

INSPECTION REPORT

ASKERN SPA JUNIOR SCHOOL

Askern, Doncaster

LEA area: Doncaster

Unique reference number: 106673

Headteacher: Mr R Leedale

Lead inspector: Mrs J Randall

Dates of inspection: 27 – 29 September 2004

Inspection number: 266335

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 category: Community
Age range of pupils: 7 – 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 334

School address: Sutton Road
Askern
Doncaster
South Yorkshire
Postcode: DN6 0AQ

Telephone number: 01302 700332
Fax number: 01302 708832

Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr A McAdam

Date of previous inspection: 1 February 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This above average-sized school, situated in a village on the outskirts of Doncaster, serves an area suffering from significant social and economic stress. At the time of the inspection 334 boys and girls were on roll, with ages ranging from 7 to 11-years-old. Twenty-five pupils are supported through the Traveller Achievement Grant and at the time of the inspection the school was still expecting to admit a group of Traveller pupils into Year 3. Nine pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds of British Asian, African or other heritages. No pupils speak English as an additional language or are in public care. Fifty-one pupils (15.3 per cent) are identified as having special educational needs and eight pupils have statements of special educational needs for learning, physical or behavioural difficulties. The percentage of pupils (29 per cent) in receipt of free school meals is above average but this figure does not fairly reflect the catchment area of the school and its level of deprivation as the school is aware that a number of families do not claim their entitlement. The school admits pupils from two different infant schools and attainment is just average. However, pupil mobility is high and the Traveller pupils present a pattern of erratic attendance, particularly in the summer. Pupils admitted later than Year 3 tend to be pupils with social or learning difficulties. These factors make direct comparisons with similar schools unsound. The balance between boys and girls is skewed in favour of boys. Since 2003 the school has had a significant number of long-term illnesses among staff and subsequently has had difficulties with supply teacher cover. At the time of the inspection the majority of Traveller pupils were still on authorised absence. Two teachers were absent with serious illness and two newly qualified teachers on temporary contracts were

covering the absences. Six new members of the permanent teaching staff have been appointed since the previous inspection. The school has also had to contend with difficulties due to building work. The school gained the Schools Achievement Award in 2001, the Activemark with Gold Standard in 2002 and the Artsmark in 2004. The school is part of the South Yorkshire Creative Partnership project and the South Yorkshire E-Learning project and works closely with the Traveller Education Service on many initiatives.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1471	J Randall	Lead inspector	Art and design Religious education English as an additional language
13450	J Madden	Lay inspector	
31175	A Allison	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Music Special educational needs
32606	V Derwas	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History
32283	D Goodchild	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Physical education

The inspection contractor was:

Nord Anglia School Inspection Services
Anglia House
Carrs Road
Cheadle
Stockport
SK8 2LA

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an effective school giving good value for money. Standards are rising. The good teaching and learning and the good curriculum, with very good opportunities for enrichment, give rise to the good achievement of all pupils. The sense of purpose and efforts of the headteacher, supported well by senior staff in the School Effectiveness Group, ensure that every pupil has the opportunity to achieve as well as possible.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- achievement for all pupils is good;
- attainment in music is well above that expected nationally;
- the school's efforts to meet the learning and social needs of all groups of pupils are very good;
- teaching and learning are good overall but in some lessons learning is hindered by too few opportunities for pupils to be active participants;
- pupils have good attitudes, behaviour and personal development;
- the curriculum is good overall with very good opportunities for enrichment;
- the good assessment procedures in English and mathematics are supporting the rise in standards but have not yet been extended to science where standards are still below average;
- the skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are not used well enough to support learning in all subjects and to improve standards;
- attendance is well below average.

The improvement since the previous inspection is good. Standards have improved in English, mathematics, information and communication technology and to some extent in science. All the issues for improvement have been addressed but there is still scope for further improvement in spiritual development. Assessment and target setting are making a significant contribution to the rise in standards in English and mathematics. Accommodation has improved significantly.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	D	E	E	E
mathematics	D	E	E	D
science	D	E	E	E

Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average

Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals.

The results in the above table comparing the school with schools that attained similarly at the end of Year 2 have been replaced with those comparing the school with those with a similar percentage of pupils receiving free school meals because of the high mobility within the school. However this comparison should still be treated with caution because the band in which the school is placed does not fairly reflect the level of deprivation suffered in the area of the school.

Achievement is good for all groups of pupils. Inspection evidence shows that attainment in the present Year 6 is similar to that expected nationally in English and mathematics and below

in science. Standards in information and communication technology and religious education are similar to those expected nationally. In music standards are well above those expected nationally. In the national tests at the end of 2003 standards were well below average in English, mathematics and science when compared with all schools and well below average in English and science and below average in mathematics when compared with similar schools. During 2003 the school had many difficulties in terms of staffing and building works and 18.9 per cent of this year group had special educational needs. Mobility was high and many of these pupils had significant learning or social problems. Unvalidated results for 2004 show significant improvements despite the percentage of pupils with special educational needs being higher at 24.7 per cent. Seventy-six per cent of pupils attained Level 4 or higher in English, 69 per cent gaining Level 4 or above in mathematics and 79 per cent gaining Level 4 or above in science. The percentage of pupils gaining the higher Level 5 was also greatly improved. The school well exceeded its targets and these results are the best that the school has ever attained. **Pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, is good**; they have good attitudes to school and behave well. **Attendance is very low** when compared with other schools. This is mainly due to the authorised absence of the Traveller pupils but is still below average when this group is discounted.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The overall quality of education is good. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The quality of teaching in music is very good and there were two excellent lessons. Teaching and learning in literacy and numeracy and information and communication technology are good and in science satisfactory. Most teachers have very high expectations of behaviour and lessons are well planned. Assessment procedures are very effective in mathematics and English in raising standards but have not yet been implemented in science. The overall quality of the curriculum for all pupils is good and the opportunities for enrichment are very good, adding well to achievement. The accommodation is good overall and very good for music, art and design, design and technology and physical education. Resources are good and very good for music and art and design. The school cares for its pupils well and satisfactory links exist with parents and the community and very good links with other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. Governance is satisfactory. All legal responsibilities are met. Leadership is good, with the sense of purpose and commitment of the headteacher, supported well by the senior management team, motivating all staff. Management is good. The school evaluates itself well and the actions taken are effective in raising standards.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Pupils enjoy school. They feel that their views are valued and teachers understand their needs. It is a friendly school where they feel safe. When minor acts of bullying do occur these are dealt with as pupils have the confidence to talk to staff. Parents are well satisfied with the school and its procedures to deal with their concerns.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things that the school should do to improve are:

- extend the already successful assessment procedures in English and mathematics to science and use the data rigorously to challenge pupils and to raise standards;
- strengthen the use of the skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology in other subjects;
- improve satisfactory teaching to that of the better lessons by ensuring that all pupils are actively involved and by increasing pace and challenge;
- make all possible efforts to improve attendance.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is good for all groups of pupils. Attainment is average in English, mathematics and below average in science. In information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education standards are similar to those expected nationally. In music standards are well above those expected nationally.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards improved considerably in the national tests in 2004 and the school well exceeded its targets.
- Achievement is good for all groups of pupils because of the school's commitment to care and concern for all.
- The school's emphasis on the arts and sport adds well to achievement.
- The improved assessment procedures have contributed significantly to the now average standards in English and mathematics but standards are below average in science where these procedures have yet to be implemented.
- The very good teaching by the specialist teacher is the reason for standards well above those expected nationally in music.
- The improvements in resources and in teachers' skills have contributed well to the improved standards in ICT where attainment is now similar to that expected nationally.

