

# Swainswick CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109206
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bath and North East Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	309926
<b>Inspection date</b>	11 September 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Lorna Brackstone

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	82
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Robert Shackell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Louise Cripps
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 March 2003
<b>School address</b>	Innox Lane Upper Swainswick Bath BA1 8DB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01225 859279
<b>Fax number</b>	01225 851204

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector, who investigated the following issues in the school: the Foundation Stage, the curriculum and the quality of academic support and guidance. Evidence was gathered about current standards. Discussions took place with the headteacher, subject leaders, governors and pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This is a very small school. It serves several local hamlets and some pupils who come from further afield. The school can admit up to 12 children per year group and there has been a significant number who have moved into age groups other than at the start of the Foundation Stage. Pupils are accommodated in one of four classes, Reception/Year 1, Year 2, Year 3/4 and Year 5/6. Attainment on entry is variable but is broadly as expected. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average. The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs is above average.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Overall, Swainswick provides a satisfactory education and has some good features. Parents identify the headteacher as a 'strong leader who is a fantastic asset to the school' and inspection findings confirm this. Her outstanding knowledge of all her pupils and parents ensures that family needs are well understood, and relationships between home and school are very good. The headteacher knows exactly where the strengths in the provision of the school are and understands the areas requiring development. Since the last inspection, standards in English have been improved and subject leaders have a clearer role. However, the quality of provision for the youngest children has declined. There is a close working partnership between the headteacher and the manager for pupils with learning difficulties. This ensures that individuals with specific needs make good progress because they are supported well through successful intervention strategies. The suitably challenging targets set for older pupils are based on secure knowledge of individuals and the rigorous data gathered from tracking records enables them to achieve well. Governors are knowledgeable about school life and provide good levels of support. However, they are aware that they need to develop more robust monitoring systems which will help them provide greater challenge to senior staff.

The successful personal development of the pupils is a reflection of the good care, guidance and support given to each pupil. This is the result of the small, friendly and caring feel of the school where, as one parent explained, individuals 'are not lost in the crowd'. Well-structured provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has resulted in very good relationships between pupils. Consequently, there is a good acceptance of individuals who have differing needs, abilities and cultural backgrounds. Older pupils act as buddies to the youngest children and community cohesion is evident when all age groups join together in spontaneous playground games. Pupils have a very strong sense of responsibility to their school. They attend regularly and behave well, both in lessons and around school. They like school and are enthusiastic learners, particularly the older pupils, who work well together in groups. Pupils attribute their feeling of safeness in school to its small size. However, not all pupils feel that their views and opinions are sufficiently listened to, for example, when they quite rightly complain about the state of their toilets.

After a slow start in Reception and Year 1, the pupils' progress improves in Year 2 and gathers momentum as they move through the school. By the time they move on to secondary school, they have attained above-average standards and are well prepared for their next stage of education. This reflects the good quality provision in the middle and upper end of the school which enables the pupils to achieve well. They are well taught and enjoy positive relationships with the teaching staff. Teachers have good subject expertise and lessons are well planned so that the needs of the different age groups and abilities of the pupils are all successfully met. A particularly strong feature of the teaching and learning is the way in which the very competent teaching assistants support those pupils with learning difficulties. Individual programmes of work successfully ensure that these pupils are fully integrated into the classroom but are also achieving well at their own personal level. Whilst teachers engage with pupils in detailed verbal feedback about their work, there are no consistent systems in place to ensure that individuals know how to improve their work, and this restricts their learning.

The good range of topics ensures that the curriculum is brought alive and reflects the needs of the school. Visits to places such as nearby Dyrham Park give pupils a real grasp on what life was like during the war and also help them to understand the wider context of world affairs.

Good links with the nearby secondary school enable pupils to benefit from specialist teaching of physical education. As a result, pupils are very clear about the link between keeping fit and staying healthy. A close partnership with the local rugby club has also inspired a group of older pupils to develop their study skills.

Given the capacity to identify weaknesses in its effectiveness accurately, the school has a good capacity to improve.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 4**

There are significant weaknesses in the Foundation Stage which impair the academic progress of the youngest children. This confirms the view of a significant minority of parents who raised concerns during the inspection. Teaching and learning for this age are inadequate and the planned programme of activities does not meet the needs of the children. Lesson planning is unclear and organisation weak. The classroom environment lacks opportunities for exciting interactions to take place. For example, there are no interesting activity areas such as writing corners or creative areas for independent development. Role-play opportunities are underdeveloped and many of the resources are not accessible to the children. There is no planned approach to outdoor learning and children are required to sit for long sessions listening to their teacher. This means that the children are not stimulated or sufficiently well engaged in their own learning. The monitoring of their progress is not used to identify the future needs of the children.

Teaching assistants support the children well in small groups but those with learning difficulties are not encouraged to take a full part in class activities. Older pupils make a significant contribution to the satisfactory development of the children's personal and social development. The leader and manager of the Foundation Stage does not provide an adequate sense of direction and does not have the capacity to make improvements without rigorous input from others.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve the quality of provision in the Foundation Stage.
- Implement consistent ways to help pupils understand what they need to do to move on to the next step of their learning.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before the next section 5 inspection.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	4
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

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**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you very much for making me so welcome at your school and helping me to find out all about life at Swainswick Primary. I enjoyed spending the day with you all.

Your school provides you with a satisfactory education and has a number of good features. By the time you are ready to move on to secondary school you have reached above-average standards in your work and make good progress. This is because most of the teaching is good and teachers plan an interesting programme of work for you. Those of you who find learning difficult are very well supported by the teaching assistants.

You are developing into sensible and mature young people who behave well and show respect towards their environment. You really enjoy playing a full part in school life and I was impressed with the way that you take such care of the younger children and include them in your play. I enjoyed hearing all about your trips out of school which make your learning interesting.

You feel safe because the school looks after you well and you are given good support and guidance. You have a good knowledge about keeping fit and healthy. However, you are quite right that the toilets are of poor quality and I have mentioned this to your headteacher.

Your headteacher is determined to try to give you the very best education possible and she works well with all the adults who are in charge of the school to ensure that this happens.

I have asked your teachers to improve the quality of education for the youngest children. I have also asked them to give you more help on what you need to do to improve your work.

Once again, thank you for your help. Keep doing your best and working with the adults to make sure that Swainswick Primary gets better and better.



11 September 2007

Dear Children

**Inspection of Swainswick Church of England Primary School, Bath BA1  
8DB**

Thank you very much for making me so welcome at your school and helping me to find out all about life at Swainswick Primary. I enjoyed spending the day with you all.

Your school provides you with a satisfactory education and has a number of good features. By the time you are ready to move on to secondary school you have reached above-average standards in your work and make good progress. This is because most of the teaching is good and teachers plan an interesting programme of work for you. Those of you who find learning difficult are very well supported by the teaching assistants.

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Once again, thank you for your help. Keep doing your best and working with the adults to make sure that Swainswick Primary gets better and better.

With best wishes

Lorna Brackstone  
Lead inspector