

# Evesham, Swan Lane First School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116673
<b>Local Authority</b>	Worcestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	312364
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 January 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Joyce Cox

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>	First
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–10
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	286
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Morris
<b>Headteacher</b>	Graham Walker
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 December 2003
<b>School address</b>	Rynal Street Evesham WR11 4QA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01386 446540
<b>Fax number</b>	01386 761362

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<b>Age group</b>	4–10
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school serves the immediate area. Some pupils travel from other parts of the town and surrounding villages. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds although there are a small number of pupils at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. Overall, children's attainment is slightly below the levels expected for their age when they join the school in Reception, particularly in their communication and personal skills. Evesham, Swan Lane First has won many awards for its work, including two Achievement awards and an Artsmark award. In September 2005, the school introduced French teaching to all pupils from Year 2 to Year 5.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school where pupils achieve well. The majority of parents speak in glowing terms about the school's achievements. One parent, summing up the views of many, wrote, 'The headteacher and staff are very personable, friendly and helpful. I am very happy with my child's progress and would strongly recommend the school to other parents.' A very small number of parents have concerns about communication and pupils' behaviour. However, inspectors investigated these concerns and found nothing to cause alarm. In the Foundation Stage, children make good progress towards all their learning goals. Parents feel their children have a 'wonderful start to school life' and appreciate the endless patience and unbounded enthusiasm of all the staff. Pupils in Years 1 to 5 respond to the good teaching and achieve well. Although there is some variation from year to year, standards at the end of Year 2 are generally, broadly average. At the end of Year 5, standards are above average in English and average in mathematics. This is because the teaching of English in Years 3 to 5 is better than that of mathematics. The quality of teaching varies because pupils are not always told what they are to learn in lessons, and teachers' marking does not consistently inform them how they can improve their work. Evidence from displays and pupils' work shows that their work in art and design and information and communication technology (ICT) is of a good quality. Learning activities are enhanced by the use of a wide variety of resources and good links with other agencies. Support staff are efficient and valued team members. Assessment systems are used effectively to monitor progress. However, pupils' involvement in knowing how to improve the quality of their work is not as strong. This is particularly true in mathematics lessons in Years 3 to 5. Pupils enjoy their work and show this by being attentive and eager to participate. Their personal development is good and is a significant strength of the school. The curriculum is good and meets the needs and interests of pupils well. It is considerably enriched by many additional opportunities such as learning to speak French, singing in the choir and creating stunning artwork. Pastoral care is very good and lies at the heart of the school's work. The headteacher is a good leader who is effectively supported by senior leaders and the governing body. The performance of the school is closely monitored, and the leadership is very accurate in its assessment of the school's successes and areas to improve. Issues raised by the last inspection have been tackled effectively. Challenging targets are used with good effect in helping pupils to attain well in tests at the end of all year groups. The management team's determination and purposeful leadership together with a strong staff team has successfully moved the school forward. Therefore, the school shows a good capacity to improve even further.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Parents speak highly of the good Foundation Stage provision. They say how much their children like the staff, and how involved they feel in their children's learning. Teaching is good and adults are skilled at engaging children in a stimulating range of enticing activities. The indoor and outdoor learning environments are planned very carefully, with colourful, attractive displays, and activities just waiting to be enjoyed. No wonder all children achieve well, and most enter Year 1 with skills, knowledge and abilities that are in line with the expected levels. Staff work well together as a highly effective team. On a few occasions, support staff could be more involved in assessing children's learning. Children's personal, social and emotional development is good as they are sensitively encouraged to become independent and confident learners who behave well and help each other. Curriculum planning and assessment are good and ensure

that tasks are matched precisely to all children's needs. Staff effectively plan children's learning so that it covers, and skilfully links, all the necessary areas of learning. Children are very well cared for and this safe, friendly and supportive environment enables all children to flourish. The good leadership and management skilfully identify strengths and weaknesses and provide good support to newly qualified colleagues.

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

- Eliminate the inconsistency in mathematics teaching in Years 3 to 5 by ensuring pupils know what they are expected to learn, and how they can improve their work.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils make good progress and attain broadly average standards at the end of Year 2. Achievement is good throughout the school and over the last few years, Year 5 pupils have attained above the expected levels in English. Concerns about writing throughout the school have been successfully addressed through improved planning and teaching. Standards in mathematics are average in Years 3 to 5, and the school recognises the need to raise standards and achievement in this subject. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress, as work is matched carefully to their needs and they receive effective additional help from staff. In most lessons, pupils who are more able are offered extra challenges which help them to make good progress. The small number of pupils at an early stage of learning English also make good progress because of effective, well targeted support and a focus on ensuring pupils understand specific vocabulary.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