Commentary

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.2 (25.0)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	24.8 (24.6)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	26.5 (26.9)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 77 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. Overall achievement is good. On entry to the school the overall level of attainment is just average although year groups differ and the entry level of older pupils and those who have left Year 6 in the last few years was lower than the present and previous Year 3. The level of mobility in the school is high and significant changes occur in the makeup of each year group between Year 3 and the end of Year 6 with the leavers tending to be average and higher-attaining pupils and the incoming pupils tending to have more social and learning difficulties. In addition to this, the group of Traveller pupils only attend school for part of the year, mainly in the winter, and this affects test results although this group achieve well when they are in school. Some Traveller pupils who are a long way behind their peers receive extra support from teachers from the Local Education Authority (LEA) Traveller Education Service to help them catch-up but the needs of others are well met in class by their teachers. At the time of the inspection very few Travellers had arrived back in school and evidence was taken from the extensive records of progress kept by the school and the Traveller Education Service.

Where parents are willing, the school provides education packs to help Traveller pupils keep up while they are away.

2. In the national tests at the end of 2003 standards were well below average in English, mathematics and science when compared with all schools and well below average in English and science and below average in mathematics when compared with schools in the same free school meals band. During that year the school had many difficulties in terms of staffing and building works and 18.9 per cent of the year group had special educational needs. Between Year 4 and Year 6, 12 pupils left the year group and most of those were predicted to attain the average Level 4. Nine pupils arrived and a significant proportion of these had significant learning or social problems. Unvalidated results for 2004 show significant improvements despite the percentage of pupils with special educational needs being higher at 24.7 per cent. Seventy-six per cent of pupils attained Level 4 or higher in English with 27 per cent of these reaching the higher Level 5, 69 per cent gaining Level 4 or above in mathematics with 18 per cent at Level 5 and 79 per cent gaining Level 4 or above in science with 24 per cent at Level 5. The school well exceeded its targets and these results are the best that the school has ever attained. The average points score in English is above that of the LEA. The school's trend of improvement is above that of the LEA and the national trend. There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls.
3. Inspection evidence shows that standards in the present Year 6 are average in English and mathematics and below average in science. The introduction of new assessment and tracking procedures last year has significantly affected the improvements in English and mathematics. Because of these, teachers are now very aware of clear targets both for groups of pupils and for individuals and target work towards these. There is clear identification of pupils who are falling behind for any reason and a clear rationale for deciding which pupils should be part of intervention strategies such as booster groups. Higher-attaining and gifted and talented pupils are identified and challenged, resulting in the increase in the number of pupils attaining the above average Level 5. These procedures are only now beginning to be applied to science and have the potential for supporting improvements in standards in the same way as in English and mathematics. The current initiative to improve speaking and listening skills is supporting a rise in standards in all subjects. Standards in ICT are now similar to those expected nationally and improvements in resources and in teachers' skills have contributed well to this success. The use and application of the key skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT are not yet securely embedded into planning at all levels to ensure that best use is made of time to raise standards in each subject. Standards in religious education are similar to those expected nationally. This subject has not been a priority for development in the school for some time as the school concentrated on raising standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT.
4. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with the highest level of special educational need, achieve well. The school has a very strong commitment to providing for the needs of all pupils and the help given to those who have special educational needs enables them to achieve well. The very small number of minority ethnic pupils achieves in line with their peers. The efforts that the school makes to value its Traveller pupils and their culture and to make very good links with the Traveller community enables them to achieve well in the time that they are in school. The school values the development of all aspects of each pupil's talents and has taken pride in its commitment to sport and the arts, believing that participation in these builds confidence

and self-esteem, particularly for pupils who are lower-attainers in more academic subjects. This commitment is clearly demonstrated in the decision to recruit a specialist music teacher and the result of this is that standards in music are well above those expected nationally and all groups of pupils achieve very well in music. Instrumental provision and the choir and orchestra provide further challenge for gifted and talented pupils in music. The attainment in art and design as a result of various initiatives, including one to use art from the Traveller culture, has resulted in some work of very high quality although it was not possible to make an overall judgement on standards in art and design as too few lessons in the subject were observed.

5. Pupils achieve good standards of personal development because of the school's emphasis on a broad curriculum and because each individual pupil and their needs are very important to the school. The school evaluates itself well and is constantly seeking to improve achievement and standards despite the challenges of the area it serves and the setbacks provided by the long-term illnesses of several senior staff.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to school are **good**. Personal development is **good**. Pupils' attendance is well below average but punctuality is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good relationships in the school.
- The school has very high expectations of pupils' behaviour and, as a result, behaviour is good.
- Most pupils have good attitudes to school and their learning and make the most of the opportunities offered in and out of the classroom.
- Although attendance is poor, its monitoring is very good and the school is fully aware of the depth of the problem but has only satisfactory strategies for improving this.
- Moral and social development is good but there are too few opportunities to develop spiritual awareness.
- Pupils are aware of the cultural traditions of their own community but there are missed opportunities in curriculum planning to forward pupils' understanding and appreciation of the richness of cultural diversity in today's society.

Commentary

6. Teachers work hard to establish a good rapport with pupils. That this works well is shown by the good working relationships leading to the enjoyable lessons observed during the inspection. Pupils work extremely well together in pairs and groups and are able to form these pairs and groups with a minimum of fuss and lots of give and take. They provide constructive comments when performing for each other and this is especially noticeable in the high quality music lessons.
7. The school expects pupils to behave well and has very good and clearly understood procedures in place to support pupils and teachers. As a result, there is very little disruption in the classrooms and teachers retain effective control. Pupils feel that it is a friendly school where they feel safe. When minor acts of bullying do occur these are dealt with as pupils have the confidence to talk to staff.

8. Pupils come happily to school and take full advantage of the clubs and activities available to them, the majority being over-subscribed. In classrooms most pupils are fully involved in their learning; in the best lessons they concentrate very well indeed and participate fully in every thing they are asked to do. All pupils with special educational needs enjoy school. Their confidence and self-esteem is similar to other pupils. This is because their peers, teachers and learning support assistants listen to their contributions to discussions with respect as shown in a literacy lesson in a Year 3 class. This reflects the strong emphasis that the school places on personal development.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	8.8
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.7
National data	0.4

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

9. Attendance at the school is poor and is due to a combination of the authorised absence of Traveller pupils, who are absent for part of the school year, a high rate of holidays taken during term time and parents who do not value education enough to ensure their children are able to benefit fully from the education available. A very good system for monitoring attendance is in place, well understood by staff and providing a clear picture of every pupil's pattern of attendance. However, as attendance is improving nationally, that in the school is falling and initiatives and consistent high profile concentration on getting pupils into school are only satisfactory.

