

Swanton Abbott Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120856
Local Authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	358860
Inspection dates	17–18 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Judi Bedawi

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	77
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rachel Kirk
Headteacher	Kay Tims
Date of previous school inspection	21 May 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed five teachers in nine lessons or parts of lessons. The inspection team held meetings with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, and staff. They observed the school's work and looked in detail at pupils' books, a range of school documentation, policies, monitoring records and data on pupils' attainment. Inspectors received and analysed 34 parental questionnaires.

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

- The progress made by younger pupils in reading, and standards by Year 6 in writing.
- The quality and consistency of pupils' behaviour across different classes.
- How well the outdoor area is used to extend play and learning skills for children in the Reception class.

Information about the school

Swanton Abbott is a much smaller than average rural village school. Pupils are admitted from a wide area that includes the small market town of North Walsham. Pupil numbers are rising. All pupils have a White British background and speak English as their first language. A low proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision comprises a Reception class. Swanton Abbott pre-school shares the school site; most of the children attend it, but it is not managed by the governing body and so will be subject to a separate inspection. An above average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities, although an average proportion have a statement of educational needs. For these pupils, specific and/or moderate learning difficulties and speech, language and communication needs predominate, followed by physical disabilities and autistic spectrum disorders. The headteacher teaches four days a week.

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

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

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. It provides pupils with enjoyable learning experiences, so they rise to challenges, and are determined to reach, and increasingly exceed, their goals. Attendance is high, reflecting pupils' thirst for knowledge. The headteacher drives the school onwards and upwards at a good pace, with enthusiasm and commitment from all of the staff and the governing body. Leaders and managers are consistently focused on raising and sustaining standards and achievement. There is no time for complacency. Pupils of all abilities and needs, both academic and personal, become confident and happy learners. Parental comments reflect their satisfaction. For example, 'I couldn't wish for a more lovely school to send my child to,' 'Very impressed with the school and the headteacher,' and, 'The school looks after my children as individuals and as a result they are thriving. I am delighted.'

Standards are above average. The school has recovered well from the dip in Year 6 mathematics results in 2009, and progress in mathematics is now more rapid than in English. In the Reception class the strong focus on letters and sounds to embed basic skills has had a positive impact on early writing. There are significant strengths in speaking, listening and use of a wide vocabulary throughout the school. Pupils who start to fall behind are quickly identified through thorough assessment, and are well supported. By Year 6, pupils read and write well with good sentence structure, grammar and use of imagination. However, they do not focus enough on improving their handwriting and spelling, or ensuring that their work is neat and tidy.

All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress that accelerates in Years 4, 5 and 6. However, the most-able pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not always understand more complex texts or read widely enough in different subjects. Teaching is good. Some practice is outstanding, including a fast lesson pace and practical activities that inspire pupils to think and discover for themselves. Pupils know their targets and work hard to achieve them. Occasionally, teachers' lesson planning does not ensure that all ability groups are fully challenged, including the more-able pupils. Outstanding care, guidance and support enables pupils and families, to get the right sort of advice with signposting to external support if needed, so that pupils can focus on their work.

Pupils' attitudes to learning are good; they settle quickly, working with concentration. Behaviour in lessons and at play is outstanding in all year groups, contributing to the strong 'school family' and to pupils' exceptional feelings of being safe and secure. They adopt excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles, with great enthusiasm for tag rugby and swimming and they eat sensibly. Their tolerance and support for others less fortunate than themselves is firmly embedded. Pupils' involvement and pride in their local

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community are significant. There is less awareness of the diversity of different communities around the United Kingdom and around the globe.

