

INSPECTION REPORT

**SANDAL ENDOWED CHURCH OF ENGLAND
[VA] JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Sandal, Wakefield

LEA area: Wakefield

Unique reference number: 108270

Headteacher: Mr C Cowlshaw

Reporting inspector: Mrs S Walker
21045

Dates of inspection: 30 June – 3 July 2003

Inspection number: 246783

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior School
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	7 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Barnsley Road Sandal Wakefield
Postcode:	WF2 6AS
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr T Hall
Date of previous inspection:	December 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21045	Mrs S Walker Registered inspector	Art and design	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements How well are the pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19446	Mrs S Wood Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
25623	Mr J Cox Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology History Special educational needs	
19041	Mr R Linstead Team inspector	English Design and technology Music Educational inclusion English as an additional language	
29426	Mr D Grimwood Team inspector	Mathematics Geography Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a large Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior School, situated on the outskirts of the city of Wakefield. There are 324 boys and girls on the roll, aged between seven and eleven. There is a good social mix of pupils. Unlike most other schools, Sandal has no catchment area of its own and so, although about one third of the pupils come from the privately owned housing near to the school, about two thirds of them travel some way to school from a large estate of local authority housing at Portobello. The composition of the school's roll has changed in recent years, there now being an increased ratio of pupils from the Portobello estate. Most of the pupils are of white English heritage; nine pupils come from a range of other ethnic backgrounds. Of these only one is at an early stage of English acquisition. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is about average. Thirty three of the pupils are on the school's register for special educational needs, which is lower than average. These pupils experience a range of learning, emotional and behavioural difficulties. There are no pupils with statements of special educational need. The attainment of the pupils when they transfer from infant school is about average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is providing a sound standard of education in a caring Christian community. It promotes good personal development, attitudes and relationships among its pupils through the good quality of the support and guidance that it gives. The standards in English, mathematics and science are higher than those achieved in similar schools; in science and mathematics they are in line with the national average but in English standards in the current Year 6 are below average, particularly in writing. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, and the leadership and management of the headteacher and governors are satisfactory. In relation to its low running costs the school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) and physical education are above average.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the good provision made for them.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good.
- The teaching is sound overall but there is some good teaching in all subjects, especially in physical education, ICT and geography.
- The school fosters the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils well.
- The very good extra-curricular activities and French enrich the curriculum.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, particularly in writing.
- Standards in art and design and design and technology.
- The level of demand made on pupils to meet their differing needs.
- The monitoring of the school's work by senior managers and governors.

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 December 1997, since when there has been satisfactory improvement. Standards in English and mathematics are not as high as they were at the last inspection due to the changing nature of the school's intake, but in science standards have risen and the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level has increased. The proportion of good or

better teaching has risen, though there are still occasions when work is not well matched to the differing needs of the pupils, which means that brighter pupils are not always achieving their best. This feature of teaching was criticised in the previous report but has not yet been fully addressed. The school improvement plan is now much better, providing a clear and detailed outline for development. Assessment has improved well and there are now plenty of systems for gathering accurate information about pupils' progress. There is still work to be done to ensure that the information is used to best advantage to help make suitable provision for pupils of all abilities and to diagnose any weaknesses. The curriculum for design and technology has been reviewed though standards remain too low. By contrast, standards have risen steeply in ICT as a result of additional resources, staff training and effective leadership in the subject. Schemes of work for all subjects are now in place and are combined with national guidance to give secure support for planning.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	B	B	C	A
Mathematics	B	D	C	B
Science	C	C	C	B

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

Results of National Curriculum tests show that in 2002 standards in English, mathematics and science were at an average level. The school's performance in English was lower than in previous years. In mathematics standards rose because the school had focused effort into improving on the disappointing performance in 2001. Standards in science have been about average year on year, but with an increasing proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5. In all three subjects pupils were achieving better results than in schools with a similar intake. The school failed to meet its ambitious targets in English and mathematics though targets for science were met. The school has kept pace with the rising national trend.

Standards in the current Year 6 group remain at an average level in mathematics and science, but are below average in English. This dip in standards reflects the changing nature of the year groups in the school, which has led to a fall in the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level (5) and an increase in the number of pupils working at the lower level (3). The slightly higher number of pupils with learning difficulties has also adversely affected overall standards. Most pupils join the school with average levels of attainment and make satisfactory progress over time.

In ICT and physical education pupils are doing well and reaching standards that are better than in most other schools. In design and technology and art and design standards are lower than is usual. In all other subjects standards are typical for the age group.

The school helps pupils with special educational needs to learn well and they make good progress. The very small number of pupils in the early stage of learning English make rapid progress and achieve very well. Provision for higher attaining pupils does not always take account of their needs to enable them to achieve their best.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are enthusiastic about school and keen to learn. Most

	have mature attitudes and work conscientiously.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most pupils are well behaved courteous and friendly. The majority behave well in lessons and enjoy learning. A small minority find it difficult to concentrate at times.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils develop respect for others and good relationships are formed throughout the school. The school helps pupils to become mature and thoughtful.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance rates are in line with national figures. The late arrival of a few pupils interrupts the start to the school day.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory

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

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Although the proportion of good or better lessons has increased since the last inspection, in the important core subjects of English, mathematics and science the teaching is predominantly satisfactory, rather than good and is contributing to the overall average standards in the school. A high proportion of lessons observed during the inspection were judged to be good or very good, although most of these were in non-core subjects. There are particular strengths in the teaching of physical education, ICT and geography. There is a spread of good teaching in all subjects and in all year groups. Key strengths of the best teaching are the good class management that impacts well on relationships, good subject knowledge that leads to interesting and lively explanations and efficient organisation that enables lessons to run smoothly and to maximise the use of time. Conversely, even though there is good teaching by individuals, the overall quality of teaching in art and design is unsatisfactory because of the lack of confidence and knowledge in the subject of most staff.

When the teaching is satisfactory rather than good it is often because of inconsistencies of approach by different teachers. In general there is too much emphasis on the use of worksheets, which limits the opportunities for pupils to use their skills in literacy and numeracy in other subjects. There are sometimes occasions when tasks are not matched well enough to the learning needs of the pupils and when this happens it holds back the brighter pupils because they are not challenged enough. The needs of pupils who have difficulties with learning and the small number whose mother tongue is not English are generally well met.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The school's curriculum is interesting and is enriched by a very good range of extra curricular activities and through its positive links with other establishments but not enough time is spent on art and design and design and technology.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by individual education plans of good quality and the strong contribution of the support assistants and they make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. Provision ensures that good progress is made.
Provision for pupils' personal, including	Good. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are promoted well through interesting and reflective assemblies and the recent

spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	introduction of a programme for personal, social, health and citizenship education, which is beginning to impact well on behaviour and pupils' capacity to learn.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactorily. The school provides a caring and secure environment. Due emphasis is placed on ensuring that pupils attend regularly and pupils' achievements are celebrated and encouraged. The assessment of pupils' progress in learning is sound; there are new and comprehensive systems in place to gather information about each pupil but it is not used to best effect to plan for pupils' varying needs.

The school makes satisfactory links with parents and provides good information about school events and the progress of the pupils.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher gives a strong lead in planning for future developments and manages the school efficiently but some subject co-ordinators are not yet influential enough in raising standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactorily. The governors are very supportive and take an active interest in managing the school. They have yet to extend their expertise to rigorously monitoring and evaluating its work.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Monitoring systems are beginning to take effect but there is not yet enough robust monitoring of teaching and learning and the consistent implementation of school systems by senior staff.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Financial management is prudent and makes best use of the tight budget. Governors monitor expenditure carefully and give careful consideration to obtaining best value when purchasing.

The school has sufficient teachers though only two classroom support staff, a small number for a school of this size. Accommodation is satisfactory overall and meets the demands of the curriculum with spacious grounds that enable a wide range of sporting activities to be undertaken. Resources for learning are satisfactory.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school has high expectations. • Their children become mature and responsible. • The teaching is good. • Children like coming to school. • Children make good progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework • The range of activities outside lessons.

Inspection findings support parents' positive views in the main, although pupils make satisfactory, rather than good progress. Concerns about homework are not upheld because it is generally used to good effect to extend and reinforce lessons. However, parents at the meeting were not all clear about the school's policy on homework, which would benefit from clarification. The quality and range of extra-curricular activities go far beyond what is seen in most schools.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

Strengths:

- Standards are high in physical education and information and communication technology and so most pupils achieve well.
- Standards in mathematics and science, though average, and compare favourably with those achieved in similar schools.
- Standards of organisation and presentation in pupils' books and files are generally high.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

Weaknesses:

- Standards in English have fallen because pupils do not do enough reading and writing in other subjects.
- Standards in art and design, design and technology are not high enough.
- In some lessons the higher attaining pupils are not achieving their full potential.

1 Standards in 2002 in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science were average. The school has kept pace with the rising national trends but standards are not as high as they were at the time of the previous inspection, when they were above average in all three subjects. There are several factors that have adversely affected the overall performance of the school in national tests. First, in the intervening years since the last inspection there has been a change in the profile of the pupils attending the school; there are now more pupils who present challenging behaviour, particularly in Year 4. Second, there is considerable variation in the make-up of each year group, which means that standards are higher in some year groups than in others. The present Year 3 cohort for example, is performing well. Third, there has been a small increase in the number of pupils with learning difficulties which has meant an increase in the proportion of pupils attaining the lower levels in national tests. Fourth, the school has focused considerable effort to raising standards in mathematics, following the disappointing performance in 2001. This has been achieved successfully, but to the detriment of English.

