

# Swanton Abbott Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120856
<b>Local Authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	313767
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 May 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Joy Richardson

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	68
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr David Sinkins
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Kay Tims
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 November 2003
<b>School address</b>	Youngman's Lane Swanton Abbott Norwich Norfolk NR10 5DZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01692 538246
<b>Fax number</b>	

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

The school serves Swanton Abbott and nearby villages, although some pupils come from further afield. The pupils are all from White British backgrounds. Pupils' eligibility for free school meals is broadly average. Many children start school with skills that are less well developed than usual at this age, particularly in personal development and language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is above the national average. The school's accommodation has been recently improved and the new extension includes a base for the pre-school playgroup.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

The school evaluates itself as providing a good education, and this judgement is confirmed by the inspection. Children thrive as learners and as people, growing in confidence as they succeed in their work and become richly involved in school life.

Pupils achieve well, making good progress over their time in school. Standards are broadly average, and are rising this year. This is because the school keeps closer track of pupils' progress each term in order to set expectations higher. More able pupils are challenged, for example, sometimes working with an older age group. Pupils who find learning difficult are well supported so that they make good progress.

Pupils greatly enjoy school and the strong sense of community underpins their learning. Their personal development is outstanding. Staff and pupils respect each other, and each child is valued as an individual. The family atmosphere extends to former pupils who frequently keep in touch, knowing that the school is interested in how they fare after they leave. Parents speak highly of the school and of its partnership with them. Pupils of all ages get on well together. Behaviour is usually excellent and pupils take pride in demonstrating good manners.

Teaching is good, laying strong foundations in basic skills and encouraging an attitude of enquiry. Pupils learn to solve problems in mathematics and to carry out practical investigations in science, growing in independence as they organise their work. They benefit from thorough teaching that is often imaginative and frequently fun. However, planning does not always ensure that time is used to the full to secure as much learning as possible. Teaching assistants work closely and effectively with teachers to help pupils learn.

The school encourages pupils' interest in other people and places, broadening perspectives through a wide range of activities, clubs and special events in addition to lessons. Pupils learn about healthy lifestyles and enjoy being active, relishing the opportunity to take part in sports and in tournaments with other schools. Pupils are well cared for and any concerns are dealt with quickly.

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher leads by example in the classroom while maintaining an overview of the school as a whole. She fosters good teamwork in taking stock of how well the school is doing, pinpointing areas for improvement and taking appropriate action. Governors make a strong contribution in helping the school to achieve its aims. The school is looking forward confidently to making the most of the opportunities provided by its new building. It has a good capacity to continue to improve.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

The effectiveness of provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and improving. The school makes suitable arrangements for children to be taught together as a small class in the morning, and to work together as a group when they join the Years 1 and 2 class in the afternoons. The pace of progress has increased this year and most children are on course to reach the early learning goals set nationally for this age. Children benefit from considerable individual attention in a small class. They make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development, learning to cooperate and to look after themselves. A new focus on learning sounds and letters is a useful springboard into reading and writing from an early stage. Teaching generates a calm atmosphere that supports learning. Activities are linked to broad themes, such as animals, but

are not always designed to extend specific learning or to stimulate and challenge children in building on their skills. Children greatly enjoy investigating the school's woodland area and helping with the creation of a garden. Now that the new building has been completed, plans are in hand to extend provision for regular outdoor play.

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

- Ensure that activities in the Foundation Stage extend children's learning and build on their skills.
- Plan the pace of work in lessons and the use of time over the day to maximise learning.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils achieve well, making good progress from their starting points. Standards, as shown in National Curriculum assessments and tests in English and mathematics at the end of both key stages, have been broadly average. The school has analysed strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning and has taken effective steps to raise standards further. In particular, it is checking pupils' progress each term to ensure that they are moving forward at a good rate. The school sets challenging targets for individuals and for year groups and these are being met and at times exceeded. Pupils reach above average standards in science. Pupils who have extra support because they find learning difficult are making good progress, building well on their prior attainment. Standards in spelling have improved since the last inspection, and writing, which has been a major focus for improvement, is a growing strength.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils develop well spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. They are at ease with themselves, with other children and with adults. Pupils are tolerant and quick to offer help when others face difficulties. Older pupils and younger children know each other well and enjoy each other's company. Each new child has a 'friendly face' supporter from Year 6 who helps them to settle in. Pupils behave extremely well, cooperating without fuss and showing a mature sense of responsibility. The role of the school council is developing and a new suggestion box is rapidly filling with pupils' ideas about how to improve the school. Pupils have a good awareness of healthy lifestyles. They learn about healthy eating and the school is planning to strengthen this focus further. Pupils have plenty of opportunities for exercise and they take full advantage of this in lessons, in clubs and at playtimes. Pupils enjoy school greatly and attendance is above average. The skills they acquire stand pupils in good stead for the next stage of their education and for later life.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching is good. As a result, pupils make good progress, whatever their starting points. Basic skills in literacy and numeracy are taught well. Pupils are encouraged to apply their learning, for example in mathematical and scientific investigations. Teachers are alert to the needs of pupils of widely differing abilities, extending the more able and giving extra support where it is needed. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together. Some teaching is very lively