Leaders and managers at all levels, including the governing body, monitor, evaluate and review school performance well. Accurate self-evaluation leads to clear actions to address weaknesses. Challenging targets are set, and the issues from the previous inspection have been fully resolved. Standards, achievement and pupils' personal development are good with some outstanding features. Leadership and management are good. Capacity to improve further is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve progress in English by:
 - providing wider reading opportunities across the curriculum for the most able pupils in Years 1 and 2, to increase their independent research skills and ensure they fully understand the texts that they read and can recall and answer questions accurately
 - ensuring that pupils in Years 3 to 6 focus more on improving the quality of their handwriting, check their own spellings and make sure that their written work is neatly presented.
- Find exciting ways to extend pupils' understanding of diverse communities in the United Kingdom that differ from their own, and further develop pupils' interest in the lifestyles and cultures of people around the globe.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children start school with attainment that is broadly in line with expectations for their age, although their skills in calculation are lower. In the lessons observed, children were making good progress that continues into Years 1 and 2, particularly in mathematics and writing. Most pupils read well but the most-able pupils in Year 2 are not always fully stretched. They are now gaining confidence in their reading abilities. Progress was also good in Years 3 to 6, accelerating for the oldest pupils. Pupils' skills in mathematics remain strong and creative writing they are good, although pupils do not always take enough care with their handwriting, spelling and presentation. The focus on practical learning has a good impact on developing pupils' independent working and thinking skills. Pupils relish the exacting targets set and are increasingly exceeding them. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities progress well due to good quality support.

Pupils are enthusiastic learners 'because the teachers make learning fun!' Parents and carers echo this, saying, 'My child loves going to school and often tells me about the subjects.' Pupils show good interest and involvement. In an excellent Year 4, 5 and 6 science lesson, pupils were challenged to learn about air resistance by making and testing the effectiveness of paper aeroplanes considering design, weight and balance, stability and aerodynamics in flight. All pupils thoroughly enjoyed the activity, and confidently explained why their aircraft were successful or not. They amended their models to improve performance and made excellent progress. Behaviour is outstanding in lessons and at play, so pupils feel exceptionally safe. They like the school gates being locked when they are at play. Pupils say that thoughtless behaviour is very rare. Year 6 pupils hugely enjoy being 'Friendly Faces' with responsibility for supporting individual Reception children

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from the time they start school. This enhances the strong sense of community that extends to involvement in their local area. Fundraising is undertaken for many local charities, including the local air ambulance and cancer charities. Pupils have fewer opportunities to understand the diversity of cultures and lifestyles across the United Kingdom, and the development of global links is at an early stage.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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

How effective is the provision?

Enthusiasm pervades the good teaching. Teachers display good subject knowledge and generally high expectations for all pupils. Questioning is used well to extend pupils' ideas and understanding. The pace of learning and challenge in the best lessons is exhilarating, leading to outstanding gains in pupils' progress. Lesson planning does not always reflect the good learning that is going on because activities for different ability groups, such as reading tasks for more-able younger pupils and handwriting and spelling development for older pupils, are sometimes unclear. The tracking system introduced in September 2010 is embedding well and staff are getting to grips with individualised assessment of pupils' progress in English and mathematics. Pupils know their targets. Work is marked regularly, however, it varies in quality in terms of identifying improvement or correction, particularly in spelling and presentation.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and carefully adapted to meet the needs of those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The development of basic skills is

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embedded, as is practical learning and use of information and communication technology. There is a good focus on independent learning for all pupils, but younger pupils who are more able, have fewer opportunities to read across the curriculum to enhance their understanding of different texts. Pupils enjoy all subjects including French and sporting activities. After-school clubs include sports, science and music. Pupils look forward to the annual residential activity trip to Derbyshire and enjoy visits and visitors who provide, for instance, African drumming sessions.

All staff provide exemplary pastoral care, guidance and support that extends to families who may find themselves in circumstances that make them more vulnerable. Staff ensure that individual pupils are enabled to learn and succeed. Pupils readily ask if they need help or advice. There are strong links with outside agencies, whose support is secured as needed. Monitoring of attendance and behaviour is excellent and sustains outstanding outcomes. Health and safety matters are regularly checked and reviewed. Parents and carers know that their children thrive within a very caring environment. One commented, 'In every respect, pastoral and nurturing care is excellent.'

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher works closely with her staff, empowering them as leaders through careful delegation of responsibility. Their focus and vision underpin the aim to ensure that every pupil becomes successful at the highest possible level. The governing body support the school well, yet are not afraid to challenge school decisions. They regularly monitor and evaluate school performance by visiting lessons and talking to staff and pupils.