2 Standards in English in the current Year 6 are below average overall. Attainment in reading and in speaking and listening is average but in writing it is below average. Despite having a previous pattern of attainment that was often above average, the school has seen its performance in English steadily decline since 1999. The gap between the school's previous high results and national average has been closing year on year. Inspection judgements and unvalidated results of 2003 tests confirm that attainment in English in the current Year 6 is slightly below average. This is because, although the majority of pupils achieve the levels expected for their age, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level is lower than expected, while the number that achieve the lower level is disproportionately high.

3 In speaking and listening and reading pupils throughout the school are reaching average standards; most pupils speak confidently, with a good awareness of their audience and can contribute thoughtfully to discussions. The majority read independently with fluency and accuracy. But in writing the pupils are not doing so well. Although the basic skills are taught well and in accordance with the National Literacy Strategy, not all teachers provide enough further opportunities for pupils to use their skills in a wider context, for example, by producing extended pieces of writing or recording observations in subjects such as history and geography in a range of imaginative styles.

4 Standards in mathematics are currently in line with the national average, but are better than those in similar schools. The results in 2002 were an improvement on those of the previous year

when standards were below average. Fewer pupils in Year 6 are expected to achieve the higher levels in national tests in 2003 than last year and consequently the school is unlikely to meet its challenging target for this year. Standards have fluctuated in the past three years, partly because there has been some discontinuity in the management of the subject because two capable co-ordinators have left the school in close succession. Consequently the present postholder is relatively new to the role. The school has thorough systems for assessing each pupil's performance but is not yet making full use of the information to track the progress of individuals and consequently areas of weakness in pupils' learning are not being picked up and addressed.

5 In science performance by the age of eleven is now average, but above average compared with that of similar schools. The number of pupils reaching the higher levels has increased. The pupils make good gains in their acquisition of information and in developing scientific skills but they do not get enough opportunities devise their own investigations.

6 In relation to their attainment at the age of seven most pupils are making sound progress during their time at Sandal, reaching average standards by the age of eleven in reading, speaking and listening, mathematics and science. This includes those with special educational needs and the very few pupils for whom English is an additional language. In writing however, some pupils are not achieving as well as expected when their attainment at seven is taken into consideration. This is because a disproportionate number of pupils are still attaining only the lower levels in national tests, while brighter pupils are not all reaching their potential. This is often because teachers' planning does not always make enough provision for them to be challenged sufficiently. In lessons when they are given tasks with the same level of difficulty as the rest of the class they can coast along without being fully stretched. These pupils make the best progress when their work is hard enough to really make them think.

7 Pupils with special educational needs achieve standards that are generally below average but appropriate to their level of understanding and they make good progress relative to their abilities. This good progress reflects the good quality of their individual education plans, the effective monitoring by the special educational needs co-ordinator and the good quality of the help they receive from the two support assistants. In some lessons, however, they are given the same work as more able pupils rather than specially modified tasks, and their ability to complete the work successfully depends on them being given help by an adult.

8 In history and geography pupils attain standards that are typical for their age and make sound progress as they grow older. They develop skills that are specific to each subject and increase their knowledge and understanding, particularly in geography. In music standards are in line with expectation overall but those pupils who benefit from tuition in musical instruments achieve particularly well as a result of the small group work and good specialist teaching.

9 In art and design, standards are not as high as they should be. This is because pupils do not experience a wide enough range of materials and techniques to develop their creative skills fully and because many of the teachers lack the necessary expertise to help pupils to improve the quality of their work. In design and technology standards are also below expectation because the subject has been under emphasised in the past. Pupils have not developed their skills over time and so by the age of eleven there are gaps in their knowledge.

10 The development of information and communication technology in the school has been a real success story. Standards were below average and unsatisfactory at the time of the previous inspection but have now moved to above average. The good progress made by pupils and their increasing competence in using computers are a result of the combination of good and very good teaching, successful training that has lifted the confidence of staff, efficient and effective management of the subject by the co-ordinator and resources that have been considerably enhanced. Another real strength of the school is the provision for physical education that enables many pupils to perform at a level that is better than in many other schools. The enthusiastic leadership of the co-ordinator and the consistently good teaching help pupils to improve their skills well. Achievement in swimming is also high compared with that of most schools because of the

regular practice in the school's own pool and the good teaching.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

Strengths:

- Pupils are keen to learn.
- Behaviour is generally good in lessons.
- Pupils show respect for others and relationships throughout the school are good.

Weaknesses:

- A minority of pupils are easily distracted and sometimes find it difficult to behave.

11 Pupils' attitudes to school are good. Most are courteous, friendly and helpful, showing respect for others and this results in the good relationships evident throughout the school. The pupils are generally enthusiastic to come to school and settle quickly to their work, showing conscientious attitudes. A good example of this was seen in a numeracy lesson in Year 3, where pupils were translating data from frequency charts into pictograms and bar graphs. They listened carefully, responded well to the teacher's questions with sensible answers and made good progress as a result. When the teaching is well focused and catches pupils' imagination they know exactly what is expected of them and produce good work. Most pupils work quietly and sensibly, often sustaining good levels of concentration whether they are working as individuals, in pairs or in a group.

12 The behaviour of the vast majority of pupils in lessons is good and often very good. The school's ethos promotes good behaviour well and the pupils care for each other and the equipment they use. Around the school building and in the playground, behaviour is more variable, occasionally being a little more boisterous, though good-natured. A minority of pupils however, particularly in Year 4, do find it difficult to sustain their concentration at times, particularly when teaching is slow in pace. This sometimes results in fidgeting or restlessness and has an adverse effect on learning because it distracts other pupils.

13 The personal development of pupils throughout the school community is good. Pupils know the daily routines of the school well and willingly respond to teachers' requests. Adults who work in the classrooms are very good role models for the pupils and pupils respond with courtesy. Pupils showed great maturity during a personal, social and health education lesson by refraining from laughing at inappropriate answers. On another occasion they listened attentively and respected the feelings of others when discussing happy and sad moments in their lives. Older pupils are given appropriate responsibilities throughout the school day, which they undertake conscientiously, although opportunities for them to show initiative are less frequent.

14 The attendance figures are in line with the national average. There has been a drop in levels of attendance over time, owing to an increase in the number of families taking their holidays during term time and a greater number of absences through illness. Pupils' absence affects the continuity of their learning and their achievements and parents are made aware of this through regularly reminders from the school. The vast majority of pupils arrive at school in good time; a small number consistently arrive late, which can delay a prompt and smooth start to the school day. Three fixed term exclusions were recorded in the current academic year.

15 Pupils with special educational needs generally behave well and have good attitudes to learning. They respond well to the positive way they are treated by teachers and support assistants. Sometimes they help each other with difficulties. This was seen in a lesson in the computer suite with a Year 4 class when one pupil sensitively helped another to find information about the habitats of animals.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

Strengths:

- When teachers have good subject knowledge pupils make good progress.
- Brisk, lively explanations hold the interest of the pupils and they concentrate well.

- Good relationships create a positive learning atmosphere.
- Lessons are well organised and efficiently managed, making good use of resources.

Weaknesses:

- There is too much emphasis on the use of worksheets.
- There is variation in the quality of marking.
- Not all teachers match work carefully enough to the needs of the pupils.

16 The quality of teaching is sound overall. Although the teaching is good or very good in most lessons, in the important core subjects of English, mathematics and science that carry the most weight, the teaching is predominantly satisfactory, rather than good. The proportion of good or better lessons has increased since the last inspection, the best teaching being in ICT, physical education, swimming and geography because of the high expectations, enthusiasm and specialist knowledge of the teachers which enables pupils to learn well. Only one lesson was judged unsatisfactory. There is a spread of good teaching throughout the school in all year groups and in all subjects. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory in all subjects apart from art and design, in which it is unsatisfactory because many teachers lack expertise in the subject.

17 There are a number of common strengths in the teaching, most of which were in evidence at the time of the last inspection. Most lessons are well managed and organised, which means that they run smoothly and make the best use of time. There are high expectations of presentation and of behaviour in most classes and time is not wasted in dealing with mundane, organisational matters. Explanations are usually clear and often given in a lively and brisk style that holds the attention of the pupils well. Most lessons conclude with a worthwhile session in which teachers draw together the threads of what has been learned. This is a useful time because it reinforces what has been taught in the lesson and, at best, helps pupils to see their learning in a wider context, for example as part of a topic or unit of work. At the time of the inspection there were two student teachers in Year 6 who were supported well by the permanent staff. Both taught with confidence and consistency as a result of their precise planning and creative ideas for making learning interesting for the pupils.

18 In the best lessons well-chosen and imaginative resources enhance and support teaching, as was seen in a very good design and technology lesson in Year 6 when pupils designed and made model helicopters using a range of materials and tools of good quality. Pupils were able to achieve success in the lesson because the resources were plentiful and in good working order so that pupils could concentrate fully on applying their skills in designing and making their models.