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	299	3	2
White – any other White background	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

10. The exclusions shown above were appropriate and in the best interests of all concerned.
11. The provision for pupils' personal and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall and contributes to the good achievement. Spiritual development is fostered satisfactorily through acts of collective worship and these meet legal requirements. In a Year 3 assembly a calm and reflective atmosphere was created that enabled pupils to reflect on people less fortunate than themselves. Lessons contain too few planned opportunities for pupils to reflect on moments of wonder. Pupils learn the difference between right and wrong and consider other moral issues through many subjects, including religious education and personal, social, health and citizenship education. Pupils in Year 3, for example, were able to talk of the slogan 'Never go with strangers' in relation to the story of *Little Red Riding Hood*.
12. Social development is particularly well fostered through the very well planned mathematics and music lessons and in paired discussions in English. In a Year 6 history lesson pupils worked collaboratively in small groups as they extracted information from primary sources about evacuees in the Second World War. The School Council structure enables pupils to contribute ideas through representatives and the 'Star of the Week' reward system helps build pride in achievement and gain in self-esteem.
13. Appreciation of the pupils' own culture arises well from cross-curricular projects studying the local area, mainly developed through the 'Creative Partnerships' programme, which has links

with other local schools and organisations. The recent visit to the site of the former Askern pit raised their awareness of the cultural heritage and the local area. The large number of Traveller children within the school is well catered for, with special projects such as the production a 'Big Book' focusing on different styles of homes. However, too few opportunities are planned for pupils to understand and appreciate the richness of cultural diversity and in discussion Year 6 pupils demonstrated little understanding of other cultures within today's society. This issue was raised in the previous report.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good**. The curriculum is good and contributes well to the good achievement of all pupils. All pupils experience a broad and rich curriculum, benefiting very significantly from participation in national initiatives in ICT, sport and in the arts. Teaching and learning are good. The accommodation is good overall and very good for music, art and design, design and technology and physical education. Resources are good and very good for music and art and design.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good**. The good assessment procedures contribute significantly to achievement and standards in English and mathematics.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in music is very good.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding and use this to plan interesting and challenging lessons.
- Questioning is used well to move learning forward and to check on learning.
- The good assessment procedures in English and mathematics are supporting well-targeted teaching and the rise in standards but have not yet been extended to science.
- In some lessons there is not enough opportunity for pupils to be active learners and the stimulus is not sufficient to keep pupils' full attention.
- Literacy, numeracy and ICT are taught well but opportunities are missed to develop key skills in all lessons.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 42 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (4.8%)	9 (21.4%)	17 (40.5%)	13 (31.0%)	1 (2.4%)	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

14. At the time of the inspection there were four teachers new to the school. Three of these teachers were newly qualified and had been teaching for three weeks and two of these teachers were on temporary contracts covering the classes of two senior members of staff who were absent with serious long-term illness. The specialist music teacher is an advanced skills teacher and the deputy headteacher is a leading literacy teacher.

15. Satisfactory, good and very good lessons took place in every year group in the school. The two excellent lessons were in music where overall teaching is of a very high standard. The one unsatisfactory lesson was a direct result of panic over the inspection and not typical in anyway of the work of the teacher or the school. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection.
16. The good and better lessons have a good or very good pace to learning with pupils kept constantly on task by a wide variety of teaching strategies. Time is used well and teachers have high expectations of participation and behaviour. In these lessons the knowledge and understanding of teachers inform good planning, with interesting and challenging tasks well matched to prior attainment. The use of questions to move learning forward and to check on learning, thus ensuring that pupils know what they have achieved by the end of the lesson, is effective. All teachers use the strategies of *What are we going to learn today?* and *What am I looking for?* and in the good and better lessons these are referred to constantly to keep the objectives in mind. In satisfactory lessons, the pace is slower and the lessons less challenging because fewer opportunities are provided for pupils to be active participants in their own learning; for example, time is wasted in a physical education lesson waiting for turns. The direct teaching part of a lesson is sometimes too long for pupils to sustain concentration without activity or focus. In good lessons teachers are beginning to make use of interactive whiteboards but in satisfactory lessons this is generally limited to demonstrating processes and does not always actively engage pupils. In science, although all teachers' planning emphasises a practical approach, in some lessons pupils have too little opportunity to practise and develop their skills through more independent activities and they do not achieve as well as they could.
17. Literacy and numeracy are taught well and teachers are confident in using the Joint Primary Strategy and in adapting for the particular needs of the pupils that they are teaching. Teachers now have a good knowledge and understanding of ICT and skills are taught well. However, although there are some good examples of the skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT being used and developed in other subjects, many opportunities for this use are missed and planning is not secure enough to ensure that all possible opportunities are taken and this limits attainment. For example, although all teachers identify key vocabulary in their lesson planning this is not consistently used, emphasised and revised during the lesson and particularly in the concluding part. The expectation that pupils will use this vocabulary is inconsistent, particularly in mathematics and science. The school has made a good start in identifying the need to improve speaking and listening skills in all subjects. In some subjects, such as religious education, there is a heavy emphasis on the completion of printed worksheets at the expense of pupils thinking for themselves and presenting their work in different ways.
18. Marking is good when the school's recently introduced '*Bubble and Box*' system is applied consistently so that pupils know how to improve their work. The 'bubble' contains praise and encouraging comments, whilst the 'box' identifies how to improve. Pupils like their individual target planners, which they take home to share with parents, and these give good incentive to improve learning. The new assessment and tracking procedures introduced in 2004 have had a significant effect on teachers' understanding of what progress they should expect from each pupil in English and mathematics. Teachers are now targeting work more skilfully at each individual pupil and have higher expectations of progress. This has resulted in a good increase in the number of pupils attaining the expected level for their age and in an increasing number of pupils attaining

above average levels. The school is now ready to apply this process to science this year.

19. Learning support assistants make a good contribution to the learning of pupils with special educational needs. These pupils are fully included in all aspects of lessons with tasks matched to prior learning and closely linked to individual education plans. Learning support assistants also make a good contribution to lessons when pupils are working independently or in groups. Teachers make too little use of them during the whole class, direct teaching part of the lesson and opportunities for support are missed, for example, for assessment.
20. The needs of Traveller pupils are well understood and the very few pupils in school during the inspection were valued and well involved. Valuable support has been provided by the Traveller Education Service in helping all staff to understand the local Traveller culture and in providing information for teachers joining the school. The school is a very active participant in all initiatives designed to improve the teaching and learning for these pupils. The new assessment and tracking procedures are of significant benefit in meeting the needs of these pupils and these are supported by more detailed assessments and tracking by the teacher from the Traveller Education Service.
21. Homework provides suitable support for learning and the school has a homework club for those pupils who find difficulty with this. The school provides distance learning packs for those Travellers whose parents wish them to take part in this scheme.

The curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum is **good** and contributes well to the good achievement of all pupils. All experience a broad and rich curriculum, benefiting very significantly from participation in national initiatives in ICT, sport and the arts. The focus on the personal and social development of all pupils to encourage confidence and self-esteem, together with the incorporation of planned transition units, ensures that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. The accommodation is good overall and very good for music, art and design, design and technology and physical education. Resources are good and very good for music and art and design.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The breadth and richness of curricular opportunities, particularly through participation in national initiatives, is helping all pupils to achieve well.
- The commitment to care and provision for all, including pupils with special educational needs, Traveller pupils and the higher-attaining pupils, is a strong feature of the provision.
- Not enough attention is paid to planning opportunities to use literacy, mathematics and ICT to enhance learning in other subjects.
- Good provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) boosts confidence and self-esteem so contributing to pupils' good achievement.
- Not enough attention is given to planning opportunities to prepare pupils more fully for life in a culturally diverse society.
- The preparation of all pupils for the next stage of their education is good.
- Accommodation and resources make a significant contribution to the standards attained.

