticulous. The school goes the extra mile in all aspects of this work. This is reflected in the views of pupils and parents and carers alike. Current requirements are fully met. Governors are effective leaders and are fully involved in the work of the school. They have improved their understanding of their roles and responsibilities and know where the school is strong and what it needs to do to get better. The governing body is hardworking, knowledgeable and challenging.

The school makes good provision to ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils. All pupils have the support necessary to make good progress. The school works successfully to ensure that pupils understand that inequality must be confronted. There is no discrimination, harassment, or bias here. The effectiveness of the school's provision for community cohesion is excellent. Local, national and international links are carefully planned and well established. Pupils' understanding of the need for cultural diversity, religious tolerance and the removal of societal inequalities is firmly established through first-hand experience and through work in geography, history, art and religious education. It underpins pupils' excellent personal, social, moral and cultural development. The Shinto prayer tree adorned with personal poems relating to the recent Tsunami in Japan in the Year 3 garden is powerful testament to this.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

The proportion of parents and carers responding to the Ofsted questionnaire was slightly above average. Almost all responses were very strongly in support of the work of the

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school. Several alluded to the marked recent improvements. Respondents were unanimously happy with the experiences their children were getting at the school. A very small minority of parents and carers raised some individual or particular concerns. Inspectors considered these views carefully in reaching the overall judgements expressed in the report.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sandal Endowed Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 77 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 237 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	46	60	30	39	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	57	74	19	25	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	44	57	30	39	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	42	55	33	43	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	48	62	27	35	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	46	60	28	36	3	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	48	62	28	36	1	1	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	39	51	33	43	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	46	60	28	36	2	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	39	51	30	39	5	6	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	46	60	30	39	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	53	69	22	29	2	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	51	66	26	34	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



16 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sandal Endowed Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior School, Wakefield, WF2 6AS

Thank you for making us so welcome when we inspected your school recently. We were very impressed with your good manners, good behaviour and your very good attitudes to learning in lessons. You obviously get on very well together, especially at lunchtimes when the older pupils work as play leaders to help younger pupils. We noticed particularly how trustworthy you are when working independently.

We found that Sandal Endowed is a good school. It is improving rapidly. Some aspects are outstanding, including your understanding of keeping safe and healthy. You receive a good education. Your headteacher and all the other adults in the school are working as an enthusiastic team. You are taught well, learning about lots of different and interesting things in exciting ways.

However, there are some things which the school could do even better. So I have asked your teachers and the other adults in school to do the following to help you learn more quickly.

- Spend less time explaining things to you, and give you more time to research, investigate and find things out for yourselves.
- Make sure that they plan work in lessons so that each one of you gets just the right amount of work to do, with none being too easy or too hard.
- Make sure that the effect of all of the different extra activities that are provided to help you is recorded and measured accurately.

You can help with these by telling your teachers, politely of course, if the work you are getting is either too easy or too hard. Please continue to be the happy, well-balanced and friendly young citizens you already are. I wish all of you good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

Terry McDermott

Lead Inspector

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