19 One of the key strengths of the best teaching is the good level of teachers' subject knowledge in several subjects, especially physical education, geography and ICT and in some English lessons. Where subject knowledge is strong pupils achieve well because they are highly motivated and well supported with individual guidance that clarifies misconceptions and boosts confidence. On the other hand, inadequate subject knowledge, notably in art, restricts the progress pupils make because teachers lack the necessary confidence and expertise to help pupils to improve their work through, for example, helpful one-to-one advice on the correct use of materials.

20 In the majority of lessons there is secure class control that leads to a calm working atmosphere conducive to learning. Most teachers have a good rapport with the pupils, whilst maintaining a clear focus on the task. These two factors came together very well in a very good physical education lesson in Year 5. The teacher's infectious enthusiasm for the subject coupled with very helpful pointers on technique, encouraged pupils to improve their skills and to become better high jumpers so that they achieved standards that were well above average. By contrast, where the teacher's control is insecure behaviour occasionally escalates into unacceptably high noise levels and disruption, which impinges on the learning of the majority of well-behaved pupils. On the few occasions when behaviour is unsatisfactory it is often because the pace of the lesson is too slow, so that pupils lose interest or become impatient to get started with an activity. Sometimes it is because the teacher has inadequate strategies and support systems to deal effectively with

pupils who find it difficult to behave.

21 The strengths in the teaching outweigh the weaknesses, but there are several recurring shortcomings that affect the way in which pupils learn and the standards they achieve. First, most teachers place too much emphasis on the use of printed worksheets in their lessons. Whilst these can be a useful resource when used judiciously, they cannot replace more challenging and interesting practical tasks to make learning interesting and meaningful. The worksheets can limit the extent to which pupils can use their skills in literacy and numeracy in other subjects, for example to write imaginative accounts of events in history. Teachers' planning does not always take enough account of the differing needs of the pupils in the class, with the effect that work is sometimes too easy or too difficult. When this happens higher attainers are not stretched enough and sometimes they just coast along in lessons because the tasks they are given to do offer little challenge. The quality of marking varies from class to class; at best it provides helpful comments to enable pupils to know what they have to do to improve. But some of the marking is too cursory and provides little feedback apart from encouragement.

22 The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. When these pupils work with support assistants in small groups or individually they benefit greatly from the closer attention and this helps them to learn well. Individual education plans contain well-thought-out targets for improvement. In some lessons, for example in a lesson when Year 4 pupils used the Internet, teachers plan work that helps pupils with special educational needs to work independently.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

Strengths:

- The curriculum is broad, balanced and features very good provision of extra-curricular activities, particularly sport.
- Provision for the teaching of French is good.
- Provision for the teaching of ICT is much improved and is now good.
- Good programmes of work are in place for all subjects.
- Assemblies of high quality contribute well to the Christian ethos of the school.

Weaknesses:

- The provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education is not yet fully embedded.
- There is no sex and relationships education policy.
- Design and technology and art and design do not receive sufficient coverage.

23 Curricular provision is satisfactory and has improved since the last inspection. The provision for ICT has been improved to the extent that standards at the school are now above average. The curriculum is broader than is found in many schools, French being well taught in Year 6. The programme for physical education is also broader than average, and includes a good range of sports, swimming and outdoor and adventurous activities. A minority of parents feel that the school does not provide a suitable range of activities outside school time. Observations during the inspection indicate that extra-curricular activities are very good, particularly in offering sporting opportunities. Activities directly extend and support the curriculum and, as well as occurring after school, take place on Saturday mornings and during school holidays.

24 Quite sensibly literacy and numeracy are allocated the greatest amount of time but most of the other subjects get appropriate coverage, with the exception of art and design and design and technology with the result that standards in these areas are still below average. Good quality programmes of work are in place for each subject. These are mostly based on nationally recognised material, which has been adapted to increase its relevance to the pupils at the school.

The school has a policy for the education of gifted and talented pupils and such pupils are identified, but it has not yet been implemented, with the result that work for these pupils often lacks challenge. Since the last inspection, the national strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy have been implemented satisfactorily although they have yet to have a major positive impact on standards.

25 The programme for personal, social, health and citizenship education is still in the early stages of development but the school is taking positive steps to implement it. It has adopted a good commercial scheme and has applied for 'Healthy School' status. The introduction of the programme is already having a positive impact on relationships and personal development where it has been introduced in classes of younger pupils. It is not yet fully integrated into the curriculum of the classes of older pupils. There is no policy for sex and relationship education. Information about the use of drugs and the dangers from misuse is appropriately handled in science lessons but is not extended by any input from medical agencies or the police.

26 Links with the community are satisfactory. The school has good links with the local church and benefits from weekly visits by clergy for assemblies and from visits to the church. For example, pupils in Year 4 made good observational drawings of the church and the building was used as a venue for a recent celebration of music and dance. The local environment is used to extend work in history and geography and there are visits to museums and places of interest. A visit by Year 5 pupils to a museum designed as a World War 2 prisoner of war camp was the stimulus for some good work in history. The school has some links with local businesses; visits to a local glass factory are particularly valuable. Year 6 pupils benefit enormously from a residential visit to an outdoor centre. Not only does the visit enable pupils to widen their experiences in physical education by taking part in a range of outdoor and adventurous activities, it also contributes well to their spiritual, moral and social education.

27 Links with other schools and colleges are good. The school has appointed separate staff to liaise with the infant school from which most pupils transfer and the secondary school which most pupils will attend. A range of systems, including introductory visits, exchanges of information and, in the case of Year 6 pupils, doing some work designed to bridge the gap between schools, helps to make transfer as seamless as possible. The teacher in charge of liaison with the infant school visits that school to gauge the ability of pupils, so helping to ensure that each Year 3 class is balanced and contains a comparable range of ability. The school welcomes a good range of teaching and work experience students, which increases the numbers of adults and therefore the opportunities for individual help for pupils. This is particularly helpful for pupils with special educational needs and in providing additional help for individual pupils in physical education lessons.

28 The school makes good arrangements to give all pupils equal opportunities and access to all educational activities. A very tiny proportion of pupils have English as an additional language. These pupils make very rapid progress in developing their speech, reading and writing because of the very good quality of support they receive. They have good access to the curriculum because staff do their best to ensure that they understand new learning. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. These pupils have equal access to all aspects of the curriculum. Assessment takes place regularly and individual education plans are revised frequently. Although these pupils take an active part in lessons in the computer suite, the school does not have many programs specifically designed to meet the targets on the individual education plans.

29 The provision for pupils' spiritual moral social and cultural development is good thanks to the high quality of the assemblies and the recent introduction of the personal, social, health and citizenship education programme, which is impacting on the pupils' development and understanding. The school promotes spiritual understanding through assemblies that are well planned and form a quiet, focused start to the school day. Opportunities are given for pupils to reflect and consider others' feelings and beliefs. 'Circle time' provides opportunities to explore and share thoughts and feelings, and teachers value pupils' contributions and consideration for others. Teachers choose resources well to inspire pupils, as when pupils were fascinated by a display of

animals for observational artwork. Pupils' work is also displayed imaginatively to celebrate and value their achievements.

30 Moral and social developments are both promoted well. The good relationships provide a firm basis for moral understanding and pupils have respect for each other, resources and the buildings. They are taught what is right and wrong and encouraged to understand the consequences of their actions. The school is working hard on social development and the good use of 'circle time' is beginning to have a positive effect on pupils' social skills and community values. The work they do for charities ensures that pupils develop an understanding for the needs of others. The 'monitors' systems helps to develop pupils' sense of responsibility for themselves and others.

31 Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to study a range of artists and their work and they learn how their own culture has been influenced by events in the past. Pupils learn about contrasting cultures in parts of the world in geography but less about the diverse cultures within the wider community at home. Through religious education lessons, pupils are taught to understand different faiths and respect different views.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

Strengths:

- Child protection procedures are good.
- Thorough procedures are in place for monitoring and promoting good attendance.
- The school has consistently applied procedures for promoting good behaviour.
- A good amount of information is collected on each pupil's attainment.

Weaknesses:

- Insufficient use is made of assessment to measure progress as well as attainment.
- Assessment of pupils' achievements in subjects other than English, mathematics and science needs further development.

32 The school looks after its pupils well and parents share this view. The school provides a caring and secure environment in which its pupils can learn. Importance is placed on ensuring that pupils attend regularly and there is a consistent approach to celebrating pupils' achievement and good behaviour. Teachers know the pupils well since many families have been associated with the school for many years. Consequently, pupils feel confident enough to share worries and concerns, knowing that they will be dealt with sensitively.

33 There are satisfactory procedures in place for ensuring pupils' welfare, health and safety, and the school makes good use of appropriate agencies to meet the needs of individual pupils. The child protection policy is clear and is supported well by local authority guidelines and appropriate staff training. Clear procedures are followed for reporting and recording accidents. The parents raised concerns regarding the inadequate space in the school car park and the safety of pedestrians. The inspection evidence supports these concerns. The school has yet to resolve this problem, but is considering ways of improving parking facilities and access for children and their carers.