Commentary

22. The school has addressed the weaknesses identified in the curriculum in the previous report. There is now a more planned emphasis for pupils to learn about their own cultural heritage. The culture of the Traveller pupils is represented well. Some use is being made of skills learned in ICT to foster learning across the full range of the curriculum but the school recognises that this needs to be extended. All requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education are fully met and enhanced by a wide range of educational opportunities, resulting in a curriculum that has good breadth and balance and is enriched very well. The good arrangements for fostering pupils' PSHE, through a structured programme lessons, are supported by teaching in religious education, physical education and science and also during acts of collective worship. PSHE is present in every aspect of life in the school and is promoted effectively by all staff. There is appropriate provision for sex education and teaching about misuse of drugs and alcohol. However, the preparation of pupils for life in a culturally diverse society is not extended enough and there is no structured and carefully planned approach.
23. The confidence and positive attitudes to school of all pupils, promoted effectively through personal and social education, enable them to achieve well. This, together with a curriculum programme and transfer arrangements with the local secondary school, for pupils towards the end of Year 6, prepares them well for the next stage of their education. The school participates in several initiatives for Traveller Education, including efforts to persuade them into secondary education and in the provision of learning packs for use when not in school.
24. The accommodation is good overall, and very good for physical education, art and design, design and technology and music because the school has benefited from funding from national initiatives, notably the Creative Partnership and Space for Sport and the Arts initiatives, and this is a factor in the standards attained by pupils, particularly in music. Similarly, resources are good overall and very good in music and art and design and help pupils to achieve well. The E-learning initiative has been instrumental in funding resources for the school and professional development for teachers and has led to more confident teaching in ICT, enabling pupils to attain higher standards than at the time of the previous inspection. A sufficient number of teachers, with good subject knowledge, backed up by learning support assistants, make a good contribution to the curriculum.
25. The range of visits, including residential education opportunities and visitors to the school, offer many experiences that add significantly to the quality of the curriculum, as shown by visiting theatre companies and the residential visit to Robin Hood's Bay. The curriculum includes very good opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in sports and in the arts, partly because of the funding that comes from participation in national initiatives and is reinforced by the appointment of teachers with a high level of expertise in music and physical education. The school has achieved the gold standard of the Active Mark and the Arts Mark awards. Pupils have opportunities to learn a musical instrument. The choir, including a young Traveller pupil who has been selected to sing solo parts, and the orchestra, perform for other pupils, in concerts for parents and with a local adult band. The school also offers good opportunities to participate in different sports and other activities such as a technology challenge. Activities such as these raise pupils' confidence and self-esteem and contribute well to their good achievement.
26. The school is very committed to include, and provide for, all pupils. The school identifies those pupils who may have special educational needs or are higher-attaining pupils and makes good provision for them, although this is only just beginning in science. In lessons, tasks are usually well planned to match pupils' prior attainment. The individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are structured well and help teachers and learning support assistants to provide good help for these pupils. The very good efforts made by the school to provide for Traveller pupils are recognised by the LEA Traveller Education Service who also work with some pupils to improve achievement.

27. The school's priority has been to plan a curriculum that will foster confidence and self-esteem and so lead to higher standards. As a result standards are now higher in English, mathematics, ICT and music than at the time of the previous inspection. The use of the skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT is not sufficiently structured to foster learning in other subjects to be fully effective in raising attainment. The school has made a successful start on this by its focus on the use of speaking and listening skills in all subjects but recognises in its planning that more training and work is needed.

Care, guidance and support

Good care, guidance and support are provided for pupils. Care, welfare, health and safety are good, as is the provision of support, advice and guidance. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is also good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff and governors work hard to ensure that the school is a safe and secure environment and that appropriate risk assessments are undertaken before outside visits.
- There is good support and guidance available for all pupils whatever their need.
- The school has good strategies to involve pupils in the regular routines and initiatives as well as in their own learning.

Commentary

28. Staff and governors are vigilant in ensuring that the school is not only safe and secure but also clean, colourful and comfortable. Regular checks are carried out to ensure health and safety issues are always under control and risk assessments are routinely carried out. Whilst child protection procedures are well known and accord with local procedures, the policy needs revising and bringing up-to-date with further in-depth training provided. The school is open from eight o'clock in the morning with a breakfast club, computer and other activities available. A homework club supports those pupils with difficulties in completing this.
29. All pupils are well supported by the school whatever their particular need. In the classroom good support is provided for pupils with statements that extends their skills and boosts self-confidence. Work is set within each class at appropriate levels for all pupils so that they are fully involved and challenged at an appropriate level. The school uses the full range of extra initiatives to boost pupils' learning. It reviews the progress of pupils with special educational needs very carefully. Individual education plans highlight key areas for improvement for pupils with an appropriate number of concise targets and clear criteria by which to measure success. The requirements of the statements of special educational needs for the pupils with the highest level of special educational needs are fully met. Traveller pupils also benefit from the support of the specialist LEA Traveller Education Service.
30. The school is trying hard to develop pupils' involvement in the life of the school and has recently put in place a School Council with representatives from each class, minority ethnic and the Traveller pupils. The council has yet to have a significant effect on pupils' lives but with the training and purposeful support in place this will be achieved. Pupils are clearly involved in their own learning and understand how their targets are set and how this is helping to improve their learning. They particularly like the new marking system. Pupils interviewed during the inspection felt that their views were valued and that teachers understood their needs.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **good** partnerships with parents, the community and other schools. Satisfactory links have been established with parents and the community and very good links with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has very good relationships with feeder schools and the secondary school enabling pupils to move forward at each stage of their education with curriculum and personal support.
- The school makes considerable efforts to involve parents in their child's learning and school life but some parents, whilst being supportive of events involving their children, are very reluctant to attend meetings designed to help them to improve their children's learning.

Commentary

31. Good and regular contacts are maintained between all local schools and these are used to benefit pupils in the school family. The school uses a designated liaison teacher who works in the school one day a week, to ease the transfer to the secondary school both academically and personally for pupils. A range of secondary teachers takes pupils for lessons and there are regular meetings, especially with the special educational needs co-ordinator, to ensure pupils are fully supported in their new school. Those pupils moving up from the two infant schools receive similar support through the exchange of teachers and regular meetings. The music specialist is an advanced skills teacher and is regularly observed by teachers from other schools.
32. The links with the Traveller Education Service and the Traveller community are very good. The school is very willing to adapt to and accommodate these pupils. Culturally relevant materials are supplied and the school co-operates very well with local projects such as an art project from the Traveller culture, distance-learning packs for pupils to use when away from the school and a secondary transfer project. There is a named person in school for liaison.
33. The school is very aware of the advantages to pupils' progress of informed and involved parents but finds it difficult to motivate parents to take part in the type of sessions organised by the school to facilitate this. This lack of involvement also applies to the parents of some pupils with special educational needs where their backing for their children is crucial. The school ensures that parents are kept well informed and they are invited to discussions as soon as the school identifies possible needs. Parents are also kept informed of the progress made by pupils at parents' evenings and at the annual review of statements of special educational need. Parents of pupils with the highest levels of special educational needs have a copy of the individual education plan.
34. The school has, in the past, set up family learning sessions but these have been discontinued due to lack of funding. The majority of parents however, are willing to attend open evenings, performances and special events that involve their children. All pupils have a target book, which they take home to help parents to understand their learning. Most parents feel that the school is effective in dealing with concerns.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. Governance is satisfactory. All legal responsibilities are met. Leadership is good, with the underlying sense of purpose and commitment of the headteacher, supported well by the senior management team, motivating all staff. Management is good. The actions taken are effective in helping the school to raise standards.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the headteacher, supported well by senior staff, ensures that all staff work as a team to raise standards.
- The school's thorough self-evaluation and analysis of national and optional test results enable it to identify and provide very well for the professional development of staff, so helping to raise standards by improving teaching and learning.
- The school's commitment to including all pupils in all curricular and other opportunities helps all pupils to achieve well.
- The leadership of the curriculum by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other key staff links closely to the school's aims to foster self-esteem and confidence and so raise standards.
- The recruitment and deployment of staff to support curriculum innovations are helping to raise attainment.
- Good financial management supports the identified priorities of the school well and so helps to improve provision and raise standards.
- The role of some subject leaders, mainly of the foundation subjects, does not yet include the checking and evaluation of teaching and learning, so limiting their effectiveness.