and imaginative, challenging pupils to be accurate in their work, to think for themselves and to evaluate their own learning. The use of time is not always planned precisely to maximise learning, such as to give pupils' clear guidance on the quality and quantity of work expected. Staff have an increasingly clear view of pupils' progress from term to term and use information from assessments to set targets in writing and numeracy.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides a broad curriculum that fosters creativity and enquiry. Sport features strongly in lessons and in clubs. Drama supports work in literacy. Role play by older pupils led to thoughtful and vivid writing about elderly people recalling their memories. Pupils enjoy music and participated with enthusiasm in a special curriculum week that included music from different cultures. Provision for singing is satisfactory, but the school recognises that this is as an area for further development. The curriculum is planned thoroughly and adapted effectively when gaps or weaknesses are pinpointed in pupils' learning. A new approach to teaching letters and sounds has been introduced. The impact of this on reading, writing and spelling, is being closely evaluated. Pupils develop appropriate skills in information and communication technology through weekly lessons in the computer suite. The curriculum is enriched and pupils' horizons broadened by a good range of visits and visitors to the school.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are well known and cared for as individuals, by pupils as well as by staff. Those who have difficulties with learning or behaviour thrive in a happy and nurturing environment where expectations are clear and consistently reinforced. The school makes appropriate arrangements for safeguarding pupils and for their health and safety. Individual education plans are maintained for pupils who need them, including both high and low attainers. These help to guide teaching and learning and are regularly reviewed. The school is making rapid strides in guiding pupils' progress. Staff are strengthening their view of the progress to be expected and sharing this with pupils through the setting of class and individual targets. In some classes, pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own work and how well they understand ideas, as an aid to improvement. This good practice is not consistent throughout the school. The school communicates effectively with parents, forging a strong partnership that supports pupils' learning well.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher is heavily committed as a class teacher, but also provides clear direction for the school and harnesses the efforts of the whole staff team to good effect. Since the previous inspection, the role of subject leaders has been expanded so that they make a good contribution in developing the curriculum and implementing new initiatives. The overview of the use of time in classrooms is an area for further development. Governors provide purposeful support and challenge. They ensure that resources are used well and this is evident in the quality of the new building, and in planning for the future. The school's leadership is strongly focused on raising standards and successful in doing so. The school has

taken effective action to address the issues raised by the last inspection. After a period of change in staffing and accommodation, the school is well placed to build on its strengths.

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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	3
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	3
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?	1
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	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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**

23 May 2008

Dear Children

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

I enjoyed visiting your school. Thank you for talking to me and telling me about all the interesting things you do. I was impressed to see how well you behave and how well you look after each other. Swanton Abbott is a good school and you learn a great deal.

You have a splendid new building and you told me how good it is to have all the extra space. You enjoy playing outside too, and it was good to see the younger children exploring the woodland area and helping to make a garden grow.

You do well in your work and you are particularly good at science because you investigate and think about things for yourselves. You are becoming good writers too, turning your ideas into powerful words, as I saw in the Years 5 and 6 class writing about old people's memories.

Your headteacher and all the staff teach you well and keep a very close eye on the progress you are making. I have asked the school to think about ways of helping the youngest children learn even more from the activities they do. We have also talked about making sure that all the time in lessons is used to the full. You can help by getting on with your work as quickly as you can.

I hope you go on enjoying school and doing your very best. I am sure that you will have many more good ideas to put in the suggestion box.

Yours sincerely

Joy Richardson

Lead inspector