34 The school has good systems in place for monitoring behaviour, and rewards are given consistently in line with the school behaviour policy. Sanctions are also applied appropriately, though not enough is done to counter the distractions that occur in some lessons due to chattering, calling out and other inappropriate behaviour. The school has worked hard to improve the behaviour of the small number of pupils whose behaviour is unsatisfactory and this is having a positive effect. The school does not tolerate anti-social behaviour, such as bullying or racism. Pupils say that if they report the rare instances of bullying these are dealt with quickly and appropriately. The pupils' personal development is monitored through the recently introduced personal, social and health education programme, which is beginning to have a positive impact on

pupils. The school monitors the pupils' attendance well and parents are clear about how to report their child's absence from school. The regular 'celebration' assemblies recognise pupils' achievements, personal development, and attendance as well as their successes out of school.

35 Assessment of pupils' progress has improved since the last inspection, and is now satisfactory overall. In English, mathematics and science the school records attainment against National Curriculum levels achieved at the end of Years 2 and 6 in the national tests. The results of the optional tests in Years 3, 4 and 5 are also recorded on tracking sheets so that teachers can check the progress of individual pupils and year groups. Reviews of achievements help to set new goals for pupils with special educational needs. Arrangements for assessing progress in other subjects of the National Curriculum are of variable quality. In some subjects easily maintained assessment procedures give a clear picture of the progress pupils have made, while in other subjects, such as art, history and computer work, they have yet to be developed and used fully.

36 The use of assessment information is inconsistent. The school has begun to collect and analyse assessment data more widely and effectively, but does not make enough use of information technology in these processes. As a result, the large amount of assessment data held is not always readily accessible to teachers. When teachers make good use of assessment information, as in English, it is used well to plan new work and to adjust the teaching to match pupils' needs and to identify aspects of learning in which pupils need further help.

37 Pupils who are having difficulty learning and who the school thinks may have special educational needs are identified early. The school maintains a list of pupils giving cause for concern and these pupils are checked regularly to see if they need putting on the register of special educational needs. Targets contained in pupils' individual education plans are generally good. Not enough attention is paid however, to the needs of pupils with special educational needs in lesson plans, in which the same work is often set for all pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

Strengths:

- The quality of written information home to parents is good.
- The supportive Parent-Teacher Association provides additional resources for the school.

Weaknesses:

- Written reports do not tell parents what their children's learning targets are.
- Parents are not kept informed of what is to be learned next so they can provide relevant experiences for their children.

38 The school makes satisfactory links with parents by providing a good level of information about school events and through the thriving Parent Teacher Association. Parental views of the school are favourable. Most parents feel that their children like school and that they become mature and responsible during their time there. They consider the quality of teaching to be good and feel that teachers have high expectations of the pupils. Most parents feel that the school works closely with them and that pupils make good progress. A few parents are unhappy about the amount of homework set by the school and also about the range of activities outside the classroom.

39 Inspectors agree with the many of the positive views expressed by parents in the questionnaires they returned and at the parents' meeting. However, the inspection judgement is that the expectations of teachers are no more than satisfactory and that the children make sound rather than good progress. The amount of homework set is also judged to be satisfactory and much the same as that seen in other primary schools. The provision of extra-curricular activities is judged to be very good, particularly the range of sporting activities.

40 The school sends frequent, well-presented letters to parents. They keep parents well informed of events in the school and daily routines though they contain little information regarding

the curriculum. Written reports are informative and well written, showing that the teachers know the individual pupils and their progress well. Parent consultation evenings are held throughout the year and these also provide ample opportunities to inform parents about the progress that their children are making and the areas for future for improvement.

41 A small number of parents, governors and friends of the school regularly help in classrooms and the school values their help. For example, one governor provides regular support by helping out in lessons and this frees teachers from minor organisational matters so they can concentrate on teaching the pupils. Parents are invited to school productions, which they appreciate and enjoy. The Parent Teacher Association supplies valued additional resources for the school, such as playground equipment and computers.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

Strengths:

- There is a clear vision of priorities for development.
- A comprehensive school improvement plan gives a strong steer to development.
- Careful thought is given to financial planning and budgetary control.
- Governors show an enthusiastic interest in the life and work of the school.

Weaknesses:

- The pace of change has been too slow to raise standards sufficiently.
- Monitoring is not rigorous enough to tackle shortcomings in the teaching.
- Co-ordinators are not making enough impact on standards in their subjects.
- Governors are not fully involved in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school.

42 The sound leadership and management of the school have brought about better teamwork among staff. The headteacher and supportive deputy headteacher have a nurturing managerial style that is consonant with the school's Christian ethos and aims. There is an increasingly collaborative approach to curriculum planning and staff contribute to the improvement plan through their regular audits of each subject. Through reflective self-evaluation the headteacher has a sound overview of what needs to be done to bring about improvement in the school. For example, following the school's careful analysis of test results the school was aware that standards in mathematics were not as high as they should have been. The management took positive steps to remedy the situation with support from the local education authority and consequently results in national tests took an upturn.

43 The priorities for development are appropriate and are made explicit in the comprehensive school improvement plan. This is something that has improved considerably since the last inspection, when the development plan was found to be inadequate. Many of the challenges set for the current year have been successfully achieved, but the pace of change to bring about further improvements has been too slow. Developments have been hindered to some extent by the reluctance of some staff to embrace the change that is necessary to take the school forward.

44 There is a clear policy in place for monitoring of the work of the school but the systems are not implemented with sufficient rigour to have any real impact on standards and the quality of teaching. Senior managers have not yet started to monitor teaching and learning through direct observation and as a result inconsistencies in teaching, such as the variations in the marking of pupils' work and the lack of provision in some classes for brighter pupils are not being picked up and remedied.

45 All staff have subject responsibilities, but there is some variation in the effectiveness of the role. Where there is strong subject leadership, as for example in ICT, the combined effects of good staff training, monitoring and a realistic action plan can be clearly seen in the high standards achieved by the pupils. The time allocated to co-ordinator duties is not always used to the best

advantage, for example to find out about standards by looking systematically at samples of pupils' work. Some of the co-ordinators have had the opportunity to monitor their colleagues teaching and to offer feedback. This has been beneficial in providing the co-ordinators with an overview of standards and what needs to be done next to bring about improvements. But not all co-ordinators have a thorough enough knowledge of standards in their subjects or of what needs to be done to develop staff expertise. Senior managers have not yet tackled this by overseeing the effectiveness of the co-ordinators.

46 The co-ordinator for special educational needs manages the provision for special educational needs very well and is up to date with recent changes in this area. She checks pupils' individual education plans thoroughly and helps teachers to write the plans. The plans are reviewed regularly and parents are given the chance to be involved at every stage. The school makes good use of outside agencies such as the speech therapy service and educational psychology service. Pupils with special educational needs receive effective help from the two support assistants, who contribute valuably to their learning.

47 The governors are very supportive and proud of the school, taking an active interest in its life and work. The governing body is led by a very supportive and knowledgeable Chair who regularly visits the school to meet the staff and hold discussions with the headteacher. Governors are well informed of what is going on in the school through the headteacher's regular reports and through their own direct observation when helping in classes. Consequently governors have a sound understanding of the strengths of the school and the areas for further development. A structure of sub-committees draws well upon the individual skills and professional experience of the governors for the benefit of the school. The finance committee monitors the school budget proficiently and regularly, ensuring that resources are deployed well to meet the needs of the pupils. The governors have not yet fully developed their expertise in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school to hold it to account as 'critical friends'.

48 The school has sufficient teachers, but there are only two classroom support staff; a small number for a school of this size. Both spend all their time working with pupils with special educational needs. The school regularly receives students training to be teachers and there are good arrangements for supporting them.

49 Educational priorities are well supported through the school's financial planning, despite the tight budget caused by a falling roll. The school is careful to ensure that it gets good value for money in what it buys. It makes good use of the professional expertise of individual governors in monitoring expenditure. The school's office staff are very efficient and the systems they use help the school to run smoothly. The school's use of new technology is satisfactory. Items such as the school fund account are not yet recorded on computer programs. However, pupils' results from National Curriculum tests are now kept on computer and this enables analysis of the results to be carried out more easily.