Particular aids or barriers to raising achievement.

35. The commitment of all staff is a key factor that helps to raise standards. Better assessment, tracking and target setting procedures are improving planning and the matching of work to prior attainment so helping pupils to make good gains in their learning and to achieve well. Attendance is well below average and limits the attainment of some pupils. Traveller pupils have extended periods of authorised absence. Pupil mobility in this area of poor socio-economic circumstances restricts the attainment of some pupils. A significant percentage of parents, although caring and well meaning, have low expectations and do not establish routines at home or offer encouragement that helps pupils to learn.

Commentary

36. The sense of purpose and efforts of the headteacher, supported well by senior staff in the School Effectiveness Group, to ensure that every pupil has the opportunity to achieve as well as possible are key factors of the good leadership. The headteacher leads by example and has created a team with similar aspirations and a sense of purpose that has led to good achievement overall and very good achievement in music. Standards in English, mathematics and ICT were below those expected nationally at the time of the previous report, but are now similar to those expected nationally. Staffing difficulties beyond the control of the school have hindered progress but, although there are still two long-term absences, the school is overcoming the difficulties it has had in the last few years.
37. The school's policies, planning and teaching indicate a genuine concern to provide for all pupils and in this the school succeeds very well. This is reflected in the classrooms by the good provision for pupils with special educational needs, by the number of pupils who attained the higher Level 5 in English in the national tests in 2004 and perhaps even more so by the care and concern shown for Traveller pupils. Another factor that relates to the

determination to provide for all is the school's involvement in curriculum initiatives, particularly the E-learning, Creative Partnerships and Space for Sport and the Arts. This involvement has significantly improved resources and accommodation, notably for physical education, ICT, art and design and music, so enhancing learning opportunities and helping to raise standards.

38. Staff are recruited and deployed so that the school gains from their strengths. For example, the decision to deploy the subject leader for English in Year 6 is improving planning and contributing well to the improvement in attainment in that year. The decision to recruit teachers with music and physical education specialist qualifications in connection with the school's participation in the Space for Sport and the Arts and the Creative Partnership national initiatives has proved beneficial. This is very well illustrated by the specialist teaching in music that has resulted in attainment well above that expected nationally. Additionally, the very good teaching in music has boosted the confidence and self-esteem of all pupils and this makes a significant contribution to pupils' attitudes school.
39. All subject leaders have clearly defined roles, but some, mainly in the foundation subjects, have not yet had the training or the opportunity to observe teaching and learning in lessons. This limits the opportunities for these subject leaders to make a greater contribution to teaching and learning and so help to raise standards. However, they do play an active part in supporting staff and developing their subjects in other ways. The co-ordinator for special educational needs has only just taken on her responsibility but the steps already taken indicate that she has high aspirations and a good sense of purpose. Strategies identified to evaluate and improve the provision for pupils with special educational needs and for Traveller pupils indicate a good approach to leadership and management.
40. The main points for action from the previous inspection have been tackled successfully. Standards in English and mathematics and to some extent in science have risen. The school has remedied the weaknesses in ICT, with a consequent improvement in the standards attained by all pupils. Improved assessment, tracking and target setting procedures have also contributed well to helping teachers to plan and match work better to pupils' prior attainment and have raised attainment in English and mathematics. Day-to-day assessment through checking on what pupils have learned during lessons, combined with the recently introduced and growing use of the 'Bubble & Box' marking system, also contribute effectively to matching work to pupils' prior attainment.
41. The school's self-evaluation is thorough and realistic. It is closely linked to the standards attained by pupils. The analysis of national and optional tests is done well. The school checks on the learning of all pupils to see whether they are making the progress predicted. This information is used effectively to identify areas for the school development plan. The strategies to improve standards in writing, by focusing on speaking and listening skills, exemplify this. The school's self-evaluation is also closely linked to a thorough review of teachers' performance and target setting that improves pupils' performance by focusing on improving teaching. The provision for the professional development of staff, for example in ICT through the E-learning initiative and in fostering pupils' speaking and listening skills, is very good and is helping to raise standards.
42. The governing body fulfils its role satisfactorily. This is because there have been a number of recent changes in the composition of the governing body and several members have not yet received the necessary training to enable them to be fully effective. Nevertheless, the governing body challenges and supports the school and helps to set priorities, for example in the refurbishment of the corridors. When taking decisions, close attention is paid to 'Best Value' principles. Spending decisions, such as the decision to take over the contract for school meals, are carefully considered. The deficit in the budget at the end of 2003-4 arose because of a number of unforeseen factors, including the earlier than required implementation of work force reforms, for

which anticipated finance did not materialise, and long-term illnesses that were not fully covered by insurance. A strategy, agreed with the LEA, to eliminate the deficit over a two-year period has been implemented. The special educational needs governor is a frequent visitor and is aware of the good provision through visits that include discussions with the co-ordinator for special educational needs. The special educational needs governor and the headteacher keep the governing body well informed about the provision for pupils with special educational needs and for Traveller pupils.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,011,205.51	Balance from previous year	4,826.51
Total expenditure	1,032,390.09	Balance carried forward to the next	-16,358.07
Expenditure per pupil	2558.00		

43. The income for the year 2003-4 looks to be high but this is because of funding directly related to the building work linked to the Space for Sport and the Arts project and to funding for school meals not normally included in budgets for other schools. After adjustments to take account of this the income, expenditure per pupil is similar to the funding for schools of this type nationally. This means that when spending, attainment on entry and the achievement of pupils is considered, the school gives good value for money.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are average by the end of Year 6 with higher-attaining pupils attaining Level 5.
- The good teaching and the positive attitudes and good behaviour enable all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to achieve well.
- The subject is led and managed well and this helps to ensure a consistent approach to teaching and learning.
- The school makes good use of its comprehensive assessment systems in order to guide planning and to set targets for improvement at school, group and individual levels.
- Use of skills learned in English to support learning in other subjects is satisfactory, but is insufficiently planned and structured.
- Marking is satisfactory overall but there are some inconsistencies that restrict learning.