Partnerships with parents and carers and are good. They regularly help out in lessons and on trips; some help to run the after-school activities. Other partnership links with the pre-school and local schools are also good, enhancing arrangements as pupils start and leave school. The cluster arrangements enable this very small school to access activities such as swimming and staff training opportunities that would be unavailable otherwise.

Safeguarding is good. The single central register is particularly thorough, and procedures follow good practice. Community cohesion is satisfactory. Local links and pupils' involvement in village activities are strong and valued within the community. Leaders are aware that they have not yet done enough to overcome the school's somewhat isolated situation and provide pupils with opportunities to gain first-hand experience and understanding of the diverse and multicultural nature of communities around the United Kingdom and globally. Equality of opportunity is good; all pupil groups make good progress and individuals who are in danger of falling behind are quickly supported so that

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they also make improved progress. Pupils know that discrimination is unacceptable in any form. Pupils are treated fairly and show respect for adults and each other.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The development of basic skills is now good, and has improved well since the last inspection. Children are encouraged to talk and express opinions, and have good opportunities to practise their skills through play and learning. Role play and dressing up are popular. One child, using a clipboard to become an inspector, was heard to say, 'Mmm that's not very impressive... we don't do that at Swanton Abbott!' The vocabulary used by the children is often impressive as they respond thoughtfully to teachers' good questions. The development of the outdoor classroom is good and includes a large all-weather structure and canopy that children can access at all times. Outdoor provision is further enhanced by access to forested, environmental and gardening areas. Children are happy and settled. They relate well to their teachers and each other and their behaviour is exemplary - they listened in absolute silence to the story of 'Floppy'. They make good progress because teaching and ongoing assessment are good. Children identified as needing additional support receive focused one-to-one attention to overcome any barriers to learning. There is a good balance of adult-directed and child-led learning. Resources and accommodation are good and fit for purpose. Leadership and management are good. Very good attention is given to children's well-being and security, and teamwork and decision making involve all staff, who are well trained and understand the needs of young children. Parents and carers are encouraged to be involved with their children's learning and are asked to help them with practical tasks such as reading at home.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were generally positive about all aspects of their children's education. A small proportion felt that behaviour and the information they receive about their children's progress are not good enough, and that their suggestions or concerns are not always fully addressed. Inspectors judged that pupils' behaviour is outstanding and that they make good progress in learning. The very few parental concerns are recorded and fully resolved; any suggestions are appropriately considered.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Swanton Abbott Community Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 34 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 77 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	24	71	7	21	1	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	27	79	7	21	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	17	50	11	32	4	12	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	14	41	14	41	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	15	44	16	47	1	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	13	38	17	50	2	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	19	56	15	44	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	11	32	17	50	1	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	12	35	18	53	3	9	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	12	35	16	47	3	9	1	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	41	11	32	2	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	18	53	16	47	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	19	56	14	41	0	0	0	0

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

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

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

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

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

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



19 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Swanton Abbott Community Primary School, Norwich, NR10 5DZ

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your friendly school recently. You told us so much about your school. You like all your subjects including sports, mathematics and French. You work well at practical activities and with a good deal of independence. We were pleased to see you working hard including you Year 1 pupils in mathematics. Keep it up. We were impressed by your excellent behaviour, your views on safety and your impressive adoption of healthy lifestyles, well done! You go to a good school and are making good progress. This means that you reach higher standards than pupils in most schools. You say that teachers make learning fun and we agree with you. The adults in the school provide excellent care for you and we can see that you appreciate this. The headteacher and the staff want to make your school even better, and you can help them. I have asked them to do the following:

- to help those of you who find reading easy in Years 1 and 2 to get better at understanding and remembering what you read so that you are able to answer questions accurately
- give you more opportunities for reading in subjects other than English and to increase your reading of stories and factual information; you can help by doing more reading
- to make sure that all of you in Years 3 to 6 take responsibility to improve your handwriting and spelling and keep your written work neat
- think of exciting ways for you to learn more about communities in the United Kingdom and around the globe - perhaps you have some wonderful ideas?

I hope you will continue to enjoy the rest of your time at Swanton Abbott.

Yours sincerely

Judi Bedawi

Lead inspector

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