50 Accommodation is satisfactory overall and meets the demands of the curriculum. The school grounds are spacious with access to a large playing field. There is a well-equipped computer suite. However, the library is small and is not easily used by a whole class. Movement around the school is not easy as the many additions to the building are on different levels. Wheelchair users and people with disabilities would find it difficult to move around the school: the school is aware of the need to improve access and planned future developments include the installation of a lift. Overall, resources for learning are satisfactory. The development of a new computer suite has contributed well to an improvement in the computer skills of pupils and the steady improvement in standards.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

51 Staff and governors should

(1) Raise standards in English by;

- providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length and relying less on worksheets;
(Paragraphs 3, 6, 21, 24, 52, 92)

and

- ensuring that pupils do more writing in other subjects of the curriculum.
(Paragraphs 3, 21, 87, 93)

(2) Raise standards in art and design and design and technology by;

- ensuring that sufficient time is spent on the subjects;
(Paragraphs 9, 24, 76, 81, 83)

and

- developing the expertise and confidence of teachers in the subjects.
(Paragraphs 9, 16, 19, 76 - 78)

(3) Improve the level of demand made on pupils to meet their differing needs by;

- ensuring that work is matched more closely to pupils' needs so that all pupils can achieve their best;
(see paragraphs 4, 6, 21, 24, 37, 58, 59, 64, 74, 87, 93)

and

- finding more varied and challenging ways for pupils to record their work.
(Paragraphs 21, 65 - 66, 74, 87)

(4) Improve the monitoring of the work of the school through:

- closer and more robust checking of standards and teaching and learning by senior managers and governors;
(Paragraphs 16, 21, 44, 45, 70)

and

- developing the role of subject co-ordinators further so that they are more influential in managing their subjects.
(Paragraphs 45, 75, 79, 93, 103)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	66
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	50

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	6	35	24	1	0	0
Percentage	0	9	53	36	1	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. When the total number is substantially less than 100, add: Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y3– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	324
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	60

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Y3– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	33

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

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

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.2
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	53	31	84

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	40	39	50
	Girls	25	22	27
	Total	65	61	77
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (77)	73 (73)	92 (91)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	40	40	47
	Girls	25	23	25
	Total	65	63	72
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (78)	75 (74)	86 (89)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	315	3	
White – Irish			
White – any other White background	1		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean			
Mixed – White and Black African			
Mixed – White and Asian			
Mixed – any other mixed background			
Asian or Asian British – Indian	3		
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani			
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi			
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2		
Black or Black British – Caribbean			
Black or Black British – African	1		
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1		
Chinese			
Any other ethnic group	1		
No ethnic group recorded			

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	27

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	55

Financial information

Financial year	2002/3
	£
Total income	712 816
Total expenditure	709 475
Expenditure per pupil	2189
Balance brought forward from previous year	-19 558
Balance carried forward to next year	3342

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3.3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.3

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	341
Number of questionnaires returned	70

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	37	3	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	61	34	3	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	37	53	4	4	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	36	19	7	0
The teaching is good.	57	39	3	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	49	41	9	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	27	6	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	37	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	44	50	6	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	54	30	3	4	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	38	1	1	0

The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

49	29	17	1	4
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PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

ENGLISH

Strengths:

- The National Literacy Strategy is used consistently across the school.
- There is good support to develop pupils' individual reading.
- Standards of organisation and presentation in pupils' books and files are good.
- Teachers use good quality modern and classic texts.

Weaknesses:

- Pupils do not make enough use of their skills in reading and writing in other subjects.
- The pace and challenge in some lessons, particularly for potentially higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently demanding.

52 Standards in English in the present Year 6 are below average overall, with average attainment in speech and reading, but below average standards in writing. However, this represents a satisfactory achievement in the light of these pupils' standards when they started in Year 3. Pupils now in Years 3 to 6, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, are making steady progress in the subject. Girls tend to do better than boys, following a national pattern, but there is no significant difference in the progress now made by boys and girls over time. Pupils' results in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 in 2002 were average, and lower than at the time of the previous inspection. However, these standards were higher than those achieved by pupils from similar schools.

53 The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory; there is good and very good teaching in just under half the lessons. Pupils learn to speak clearly and to listen attentively through the good range of opportunities teachers provide to develop their speaking and listening skills. Teachers set pupils very good examples through the clarity and responsiveness of their own speech. They read expressively and dramatically and pupils' speech improves as they follow these good examples.

54 Nearly all Year 6 pupils speak confidently, with interest and at length with a good awareness of their audience. For example, a group of Year 6 pupils quickly described what they had found easy and difficult in their National Curriculum tests in English. The high quality of listening enabled another Year 6 class to explore the meaning of Michael Rosen's poem "For Naomi" in a mature, whole-class discussion over three-quarters of an hour. Through listening they learned much from each other and began to reflect on their own family relationships before writing from both parents' and children's points of view. In a Year 4 lesson, the teacher's skilled use of open questions drew most of the pupils into thoughtful discussion of a character in the poem they were reading. Weekly music lessons, singing practices and daily experience of working together in groups also significantly improve the clarity and confidence of pupils' speech.

55 Good support for personal reading ensures that nearly all pupils make steady progress in their four years at Sandal. Nearly all read independently and with enjoyment by the end of Year 6. This reflects the success of teachers' recent reorganisation of reading materials, which now gives all pupils easy access in their classrooms to materials and books that match their achievement in reading. Teachers also enlist the help of parents and classroom assistants effectively to give good support to those pupils who need it most.

56 However, there is a lack of opportunities in other subjects for pupils to develop more advanced reading skills through individual research. As a result pupils speak of difficulties in "understanding the questions", selecting evidence to support views, rapid reading and making sure they haven't missed anything. This shows that they do not have enough practice in using reading

as a means of learning and in skimming and scanning text. A small but nicely organised library is little used for this sort of 'finding out' work. However, pupils know how to use number systems to find information from books in libraries and also to find information in dictionaries, thesauruses and encyclopaedias.

57 Regular spelling and handwriting practices ensure that pupils maintain sound standards of presentation and accuracy. Satisfactory progress through the National Literacy Strategy programmes of study each term gives them a good understanding of the English language and experience of a good range of writing forms. Teachers develop poetry writing skills well as noted at the last inspection. For example, a Year 5 pupil wrote that boredom "tastes like watered down custard, smells like a wet dog and is like a furry orange". A Year 6 pupil described a mother as "like a heart with two children". Pupils gain good control of sentences, organisation and planning skills in literacy lessons but standards of punctuation are not high enough. This is mainly because the teaching and individual marking do not always give enough emphasis to it. Teachers make good use of the high quality of the displays evident in most classrooms, which remind pupils of important things to remember in their work such as how to structure a piece of writing.

58 Although about half the lessons were judged good or very good, the remainder were no better than satisfactory. A significant number of writing lessons are less successful than they might be because teachers have to work very hard to keep all pupils of different abilities moving forward at a similar rate. As a result there is a significant lack of challenge for potentially higher attaining pupils at times. However, teachers use resources of good quality to support pupils' learning. Teachers and pupils make satisfactory use of computers, for example to improve spelling, layout, correcting and editing skills.

59 While the teaching in Years 3 to 5 is successful in meeting its objectives, the pace of learning and levels of engagement with new work are not always high enough. Too much time can go on introductions, explanations and directions and not enough on using pupils' ideas, activities and questions to take learning forward. For example, pupils find it difficult to sustain concentration when they have spent most of 40 minutes mainly listening to the teacher. Teachers do not always expect enough, for example in the rate and amount of writing.

60 Leadership and management of English are satisfactory. The co-ordinator works closely and conscientiously with the headteacher and other staff to improve the quality of teaching and learning. She has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and of what needs to be done to bring about further improvement. There are good assessment procedures for English, which are used well to target support and match teaching to pupils' levels of achievement.

MATHEMATICS

Strengths:

- There is good coverage of the full mathematics curriculum.
- The school follows the programme of the National Numeracy Strategy well.
- The work is supported by good commercial schemes.
- Good class management ensures that pupils concentrate and are productive.

Weaknesses:

- There is, on occasions, too much reliance on worksheets and textbooks.
- Lesson planning does not always take into consideration the needs of high attaining pupils.
- The quality of the marking of pupils' work is of variable quality.
- Insufficient use is made of assessment data to track the progress of individuals and to analyse areas of weakness in pupils' learning.

61 Standards in mathematics at the end of Year 6 are average and pupils' achievement is

satisfactory, including that of pupils with special educational needs who make satisfactory progress, often because of the individual help they receive. The school is likely to be close to reaching its target for this year but standards have fallen since the time of the last inspection, when they were judged to be above average. This can be explained, at least in part, by the changing intake of the school and the fact that the percentage of pupils with special educational needs has virtually doubled in the period between inspections. Fewer pupils in Year 6 are expected to achieve the higher levels in national tests than last year.

62 The results achieved by Year 6 pupils in the national tests of 2002 show that standards in mathematics for pupils aged 11 at the school were in line with those achieved nationally but above those achieved in schools of a similar type. These results were an improvement on those of the previous year when standards were below average. Pupils currently in Year 6 are on course to achieve standards that are in line with the national average.

63 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, although there are examples of very good, good and unsatisfactory teaching. In the better lessons teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy to plan their lessons thoroughly, including activities for pupils of different abilities, thus helping to ensure that all pupils make progress. In a successful lesson in Year 3 pupils were using data to make a graph. Higher attaining pupils were given little more than the data to work with, middle attaining pupils were given an outline and pointers as to the approach they would need to take and lower attaining pupils received a simpler, more directed task, and adult support. As a result pupils learned at a good rate and were well motivated.

64 However, not all lessons are planned so thoroughly and this often leads to higher attaining pupils being insufficiently challenged. In another Year 3 class, pupils were drawing graphs of data, but all the pupils were given the same task from a textbook. As a result of the lack of challenge the higher attaining pupils completed the task with little difficulty. The planning for higher attaining pupils, particularly in Year 6, is a critical feature because this is the first year for some time that Year 6 pupils have not been taught mathematics in special classes in which pupils were grouped by their ability and which made it easier for the teacher to judge the learning needs of their pupils. This system was judged to be successful at the time of the last inspection.