Commentary

44. Achievement is good for all groups of pupils. Standards have risen since the previous inspection and particularly over the last year. Standards are average in all aspects of English. The mobility of pupils is such that comparing attainment in Year 6 with attainment in the national tests at the end of Year 2 is unreliable. Pupils who are admitted after the beginning of Year 3 come with overall lower attainment than those who leave after entry to the school. In addition the Traveller group does not attend all the time. The school analysed carefully the reason for a fall in standards in 2003 and implemented successful strategies to remedy deficiencies. This resulted in a very significant increase in the percentage of pupils who attained Level 4 or above and a 17 per cent increase in pupils attaining the higher Level 5. Unvalidated analysis of the national test results in 2004 indicates that the performance in the tests is likely to be similar to schools nationally. The present Year 6 has a higher percentage of pupils with special educational needs and the percentage of pupils attaining Level 4 is likely to be about 10 per cent lower than in 2004. Nevertheless the percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 will be only marginally lower than in 2004. The school has in place thorough systems of assessment that help staff to check pupils' progress and to set targets for improvement for the whole school, for groups and for individual pupils. In this way teachers and pupils are clear about what they need to do in order to improve.
45. The present focus on speaking and listening in all subjects is an identified strategy to improve these skills specifically as well as, by extending the vocabulary of pupils, improving their reading and writing. The school provides interesting opportunities to encourage pupils to listen, speak, read and write. For example, they take part in drama productions and receive visits from theatre groups. Relationships are very good and pupils know that their efforts are highly valued so they learn to speak confidently and articulately. In Year 6 pupils discussed how to make '*It was a sunny day*' more interesting to a reader. The work with a partner promoted social development well. One of the improvements suggested was '*The sun was beaming*', so confirming the effectiveness of the teaching strategy. Opportunities to write in a range of styles and for a variety of audiences are evident in the work. These opportunities help pupils to make good gains in their learning and increase their facility with language, so whetting the appetite of the reader.

46. Teachers have a good knowledge of the Joint Primary Strategy and use it well to teach basic skills efficiently. As a result, when reading, most pupils, including lower-attainers and those with special educational needs, make effective use of a range of strategies when they meet new or unfamiliar words in texts. In Year 6, higher-attaining pupils read confidently, fluently and with expression. All pupils take books home and the adults to whom they read add comments to the pupils' planning books. Most pupils in Year 6 use the contents and index pages in information books efficiently when completing research. All pupils say that they enjoy books and some specifically mentioned enjoying poems such as *'The Owl and the Pussy Cat'*. Older pupils in particular justify why they like a book.
47. Teaching and learning are good overall. The key features of the good teaching are the knowledge and understanding that inform good planning with interesting, challenging tasks matched to prior attainment and high expectations of work and behaviour. In addition, the use of questions to move learning forward and to check on learning, thus ensuring that pupils know what they have achieved during by the end of the lesson, is effective. In the best lessons the pace is very brisk, almost relentless. Where teaching is satisfactory the pace is slower and work is not as well matched to the prior attainment of different groups of pupils. Marking is good when the school's recently introduced *'Bubble and Box'* system is applied, so that pupils know how to improve their work, but the system is not always applied consistently. Pupils also have individual targets for improvement. This is why most pupils have a good understanding of their own learning. Teachers sometimes fail to correct important, incorrectly spelt words and occasionally their spelling in pupils' books is incorrect. The good teaching helps pupils of all levels of prior attainment to achieve well.
48. The subject is led and managed well. The subject leader has good subject knowledge and a very clear understanding of the areas for improvement. She is determined to raise standards and management strategies are designed to effect better teaching and learning.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

49. The school makes satisfactory use of literacy in other subjects. This helps to extend pupils' literacy skills and deepen their understanding of other subjects satisfactorily. Pupils used their speaking and listening skills well in a music lesson in Year 6 when they listened to their peers perform a rhythmic composition and then commented constructively on the performance in a sensitive manner. In history, pupils in Year 4 devised posters entitled *'Wanted – a King'* to support their learning about the Tudors. Pupils in Year 5 write recipes in connection with food technology. Information and communication technology is sometimes used, for example, in compiling a booklet about Travellers. However, the school is aware that the use of literacy to support learning in other subjects is still insufficiently planned and structured and that this is an area for development that will help to raise achievement and standards further.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils achieve well and the school now has good strategies in place to improve the achievement of a minority of under-achievers.
- The good teaching is characterised by high expectations of behaviour, good pace, and appropriately targeted questions and tasks to challenge and extend pupils.
- Pupils are not encouraged enough to use subject specific vocabulary when answering questions.
- Assessment is used well to inform planning but occasionally pupils' computation skills are not secure enough for them to progress.

Commentary

50. The school has been working hard to raise standards. Achievement is good for all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs. Standards in the national tests for pupils in Year 6 at the end of 2003 were well below average. Standards in 2004 were much higher and the percentage of pupils gaining the higher Level 5 improved. Standards during the inspection were average. However, the computation skills of some lower-attaining pupils in Year 6 are not secure and this makes it difficult for them to perform more complex calculations. The school has raised standards in mathematics because of the new assessment and tracking procedures. This enables individual progress to be tracked, a sharper analysis of which group or set in which a pupil should be working, with a closer match of work to each pupil. Intervention strategies have become more carefully targeted. The school has used the pupil tracking data well to identify a group of underachieving pupils and to develop effective strategies for checking and improving their progress. The recent focus on a greater range of strategies for teaching and learning is beginning to have a positive effect on pupil achievement.
51. Teaching and learning are good overall. Teachers suitably adapt the Joint Primary Strategy for the needs of pupils. Learning support assistants are used well during group activities but they are less effective during class teaching sessions. Where teaching is at least good and sometimes very good, pupils make better progress because teachers' planning of appropriate tasks is targeted at the needs of all pupils in order to both consolidate and extend understanding. This enables pupils to learn and achieve as well as possible. In a very good Year 3 lesson the fast pace was balanced carefully by the need to involve all pupils fully in their own learning. The teacher's use of assessment ensured that all pupils were challenged appropriately in the tasks set as well as by careful questioning. Pupils' self-esteem was further raised by the frequent opportunities given to celebrate the achievement of others. The use of on-going assessment is improving rapidly. Pupils' work is checked regularly in lessons, using 'traffic lights' and 'thumbs up' to involve pupils in their own learning and the information gained is used well to adapt subsequent plans. Marking is satisfactory overall. The newly introduced 'Bubble and Box' marking system means that teachers can communicate better with pupils, celebrating achievement as well as identifying what individual pupils need to do to improve their work. This is an improvement on marking in last year's books, which contained very few comments designed to improve pupils' understanding.
52. In the satisfactory lessons, the tasks set are not always targeted effectively to meet pupils' specific learning needs. Whilst an appropriate emphasis is placed on key vocabulary, for example the names and properties of two and three-dimensional shapes, the expectations that pupils will use these key words is inconsistent. Teachers

make use of interactive whiteboards but this is generally limited to demonstrating processes and does not yet actively engage pupils.

53. In the continued, unavoidable absence of the subject leader, the senior management team have been instrumental in identifying weaknesses and taking action to raise standards. The recently appointed temporary subject leader has not yet had sufficient time to effect change. However, plans, already in place indicate that there is a clear vision of what is needed to consolidate on improvements already made as well as to introduce further innovations.

Mathematics across the curriculum

54. Opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills in other subjects are improving but are not yet securely embedded into all levels of planning. In science pupils use basic skills to measure time, mass and volume and to produce bar graphs. They use some data-handling techniques to represent and interpret data in ICT.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Assessment procedures are not rigorous enough to help raise standards.
- High expectations of behaviour make sure that pupils listen and work hard.
- The emphasis on practical work contributes to the development of scientific skills and generates pupils' interest and enthusiasm for science.
- Information and communication technology is not used enough in science.
- When explaining their investigations pupils are not challenged enough to use scientific vocabulary or knowledge.