A warm and very welcoming ethos underpins the school's work and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Consequently, pupils learn to be thoughtful about themselves and others in a safe and happy environment. Pupils say they go to a 'super school' and feel that they are 'doing well'. They enjoy their lessons and most pupils behave considerately, in response to teachers who model for them courtesy and kindness. On rare occasions, a very small number of Years 3 to 5 pupils become over excited in lessons and this slightly disrupts the normally calm, purposeful classrooms. Pupils know how to keep themselves and others safe and healthy, and learn quickly to appreciate and understand others' feelings, beliefs and backgrounds. Not surprisingly, in such circumstances, attendance is good. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and the wider community. The school council plays a significant part by representing the views of others and thinking how to improve playtimes for everybody's benefit. Pupils make good progress in basic skills and they are prepared well for their future lives.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Relationships between pupils and staff are excellent which results in happy, purposeful classrooms. Teachers make lessons interesting, challenging and enjoyable with good use of humour. This results in pupils working hard to do their best. Parents appreciate the school staff

saying they are 'real gems' and 'are unfailingly kind and considerate to the pupils in their care'. Teaching in Years 3 to 5 is better in English than in mathematics and the school is starting to implement strategies to remedy this through increased monitoring and professional development. Teachers are exceptionally skilled at using interactive whiteboards to enliven lessons. Careful planning and well-targeted support for pupils who find learning difficult ensure that they make good progress and participate fully in activities.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum serves the needs of pupils well as shown by their good achievement. This is because of the well planned emphasis on basic skills and the wide range of activities on offer beyond the conventional curriculum which pupils take up in large numbers and which enriches their education considerably. Parents recognise and appreciate this saying, 'Teaching French is a very good initiative,' and, 'I am constantly surprised by the range and depth of the curriculum.' Many pupils are involved in sports clubs and a good variety of healthy eating initiatives, which means they are healthy and know how to stay fit. Pupils' stunning artwork brightens the walls and high calibre music provision enhances pupils' learning. ICT features in all lessons and is used extremely well by staff and pupils. Provision for gifted and talented pupils is the one area requiring improvement in this otherwise vibrant curriculum. Good links with parents, outside agencies, the local church and the community enrich and enliven pupils' learning.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Pastoral care is very good and results in pupils feeling secure and well supported. Members of staff know the pupils and their families very well, ensuring the needs of all pupils are catered for effectively. Secure child protection procedures are in place and staff awareness is good. A good behaviour management system, seen as fair by the pupils and applied consistently by all members of staff, has a marked impact on creating a calm, orderly atmosphere. The needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are quickly identified, allowing them to receive good support. Most pupils know what their learning targets are in English, but this is not the case in mathematics. Teachers' marking is good in English but varies in quality in mathematics and does not always tell pupils how they can improve their work.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Good quality leadership and management is the key to the school's continued improvement. The headteacher, effectively supported by senior managers, has successfully engendered a good team spirit and high morale amongst the staff. Robust self-evaluation, including precise and rigorous use of assessment, has led to the school having good quality action plans and the setting of precise and challenging targets for school improvement. Regular and effective monitoring of teaching and learning by senior leaders has ensured teaching quality has improved across the school particularly in English. Monitoring has taken place in mathematics. As yet, however, the information from this is not used well enough to ensure that pupils do as well in mathematics as they do in English. Governors actively and enthusiastically support the school and have a good knowledge of strengths and areas to improve. Virtually all the parents are

extremely happy with everything that the school provides. One parent, summing up the views of many, wrote, 'We have been involved with the school for the last eight years and have no complaints at all. The education is of a high standard and both our children have been very happy there.'

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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?	2
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	2
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	2
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	2
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

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

- 25 January 2008 Dear Pupils Inspection of Evesham, Swan Lane First School, Evesham, WR11 4QA It was a real treat for us to visit your school and thank you for two very happy days. You go to a good school. That means that staff not only take good care of you but also are successful at helping you to do your best and reach good standards in your work. There are lots of great things about your school.
- You are very good at working hard, helping each other and listening to your teachers, and you do well in all your lessons.
- The staff care about you very much. They are good teachers and they make learning really interesting and fun, giving you many exciting things to do.
- Your headteacher and other staff are good at running the school and making sure you all have a happy and safe time and do really well.
- Anybody who needs extra help is always given it.
- You love learning new things and are good at behaving well and being kind to each other.
- Older children learn to speak French really well and you are all very skilled at using computers and many of you are very talented artists.
- For all these reasons you make good progress. Your headteacher and staff have lots of good ideas to make the school even better. We agree with them and feel that it would also be good to make sure that those of you in Years 3 to 5 do as well in mathematics as you do in English. To help you do this, teachers could give you clear learning targets and tell you what you do well and how you could improve your work. You can help your teachers by continuing to work hard and behave well, and always being kind to each other. We wish you all the very best for the future. Yours faithfully Joyce Cox Lead inspector



25 January 2008

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Evesham, Swan Lane First School, Evesham, WR11 4QA**

It was a real treat for us to visit your school and thank you for two very happy days. You go to a good school. That means that staff not only take good care of you but also are successful at helping you to do your best and reach good standards in your work.

There are lots of great things about your school.

- You are very good at working hard, helping each other and listening to your teachers, and you do well in all your lessons.
- The staff care about you very much. They are good teachers and they make learning really interesting and fun, giving you many exciting things to do.
- Your headteacher and other staff are good at running the school and making sure you all have a happy and safe time and do really well.
- Anybody who needs extra help is always given it.
- You love learning new things and are good at behaving well and being kind to each other.
- Older children learn to speak French really well and you are all very skilled at using computers and many of you are very talented artists.
- For all these reasons you make good progress.

Your headteacher and staff have lots of good ideas to make the school even better. We agree with them and feel that it would also be good to make sure that those of you in Years 3 to 5 do as well in mathematics as you do in English. To help you do this, teachers could give you clear learning targets and tell you what you do well and how you could improve your work.

You can help your teachers by continuing to work hard and behave well, and always being kind to each other.

We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours faithfully

Joyce Cox  
Lead inspector