65 Teachers generally plan their work together in year groups, sometimes to the extent that teachers will use worksheets prepared by other teachers. This has the advantage of ensuring equality of access to the curriculum for all pupils but it can mean that teachers are not absolutely confident with materials and that the work is not exactly tailored to the needs of a class. The commercial mathematics schemes used by the school are of good quality and are generally well used to support work. However, there are examples of teachers being over-reliant on this material and letting it dictate the content of lessons. An example of this was seen in a Year 4 class where pupils were tackling the topic of area. They were given the formula for finding the area of a rectangle without having had a chance to discover it for themselves through a practical activity. Neither had they had an opportunity to consider what 'area' actually means or how it might be measured. They were given the formula simply because they needed the information to complete the next page in the textbook.

66 A large amount of work in mathematics is completed on worksheets, and although some of these can be very helpful there is often an over-reliance on them. In a Year 5 lesson on measuring angles, for example, pupils used a worksheet designed to develop their skill in using a protractor. But before any pupil had completed this, they were given another sheet intended for consideration at the end of the session when the teacher was to revise the main points of the lesson. This second sheet tended to distract pupils from what the teacher was saying, rather than helping to consolidate learning. Worksheets are not always dated and this makes them less useful than workbooks for keeping a record of progress in levels of learning. They also reduce the opportunities for pupils to make their own systematic recordings and this sometimes leads to the untidy presentation of work, which can mean unnecessary errors, a fact acknowledged by one Year 6 teacher who wrote, 'This is unreadable, no wonder it's wrong'. Because of the more transient nature of a worksheet, as opposed to a workbook, marking tends to be less thorough than in books.

The quality of marking is variable; some is good, but not all work is acknowledged and a lot of marking is little more than ticks. There are examples of teachers offering encouraging remarks but relatively few examples of teachers offering suggestions as to how pupils might improve their work. Pupils are sometimes left to mark their own work, which can be useful on occasions but can lead to misunderstanding. In one Year 6 pupil's book, ten consecutive multiplication sums were marked correct when in fact none of them was.

67 Teachers' management of their classes is usually good and this leads to pupils being productive and working together well. On the very few occasions when class management is not so good, pupils make less progress because they do not sustain concentration. Teachers' subject knowledge is sound and they use correct terminology: the teacher and pupils in a Year 3 class referred to the 'x and y axes' when discussing graphs. Teachers generally question well, challenging pupils' learning by getting them to explain their thinking and strategies. A teacher of Year 5 pupils, developing their understanding of the 24 hour clock by studying timetables, questioned skilfully to probe the pupils' understanding of time intervals and what was likely to be happening at those times.

68 The use of computers to support learning in mathematics, an area for development noted at the time of the last inspection has not been, as yet, fully addressed. There are few examples of computers being used to support pupils' learning in lessons because the computers are largely confined to the ICT suite and are not accessible to pupils for most mathematics lessons.

69 Assessment was an area judged as unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection. This has now been partially addressed. Assessment procedures are thorough and a good amount of data is now collected about each pupil, but insufficient use is made of this data. Pupils are assessed at the end of each school year with nationally recognised tests. Information gathered is used to give a clear indication of the performance of the year group and to ascertain the performance of different groups of pupils, for example boys and girls. There are, however, no easily accessible records to track the progress of individual pupils as they pass through the school. Pupils' responses to test material are not, as yet, analysed to find areas of weakness in learning. However, both these areas are targeted in the co-ordinator's action plan. Each year group of pupils is set targets in mathematics and has a target sheet so that they may gauge their own progress. These targets become more individual as pupils pass through the school because lower attaining pupils in Year 6 may have the targets aimed at Year 5 or Year 4 pupils.

70 The current co-ordinator has been able to monitor the quality of teaching and offer feedback to teachers. Such feedbacks are sometimes descriptive rather than evaluative and do not always focus sufficiently on areas for development to bring about an improvement in teaching.

SCIENCE

Strengths

- Work is based on scientific investigations.
- Pupils' work, particularly in Year 6, is neat and well presented.
- Pupils know how to conduct fair tests.

Weaknesses

- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to set up their own investigations and explain in their own words what they done.
- Pupils complete too many worksheets.
- Work is not matched well enough to the ability of pupils.

71 By the end of Year 6 standards are now broadly average, though a significant number of pupils achieve at a higher level. In the national tests in 2002, attainment in comparison with that of similar schools was above average. Unvalidated results from national tests taken in 2003 suggest

that standards have at least been maintained.

72 Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of how to carry out scientific investigations and conduct fair tests, recording the results of investigations in charts and graphs. Most pupils have a sound understanding of how gravity acts on objects in air and in water. They use symbols to draw electrical circuits and understand how the thickness of the wire in circuits affects the brightness of bulbs. Higher achieving pupils show good understanding of deeper scientific ideas, such as how the beak and talons of the osprey have evolved to match its hunting needs. Average and lower attaining pupils however cannot explain why these adaptations are important to the bird. Lower achieving pupils and those with special educational needs often make good progress because of the support they receive. Pupils present their work well. Their handwriting is easy to read and drawings and charts are presented neatly.

73 The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. This represents a drop in quality since the previous inspection when teaching was judged to be good. When teaching is good there is plenty of variety and a suitable balance between questioning, practical investigation and recording. In a good lesson in Year 3, the teacher used the introduction to check pupils' knowledge of the parts of a flower. The session was lively and pupils were keen to answer. Good questioning allowed them to show good knowledge of the parts of the plant and their functions. For example, pupils knew that the roots take up water and nutrients from the soil and anchor the plant to the ground. They used the correct vocabulary, accurately explaining the meaning of terms such as 'photosynthesis' and 'chlorophyll'. The teacher made good use of a wall poster to show the parts of a flower and explain how a flower is fertilised. Pupils gained first-hand experience of the parts of flowers when they used hand lenses to identify the differences between poppies and mallow flowers. In this lesson, higher achieving pupils carried out more detailed investigations than average and lower achieving pupils and they made good progress in their learning.

74 Although most of the work starts with investigations, the work is often too directed by teachers. Pupils are not given the chance to construct their own investigations and record the results in their own way. This is because teachers use worksheets too often and give pupils exercises where they merely have to supply one-word answers. This prevents pupils from developing scientific skills of observation and recording. Sometimes too little consideration is given to pupils' individual learning needs and some teachers give the same tasks to all pupils, regardless of their ability. The quality of teachers' marking is satisfactory overall, but variable. Comments such as, "This is not a very scientific diagram." are unhelpful in showing pupils how to improve their scientific skills.

75 The curriculum is satisfactory overall and pupils are taught a suitable range of topics. However, the co-ordinator does not check pupils' work often enough or oversee the quality of teaching and the effect it has on learning. Pupils' books are not checked often enough to see how different groups are learning. Consequently, limitations in pupils' learning and independence caused by the use of worksheets and the lack of opportunities for pupils to devise investigations for themselves have not been identified as areas to develop. The school makes accurate assessments on pupils' levels of attainment but the information is not being effectively to plan appropriate work that builds on pupils' previous learning. There are some examples of good links with mathematics when pupils measure and record their findings. In Year 3, work on teeth was used as the stimulus for creative writing in English.

ART AND DESIGN

Strengths

- There is some very good teaching and expertise in the subject.
- Some good links are made with the art of other cultures.

Weaknesses

- Most staff lack confidence in the subject.

- The curriculum is too narrow.

76 Standards are below the expected levels and lower than at the time of the last inspection. This is because pupils do not develop a wide enough range of skills as they grow older since the curriculum makes too little provision for them to explore an increasingly broad range of materials, topics and techniques. The skills learned in lessons do not build systematically on what has been learned previously and as a result pupils do not become more proficient year on year. So by the time they are eleven, although their work is colourful and bold, it lacks the quality more typically seen from pupils of this age. This is especially noticeable in the quality of painting in the school, where much of the work lacks precision and detail because pupils have not been shown how to mix, apply and control paint correctly and with developing sophistication. The subject is under-emphasised in the curriculum, as evidenced by the paucity of work on display.

77 The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory overall although there is considerable variation in staff expertise. In lessons where the teacher has confidence and good subject knowledge art is taught well because the choice of activity is suitable for the aptitudes of the pupils, and the teacher is able to provide expert guidance to enable pupils to improve their work. In good art lessons in two Year 4 classes for example, pupils were shown how to apply oil pastels correctly. After a brief spell of experimentation the pupils went on to produce very well observed, detailed representations of stuffed birds and animals, with good attention to detail such as the subtle range of colours visible in the birds' feathers. The best work showed a good ability to create a range of effects with the pastels, for instance by using a finger to gently blend the colours together or to create delicate, feathery lines. The lessons were both successful because the co-ordinator had provided effective support with planning for both classes.

78 By contrast, when their subject knowledge is insecure, teachers are less able to help pupils in this way and expectations of what can be achieved are insufficiently high. Although pupils are encouraged well and praised for their efforts in such lessons, the lack of expertise means that the teacher is unable to show them what they need to do next to make their work better. Examples of work on display indicate that sometimes inappropriate materials are used, for example when still life drawing is done with coloured pencils rather than more versatile mediums such as charcoal, pastel or paint. Sometimes tasks are too low level to offer any level of challenge, for example when pupils are required to fill in shapes with screwed up tissue paper or to colour templates with felt tip pens.