Commentary

55. Standards by the end of Year 6 are below the national average. This is similar to those seen at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils achieve satisfactorily over time and make satisfactory progress within lessons. Those with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers because work is adapted to match their needs.
56. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Pupils are expected to behave well and listen carefully. As a result, pupils have good attitudes to their work and co-operate well during group investigations. They express enthusiasm about their work and particularly enjoy the practical element. In the best teaching teachers generate enthusiasm with well-planned activities and clear explanations and demonstrations. For example, Year 6 pupils planned and carried out an investigation on the best kind of sugar to use with coffee. Within the lesson they had opportunity to use their scientific skills and were able to explain their choice of method. They made good progress in their understanding of what constitutes a fair test. Although the planning of all teachers emphasises a practical approach, in some lessons the pace of teaching and learning is too slow. Pupils here have too little opportunity to practise and develop their skills during independent activities and they do not achieve as well as they could. There are missed opportunities

to deepen pupils' understanding of scientific knowledge. For example, teachers do not place sufficient emphasis on pupils' use of correct scientific vocabulary during discussions. In their writing, pupils are not challenged enough to use their scientific knowledge to clarify and explain their observations. This limits their ability to attain the higher standards and constrains achievement, particularly for higher-attainers.

57. Pupils have some opportunity to apply their numeracy and literacy skills during investigations and in recording their work but this is not securely embedded into planning. The use of ICT to record and present data is not as well developed as it should be and this limits pupils' attainment and achievement in both subjects.
58. The leadership of the subject has gone through a period of change beyond the control of the school. This, plus the school's other priorities, means there is no plan of action in place to develop the subject systematically although a temporary subject leader is now in post and the issue is being tackled. Assessment procedures and information are not yet used to track individual pupils' progress and to identify groups of pupils who would benefit from further support. This presents a barrier to the schools' ability to drive up standards. However, the school now has procedures in place, to be implemented very shortly, and so has the capacity to improve standards this year.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching and learning and the confidence and enthusiasm of all pupils enable them to achieve well.
- Good resources are used effectively by teachers to promote learning well.
- Use of information and communication technology to promote learning across the curriculum is growing but is insufficiently planned and structured.
- Arrangements for a systematic programme of lesson observations to raise further the quality of teaching and learning are not in place.

Commentary

59. Standards are similar to those expected nationally and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good gains in their learning and achieve well. This is an improvement since the previous inspection because planning now takes account of prior attainment. The skills and confidence of teachers have grown because of professional development through national initiatives such as the New Opportunities Fund and the local E-learning project. Accommodation and resources have improved because of the range of resources now available to teachers and pupils and the computer suite in the school.
60. On the evidence of the lessons seen, analysis of work in folders and displays of work, teaching and learning are judged to be good overall. Teachers are confident when using the ICT resources and understand the requirements of the subject. The increasing use of the new interactive whiteboards in classrooms for ICT and other subjects exemplifies this well. Other strengths of teaching that enable pupils to make good gains in learning are the planning that provides tasks that arouse the interest of pupils and the effective use of questions to check on learning or to draw ideas from all pupils. Pupils who have special educational needs are supported well, particularly when another adult is present. The opportunity to work in pairs and to take turns fosters personal and social development well. Where teaching is only satisfactory the pace of work is variable and generally. Learning support assistants, when present, are underused in these lessons.
61. In all lessons the interest of pupils was evident and this makes a good contribution to their achievement. In a lesson with pupils in a Year 4 class two lower-attaining pupils were working with good concentration and enthusiasm on a task designed especially for them. Their interest was high because the teacher had said it was a special task they were doing for her. A very good example of the use of ICT to support learning and raise the self-esteem of pupils is a book about their life, using a word processing program and incorporating photographs, compiled by a group of Traveller pupils. This is a very good example of how the school values all pupils.
62. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject leader has good subject knowledge. He is clear about the progress being made and the areas that need to be improved. Planning, samples of work and the displays are checked, but the subject leader has not had the opportunity to observe teaching. He recognises that training for lesson observations, followed by the opportunity to observe teaching is an area for his development if teaching and learning are to improve and so raise attainment further.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

63. The use of ICT to support learning in other subjects is growing. For example, presentations of work on the Ancient Greeks using a visual presentation program in history, graphs in mathematics and word processing, incorporating clipart, in a radio advertisement for a new toy. In music, ICT is used very well to support learning. Digital photography is used to foster learning, for example in literacy, history and art and design. However, in some instances only the teacher uses the camera and this is a missed opportunity to extend pupils' skills. Internet access to all classrooms is not yet complete and this is limiting the full use of the Internet. The school recognises in its development planning that the use of ICT to support learning in other subjects is still insufficiently planned and structured to enhance learning opportunities in ICT and other subjects so helping to raise standards further.

HUMANITIES

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In good lessons useful links are made in developing literacy skills.
- Simple assessment procedures are in place to give an overview of pupils' understanding.
- Many worksheets are used at the expense of pupils' own writing and thinking for themselves.
- There are very few visits and visitors to make the subject to come to life for pupils.

Commentary

64. Standards are in line with those normally found in Year 6. The subject meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. This position is similar to that found at the time of the previous inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily. Pupils in Year 6 remembered their work well on Christianity but found it harder to recall work on Islam and Sikhism, the two other world faiths studied, as these are not incorporated each year into the planned work. Pupils also know some facts about other world faiths. In the work scrutinised a heavy emphasis was placed on the completion of printed worksheets at the expense of opportunities for pupils to think and write for themselves and not enough evidence was seen of pupils relating what they had learned to life today or to the role that faith plays in people's lives. Religious education has not been a priority in school development for some time and the worksheet approach has been seen as a way to cover the curriculum during a time of stress in the school. However, the school has recognised this and is about to move forward. Too few links are made with other subjects to maximise the use of time but this is also improving. Very few visits, visitors or other opportunities to make the subject to come to life for pupils are provided, although a Sikh visitor demonstrated dance and spoke of his faith to pupils in Year 3. The subject leader is now actively seeking these links. Information and communication technology is rarely used and opportunities are missed to use the Internet to provide additional visual experiences for pupils to make learning more meaningful. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As in the previous report, too few opportunities are provided to explore the spiritual aspect of religious education.

65. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. This is an improvement since the previous inspection in that none of the lessons was unsatisfactory. In the good lesson observed, pupils in Year 3 remembered events of Jesus' life and some of the stories told. Useful links were made with literacy when they used words to describe the feelings of the various characters in the very well told story of *The Good Samaritan*. They understood the concept of a parable and related it well to the moral of 'never go with strangers' in the context of the story of *Little Red Riding Hood*. Satisfactory lessons lacked enough visual and active opportunities to attract and keep pupils' attention. Although the direct teaching was well planned in these lessons it did not provide enough opportunities for pupils to be active participants in the learning and they were expected to listen for too long and attention wandered for some pupils. Role-play added too little to lessons for most pupils in relation to the time spent as too few participated while others watched.
66. The subject leader has a good overview of the subject and its development and has many plans in hand for its improvement. Religious education has not been a school priority for some time and the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms has not been evaluated although samples of work are examined. The latest National Curriculum guidance has been adapted for use and links created with the other junior school in the secondary school cluster to attempt a common curriculum. Resources are satisfactory overall with video recordings and books but only a limited range of artefacts and the subject leader knows that this is an area for attention. Assessment procedures are simple but provide an overview of coverage with indication of whether pupils have above or below expected levels of understanding.