79 The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and has provided helpful support with planning for the teaching in one year group. She has enabled a non-specialist colleague to teach effective lessons and to get the best out of resources. But this level of support does not extend to the rest of the staff and, overall, too little consideration is given to assessing the standards in the school and devising appropriate action to improve them. A recent development is the portfolio of work samples, which has the potential to provide an insight into the standards in each class and the range of activities pupils have experienced. As yet the work is undated and lacks annotations to help the co-ordinator to assess standards accurately.

80 Overall the subject makes a limited contribution to the spiritual and cultural provision in the school. A notable exception to this is in the interesting range of techniques used by pupils in Year 4 as part of their project on India. Pupils created fine replicas of mendhi patterns, with careful proportions and attention to detail, and also well executed embossed designs taken from traditional Indian fabrics. By creating attractive patterns with wood blocks and batik, pupils have experienced several different techniques with textiles. When teachers are imaginative in their planning, innovative ideas can inspire work of high quality, as when pupils in Year 5 used computer generated images to produce strikingly colourful designs of tin cans in their study of the 'Pop artist' genre.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Strengths:

- The quality and interest of the projects chosen from the national plans.

- Effective links with other subjects, which broaden pupils' learning.

Weaknesses:

- There is not enough emphasis on design and evaluation in each project.
- The subject is not given enough priority or curriculum time.

81 Standards are not yet high enough. They are below those expected for pupils' ages by the end of Year 6, as they were at the time of last inspection. This is mainly because these pupils did not have enough opportunities to learn and develop skills and knowledge in previous years. The quality of teaching is now satisfactory overall. However, the quality of learning is unsatisfactory because of gaps in pupils' knowledge by the time they finish Year 6, and significant shortcomings in their skills. For example, pupils' sawing, cutting and assembling work needed more than usual levels of support in a Year 6 model-making lesson.

82 The best lessons draw together the key aspects of the subject in challenging learning. A very well taught Year 6 project to design and build a model helicopter generated strong motivation and enthusiastic learning. Pupils achieved a great deal and made good progress over several weeks because the work stretched all of them, including higher attainers. There was much excited discussion about the models and how they could be modified for improvements. Teachers had worked closely with pupils to use the Internet to research shapes and functions of the helicopter and this work led to carefully labelled design drawings. A wide range of tools of good quality was readily available and pupils' designs drew nicely on previous science work on the use of circuits. Pupils described exactly how they could improve their work, and had a satisfactory theoretical knowledge of design processes, but lacked regular practice to hone their skills.

83 Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has chosen a stimulating set of projects that pupils find enjoyable and relevant. However less design and technology takes place at times than has been planned and this is one reason why standards are not high enough. For example, Year 3 missed their project on pneumatics because, in a short half term, tests, Mayday and a local election used up the planned time for design and technology. The co-ordinator clearly identifies the ongoing problem as "the expectation to do design and technology at a high level without the correct facility to do it". Inspection emphasises the subject's importance in restoring the balance of practical, creative and imaginative work in a curriculum driven largely by academic requirements.

GEOGRAPHY

Strengths:

- A good scheme of work helps the systematic development of pupils' skills.
- The subject is well represented in the timetable.
- Good emphasis is given to map work, particularly at the older end of the school.
- Teaching is generally good.

Weaknesses:

- There are few opportunities to extend learning through the use of field trips and research.
- The use of computers, literacy and numeracy to support learning in geography are limited.
- There is too much dependence on commercially produced worksheets.

84 By the time they are eleven pupils reach standards, which are in line with the national average. Their achievement is satisfactory, including that of pupils with special educational needs. The school has maintained the standards found at the time of the last inspection. Geography is a subject taken seriously at the school and receives good curricular coverage.

85 The quality of teaching is good. Teachers generally have good subject knowledge and this, combined with good class management, ensures that they hold the attention of their pupils. For example, in a lesson on Ordnance Survey maps in Year 6 the teacher fully engaged the pupils'

attention with a clear explanation of the features of a map of the local area, using correct terminology as a matter of course and treating the pupils like young adults. This sort of approach helps to foster good attitudes amongst the pupils; they are interested, sustain concentration and, when given the chance, work together well.

86 Planning, and particularly preparation for lessons, is often good. For example, pupils in a Year 3 class were consolidating their understanding of climatic conditions in various regions. The pupils were required to decide what they would need to pack for a holiday and they were able to do this with the range of items prepared by the teacher, such as labels for their bags, passport covers and sheets of information, like dates of birth, to enable them to complete their passports successfully. As a result of the practical task and the need to think hard they made good progress.

87 The over-reliance on worksheets noted at the last inspection persists and this often limits geographical investigation as well as the development of pupils' skills in information and communication technology, literacy and numeracy. Some worksheets prepared by teachers are useful aids to learning. In a good lesson in Year 3 the teacher, whose pupils were investigating clothing for different regions, prepared different worksheets for pupils of three different levels of ability. However, many of the commercial worksheets fail to significantly develop geographical thinking, often featuring low level activities like colouring in.

88 There are, however, isolated examples throughout the school of skills in literacy and numeracy being developed well. Year 3 pupils for example, designed and wrote postcards from various destinations and used their numeracy skills to graph the results of a survey of methods of transport. Year 4 pupils used the Internet to research material about India. Year 6 pupils conducted experiments on rusting and freezing as part of their work on erosion and weathering. Significantly, some of the most interesting and worthwhile geographical work in Year 6 occurred because of work in literacy lessons about the rainforest. This involved informative and persuasive writing and research using the Internet. As part of this work, there was a release of balloons, which involved pupils learning about the rates of production of rubber, raised money to assist in the saving of the rainforest and provided useful mapping opportunities as the balloons were returned.

89 With the exception of the valuable residential visit made by pupils in Year 6 too little use is made of field trips and visiting speakers to stimulate learning and give relevance to the subject. In general there is too little emphasis on first-hand experience through field trips, research opportunities or input from outside speakers or agencies to push standards above average. There are, however, examples of this being done well, as when Year 6 pupils visited a local churchyard and produced photographic evidence of weathering.

90 An improvement since the last inspection has been the introduction of a good programme of work based on nationally recognised material, which helps the systematic development of pupils' skills. The school is now well placed to make further progress with geography. The lack of a system of assessment, raised at the time of the last inspection, has been partially addressed. A simple but informative system is in place in some year groups but this is too recent to have had any impact on standards. The co-ordinator has collected a useful portfolio of work but this has yet to be annotated with information about the levels pupils have achieved, to give teachers a clear idea of the standards that their pupils might reach.

HISTORY

Strengths:

- Good use is made of visits to places of interest such as Eden Camp and Sandal Castle.
- Good use is made of information and communication technology in some lessons.
- The subject knowledge of some teachers is good.

Weaknesses:

- Pupils complete too many worksheets and this means that they do not develop skills in writing about history.
- In many lessons, all pupils do the same work. Consequently, higher achieving pupils are not made to work hard enough and the work is sometimes too difficult for lower achieving pupils to understand.

91 By the end of year 6 standards of attainment are typical of those for 11-year-olds. Pupils have satisfactory knowledge of different periods of history and how historical evidence is gained from a variety of sources. Judged mainly on work seen in books, pupils make satisfactory progress throughout Years 3 to 6. Standards have remained the same since the last inspection.

92 The quality of teaching is satisfactory, although the overuse of worksheets is common to most year groups. In Year 5 a rewarding visit to the World War 2 museum at Eden Camp gave pupils the chance to reflect thoughtfully in their writing on the plight of evacuees. They used skills learnt in the computer suite to produce colourful and well-thought-out propaganda posters. However, teachers do not make enough use of the information the school has about the effect of the war on Wakefield to make the topic more meaningful to pupils. The very good teaching in a Year 6 lesson about King Henry and his six wives resulted from the student teacher's very good subject knowledge and passion for the subject. Pupils used evidence from books and portraits to work out why there were so many wives. The teacher gave them a very good insight into how the politics of the time affected events, for example by explaining about the need for Henry to marry again, even though he had a son and heir, in order to form a strong alliance against his enemies. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed the lesson and talked confidently about what they had learnt. A pupil whose mother tongue is not English made a particularly good contribution to the discussion.

93 The management of the subject is satisfactory but much needs to be done to improve the leadership in order to raise standards. Checks on the quality of teaching and learning and on pupils' work have been inadequate. Work needs to be planned to take account of pupils' abilities so that all pupils are working at a level which challenges them to do better. Writing skills need to be developed so that pupils can record what they know. In those classes where worksheets are used too much, pupils do not develop skills in recording history and teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. All pupils do the same work and higher achieving pupils are not made to work hard enough. In some instances all pupils copy the same work, for example, work about the use of chloroform by James Simpson in Victorian times

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Strengths:

- Teachers make good use of the ICT suite.
- They have good knowledge of the subject.
- Lessons are planned well and are interesting.
- The co-ordinator supports teachers well, training has been effective and this is contributing to rising standards.
- Some teachers write very good instruction sheets that help pupils to use the programs.

Weaknesses:

- The school has yet to carry out a survey of pupils' skills and devise a system for checking how well pupils are learning;
- Not enough use is made of ICT to support work in other subjects.

94 Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are above average. Pupils respond well to well-prepared lessons and good teaching. The subject is managed well by the subject co-ordinator and the effort put into training teachers and boosting their confidence has been instrumental in creating the good improvement since the previous inspection.

95 The teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection and is now good and often very good. Almost all the lessons seen were planned thoroughly. Teachers know the subject well. Consequently, instructions given to pupils are usually crisp and clear, and are given in an authoritative but relaxed style. This means that pupils understand what they have to do and get on well with their work. The tasks provided for pupils are interesting and this ensures that they want to learn. In a good lesson with Year 6 pupils, the teacher showed pupils several features that they could use to make their multi-media presentations more interesting. They were then left to make their own decisions about the features they wanted. Pupils responded very well and thought carefully about matching the features to their work. For example, one group, writing about majorettes, made the title spin onto the screen, imitating the movement of the majorette's baton.

96 Teachers write very helpful guidance sheets that help pupils to learn how to use programs. In a very good Year 5 lesson, pupils who had missed the previous lesson were able to follow the instructions without the help of the teacher to put figures into a database, produce graphs and charts and transfer them into a word processed document. They then wrote questions about the graphs. Pupils worked very hard and most were engrossed in the task. The teaching is less successful, but nevertheless satisfactory, when teachers do not make full use of the equipment available. In one lesson, the pace of the lesson was slow because the teacher moved among groups of pupils repeating instructions. It would have been better to use the projector to show all pupils how the program was to be used.

97 ICT is not yet used sufficiently to support work in other subjects. This is because most classrooms are not yet equipped with computers. Consequently, the school cannot yet achieve its aim of developing skills learned in the ICT suite in other lessons. However, teachers sometimes teach new skills and make links with other subjects at the same time. For example, skills in mathematics are reinforced when pupils compile lists of information and use them to learn how to produce graphs and charts; pupils learn to select different styles and colours of font to present attractively the poems they have written. A particularly effective use of ICT was seen in Year 5 when pupils learned how to create propaganda posters for their topic on World War 2.

98 Pupils with special educational needs are well catered for. Worksheets and guidelines are written to match their ability and they are given constant help during lessons. Pupils are encouraged to use their initiative in selecting parts of programs to use. This creates challenges for higher achieving pupils. The pace of lessons sometimes slows down because of problems gaining access to the Internet. However, in one lesson where this happened, both teacher and pupils stuck to the task and achieved what they had intended. Teachers use other adults well to support pupils. The subject co-ordinator often joins lessons. This enables him to give help and also to judge how well the subject is being taught.

99 The ICT suite is a valuable resource that is used well and the school has a good range of equipment. However, there are very few computers in classrooms and those that there are seldom used. This means that pupils cannot make much use of the techniques they learn to support other subjects such as science. The school is well aware of this and the situation will soon be remedied when new computers arrive. Much has been done to raise standards in ICT since the previous inspection. Training has been successful in raising the confidence and expertise of teachers, who are supported well by the subject co-ordinator. There is no system at present for checking what pupils know and can do. Given the commitment of the school to developing ICT, the enthusiasm of the subject co-ordinator and the good subject knowledge of teachers, the school is well placed to make further improvements successfully.

MUSIC

Strengths:

- A high number of pupils make very good progress in instrumental lessons.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the technical language of music.
- The quality and range of pupils' musical experiences are good, particularly through the careful programme of music in assemblies.
- Effective use is made of new schemes and resources to teach the National Curriculum.

Weaknesses:

- There are not enough opportunities for music-making in lessons.
- Arrangements to monitor lessons and assess and record pupils' progress are under developed.

100 Standards are as expected for pupils' ages by the end of Year 6, as at the time of the last inspection. Pupils, including those with a special educational needs and English as an additional language, are making steady progress in composing, performing and listening. Progress in appraising music is good.

101 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. During the inspection the quality varied between satisfactory and very good. The quality of the teaching of singing is satisfactory and the quality of instrumental tuition very good. Arrangements by which the co-ordinator and more confident staff take the lessons of the less confident enhance the quality of learning. However, as the co-ordinator is not free to monitor lessons she is less able to effect improvements. Professional music teachers are pleased by the take-up of individual instrumental tuition and the very good progress pupils are making. Currently 47 pupils are having weekly lessons in clarinet, flute, trumpet, trombone, French horn, tenor horn, euphonium, violin and cello.

102 The teaching in music lessons is most effective when pupils enjoy a wide range of musical activities. For example, in a good Year 4 lesson, well-chosen music on tape rapidly developed pupils' skills in recognising rhythms and following notation. A poem of high quality proved a strong stimulus for sensitive and creative percussion compositions to represent the sounds of day and night. A good lesson in Year 5 packed in theory, practice in rhythm, learning new songs, following tapes and scores, work on tongue twisters and conducting in 4/4 time. The teaching is less effective when pupils do not know the purpose of the work, when time is less well managed and activities lack challenge and excitement.

103 Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. An enthusiastic co-ordinator has improved the school's use of the new National Curriculum. She makes best use of the musical expertise of the staff and continues to offer pupils good opportunities to take part in musical productions and performances. However, she does not have enough opportunities to develop extra-curricular music, monitor teaching and improve arrangements to track and check pupils' developing musical skills. The subject makes a good contribution to the spiritual and cultural development of the pupils.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Strengths:

- The subject is very well led.
- The curriculum is broad.
- The school has good facilities, including a large playing field and swimming pool.
- The timetable is flexible ensuring good coverage and maximising the use of teacher expertise.
- There are good opportunities for competitive sport and a very good extra-curricular programme.
- Teaching is good.

Weaknesses:

- Assessment and recording procedures for physical education are not as good as for swimming.

104 Standards in physical education are above average; in swimming and in athletics they are well above average. Pupils achieve well and this includes pupils with special educational needs. The school puts a high emphasis on sporting achievement and physical fitness and has at least maintained the good standards found at the time of the last inspection.

105 The school has a long tradition of encouraging all pupils to achieve well in sport; school colours are awarded in individual sports for excellence in attitude and performance. The range of opportunities for pupils is broad. It involves swimming, a good range of sports and games, including table tennis to a good level, and outdoor and adventurous activities. The school is able to support this good range of activities by having good facilities and resources, including a swimming pool and a very good playing field. Timetabling arrangements are flexible and carefully planned, meaning that physical education lessons are seldom lost because of poor weather and that the school is able to maximise the expertise of individual teachers. The quality of teaching and learning has also improved by the employment of a swimming coach.

106 A very good range of extra-curricular sporting activities, which are attended by very many pupils allow for the development of individual skills to a high level. The school's system of sporting competitions raises the status of physical education in the school and also allows a good proportion of pupils, of different levels of ability, the opportunity to improve their skills in a competitive situation.

107 The quality of teaching is good. Teachers dress appropriately for lessons, emphasising the importance of the subject and setting a good example for the pupils. Teachers combine good class management skills with good knowledge of the subject to ensure that pupils work productively, sustain concentration and practise skills likely to improve their performance. Year 5 pupils improve their high jump skills using the fan approach, assisting their upward movement with supporting use of the arms and landing in a way to avoid falling into the bar. Year 4 pupils learn the correct arm and hand positions and breathing techniques to help their front crawl style of swimming. Pupils are also able to work together well. So, for example, Year 4 pupils can develop their throwing, catching and batting skills, which they have practised previously, in small group games, changing roles so that individuals have sufficient opportunities to develop their skills. The sustained nature of activities means that pupils have good levels of physical fitness. So Year 6 pupils are able to complete a circuit of activities requiring vigorous use of different parts of the body. They work together well in pairs, recording each other's performance so that they are able to gauge their individual progress.

108 Teachers usually take some trouble to include all pupils in their lessons. For example, Year 5 pupils unable to take part in an athletics lesson were asked to become involved by evaluating the performance of others. Teachers generally make good use of demonstration, both by themselves and the pupils, to encourage improvement in technique. A Year 5 pupil who used an incorrect fielding technique improved rapidly under guidance from the teacher. Good relationships allow this to happen without embarrassment to the pupil. Teachers generally consider the full range of abilities in their classes, planning different activities for different groups of pupils. Year 3 pupils were given a range of tasks to suit their abilities in a swimming lesson, some involving aids like floats and armbands. This helped the confidence and ability of the pupils. So, for example, in a Year 4 class three quarters of the pupils are able to reach or exceed National Curriculum requirements for Year 6 pupils and a third of the class can swim a length of the pool under water. Teachers further help all ability groups, particularly those with special educational needs, by making good use of teaching assistants and other adult helpers to work with individuals. They also use sessions at the end of lessons well to revise the work covered in the lesson, helping to consolidate learning.

109 The high standards in physical education can be traced to the very good leadership of the subject. The co-ordinator has considerable expertise and has been able to use this directly to help the training of pupils, both through class lessons and through the range of extra-curricular activities and internal and inter-school sporting competitions. Advice and help to other members of staff have improved confidence and knowledge and, with the good scheme of work, have helped ensure the systematic development of pupils' skills. Informative and easily maintained assessment procedures have been developed but these have not yet had any impact on standards except in swimming, where they have been established for longer.