History and geography

67. No judgements have been made about **history and geography** as these subjects were only lightly sampled. Only one lesson was observed in history and no lessons in geography.
68. Carefully identified literacy links combined with good pace enabled all pupils in a good Year 6 history lesson successfully to extract relevant information from some complex primary sources about evacuees during the Second World War. Lower-attaining pupils were well supported by the learning support assistant. In a Year 4 art lesson very good links were made with the pupils' history topic about Henry VIII to enable them to create artwork of the types of clothes worn in the Tudor court. Displays around the school and scrutiny of pupils' books showed that literacy skills are being increasingly well used in history. Pupils have written letters and diaries based on their understanding of the feelings of people at the time. The saga of Beowulf was successfully used as a basis for recount writing as well as providing good links with art and design. The overuse of commercially produced worksheets, especially for older pupils limits skills development in both subjects.
69. National Curriculum topics are well supported by visits to museums and the local area, often with further support from the Creative Partnerships initiative. The enthusiastic comments from Year 6 about many of the history topics and visits they made during their time at the school suggests that these have a good effect on their knowledge and understanding of both history and geography. Geographical understanding is enhanced by 'In the News' displays where pupils bring in newspaper articles to display on a world

map. Little evidence was seen of the use of ICT in either subject both for presentation of work or to develop pupils' research skills and capture their interest.

70. Leadership and management are satisfactory in both subjects. The recently appointed, temporary geography subject leader has already identified areas for development to ensure that skills and knowledge are planned for. Although the history subject leader has not yet observed teaching and learning in lessons, she has checked pupils' progress through end of year assessment tasks and is working to improve further teachers' planning for the progressive development of history and literacy skills. The recently introduced weekly class assessment sheets for all classes enable teachers and subject leaders to track pupils' progress more effectively.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

71. No judgements have been made about standards and teaching and learning in art and design, design and technology and physical education as too few lessons were observed. Discussions were held with subject leaders and planning files and other evidence examined.

Art and design

72. At this early stage in the school year there was little recently completed work displayed around the school. The work in the art folder shows good coverage of the subject but little work based on art from cultures other than western European. Work completed in Year 6 in pastel in relation to the village studies is outstanding and the work on the pithead and the Askern miner from Year 4 is very good. Pottery work and textile work, completed with the support of visiting artists is very impressive. Participation in the South Yorkshire Creative Partnership has enriched the curriculum significantly and provided opportunities for gifted and talented pupils as well as all other groups to extend their skills, knowledge and understanding beyond those normally provided in school. Resources and accommodation for art and design are very good. A simple assessment procedure is in place that records attainment in each unit covered.
73. In the two very good lessons observed, clear teaching points and very good use of the interactive whiteboard to show paintings by well known artists set the scene well for pupils to succeed and make progress in their skills and understanding. Pupils were encouraged to experiment and test before starting their final piece of work. Planning was detailed and built well on prior learning. In Year 4 there were good links with history.

Design and technology

74. Pupils have opportunity to work with a good range of materials and links with history provide stimulus for their work. For example, they construct Tudor Houses, Anglo Saxon baskets and masks representing Greek mythological creatures. Food technology is well developed and resourced and pupils design food containers and menus. In their design projects pupils sketch and label diagrams and record the process of construction. However there is not enough emphasis on evaluating how they would improve the design.

Physical education

75. Lessons were only sampled in physical education and it is, therefore, not possible to make a judgement on overall provision. In the teaching seen, hockey skills were well taught in Year 6 and pupils then had opportunity to practise skills in a games situation. The school places a good emphasis on physical education and seeks to develop pupils' skills through the provision of after-school clubs that include dance, football, volleyball and tag rugby. Residential visits provide additional experiences in water sports and orienteering. All pupils learn water safety in Year 5 and the majority are able to swim 25 metres. The school has recently achieved the Active Mark Gold award and has very good facilities with the addition of a new sports hall.

Music

Provision in music is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching and learning enable all pupils to achieve very well.
- By Year 6 standards are well above those expected nationally.
- The enthusiasm and confidence of pupils helps them to achieve very well.
- The subject leader uses the very good accommodation and resources very effectively.
- The curriculum is broad and very rich and fosters personal, social and cultural development very well.
- Good use of information and communication technology promotes learning very well.
- The subject is led and managed very well but there are too few opportunities to extend the skills of other teachers.

Commentary

76. Standards have risen since the previous inspection and are now well above those expected nationally. The subject leader is dynamic, charismatic and has a very high level of knowledge and understanding of the subject. The teaching by the subject leader, who teaches all classes, is very good overall and often excellent. All pupils respond very well and their enthusiasm and confidence are of a high order. The refurbished accommodation provides very good facilities for the music suite and the resources are also very good. The funding from the school's involvement in the Creative Partnership initiative has contributed significantly to the overall quality of the provision.
77. The very good and often excellent teaching is founded on the very high level of knowledge and understanding of the teacher and ensures that all requirements of the National Curriculum are fully met. Very good planning identifies very clearly what pupils will learn and achieve in the lesson. This leads to tasks that are very interesting, challenging and very well matched to the prior attainment of pupils. Assessment of the learning by careful questioning both during and at the end of the lesson ensures that both the teacher and the pupils know what has been achieved during the lesson. The teacher has very high expectations of both work and behaviour. The pace of the teaching is almost relentless. When pupils perform their compositions they do so with a high level of concentration. Their peers listen very intently and comment constructively on the performance and suggest how it could be improved. All pupils know that their contribution to the lesson is valued both by the teacher and their peers.

This boosts their confidence and self-esteem. These characteristics of the teaching were exemplified in two outstanding lessons, one with pupils in a Year 4 class working on painting with sounds and the other with pupils in a Year 6 class, which included several pupils with behavioural difficulties, working on rhythmic patterns. As a result all pupils achieve very well.

78. Pupils' enjoyment and enthusiasm is evident, not only in lessons, but in the choir and orchestra rehearsals at lunchtimes. The pace is again very brisk and much is achieved in a short time because pupils are always listening carefully and following instructions. The teacher ensures that higher-attaining pupils have the opportunity to use their skills to enhance their performance, for example, when a Traveller pupil in Year 5 sang a solo line in 'I am a small part of the world'. As a result, the playing and singing are of a high order. The curriculum is also enriched by opportunities to learn musical instruments – keyboard, brass, woodwind and strings – and by visiting musicians. Pupils perform for their peers, for parents and sometimes for people outside the school. The performance alongside an adult concert band is a challenging, but rewarding experience that promotes confidence and self-esteem. Pupils also consolidate and extend their ICT skills in music very well by using electronic keyboards, software programs for composition on the computers and recording equipment to record their compositions and incorporate clipart into their word processing when researching, for example, guitars.
79. Music also supports learning about their own and other cultures well. Pupils listen to, for example, English, Scottish, Indian and African music. In an excellent lesson in Year 6, listening to a short extract of Taiko drumming enhanced the work on rhythmic patterns.
80. The subject is led and managed very well because of the very high aspirations and subject knowledge of the leader. The school has not yet capitalised on the expertise of the subject leader to provide professional development for other staff and this is a missed opportunity.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

81. A structured programme fosters well pupils' personal, social and health education. Appropriate attention is given to the teaching of sex and relationships education, alcohol and drugs misuse. This aspect of the curriculum is present in every aspect school life and is promoted effectively by all staff by the introduction of 'circle time' (a time when pupils sit and discuss matters of personal and social importance). In the one session observed, Year 3 pupils were reminded of the rules of 'circle time' and played a game designed to foster good relationships. This is also a time when pupils can gain confidence and improve their speaking and listening skills and they answered the teacher's well-targeted questions clearly, using a 'public voice'. They explored feelings relating to 'unhappiness'.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	6
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).