

Southwick Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126359
Local Authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	315517
Inspection date	14 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Diane Wilkinson

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	154
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Graham Kempster
Headteacher	Julia Bird
Date of previous school inspection	30 September 2002
School address	Hollis Way Southwick Trowbridge BA14 9PH
Telephone number	01225 763325
Fax number	01225 710750

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: • standards and progress in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 • the progress of higher attaining pupils • the effectiveness of the school's work in improving standards and progress. At the school's request, the new mathematics programme was evaluated. Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, analysis of school tracking and assessment data and discussions with the headteacher, Key Stage 1 coordinator, members of the governing body and pupils. The views of parents were gathered from the school's own questionnaires, together with the returns of the Ofsted questionnaire. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's self-assessment is not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is a small village primary school to which pupils travel from a wide area. Most are taught in mixed age classes. Attainment on entry differs from year to year but has declined in recent years and is generally below that usually found. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is around average although it varies significantly between year groups. A few of the small number of pupils from non-British backgrounds speak English as an additional language. An above average number of pupils join or leave the school after the Reception year.

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 know they are well looked after and enjoy coming to because they say lessons are fun. Attendance is well above the national average. A major reason for the school's success is the headteacher's vision for a school where both the personal and academic needs of each pupil are met which, together with staff and governors, she is working hard to achieve. Governors are supportive, fulfil their duties well and provide the school with good expertise in areas such as financial planning and health and safety audits. Staff with management responsibilities support school monitoring and development effectively although staff changes mean some are still developing their skills.

The headteacher's knowledge of all that happens in the school and the progress of individual pupils is impressive. Self-evaluation is rigorous and accurate so that weaknesses in the school's work and pupils' progress are identified and addressed effectively. Monitoring and support of teaching are good, especially so for new or inexperienced staff. The school willingly embarks on innovative work, which benefits pupils especially well. For example, it is piloting a new programme aimed to ensure pupils use their mathematical skills productively in a wide range of situations and activities. The benefits of this can already be seen in the improving progress and rising standards in this subject. The school's success in tackling weaker aspects of its work and the determination to continually develop its provision to enhance progress give confidence that its capacity to improve further is good.

Pupils' achievement is good, including that of higher attaining pupils and those who have specific language or learning needs. Progress in both the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 has improved well over the past year and is good owing to consistently good teaching. By the end of Reception, standards are around those expected for the children's age and by Year 2, they are above average. The dip in the Year 2 national tests last year, caused mainly by some weaknesses in assessment procedures, has been fully addressed so that standards have risen. Despite the considerable number of pupils joining after Year 2 who have emotional or learning needs, the school's high aspirations that they will make good progress ensure that, by Year 6, standards are above average and virtually all pupils reach the expected level. Pupils take part in enterprise activities and they are well prepared for their future economic well-being. The good curriculum has significant strengths in some areas because the school is continually looking for ways to engage pupils and help them learn easily. The school's success is evident in the awards it holds for skills development, art, sport and health awareness. Extra activities, including clubs, visits and visitors are good, for example all Year 4 pupils learn to play the cornet. Very good attention is given to ensuring activities are relevant to pupils' needs and interests including in Reception. Effective links are made between subjects, for example pupils used computers to develop a multimedia presentation on a history topic. The growing emphasis on helping pupils to use their mathematical skills in a wide range of situations benefits them especially well although the full effect of this on standards has yet to be seen. There are plans to extend this approach to English and science. Good teaching, including in Reception, results in well-planned lesson activities which effectively meet the needs of the different ages and ability in each class. Tasks are challenging and written work is marked accurately, with pupils given good advice on how to improve. Classroom assistants support learning very well, including when working with specific groups. In most lessons, behaviour is good and often exemplary. As a result, pupils work hard and learn quickly. However, this is not consistent in all classes as

on some occasions teaching lacks clarity so pupils are not sure about what to do. When this happens, they become restless and waste time which is a concern of a minority of parents.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. From Reception, responsibility and independence are encouraged effectively so by the time pupils leave they are thoughtful, reflective and polite and develop into confident young adults. The school has a considerable number of vulnerable pupils or those who have emotional and social needs and a few parents are concerned about behaviour. Nevertheless, behaviour is generally good and pupils are confident that adults quickly deal with any incidents of unsatisfactory behaviour. Pupils know that good attention is paid to their welfare and have a good awareness of how to achieve a healthy and safe lifestyle. Pupils' excellent contribution to the school, local and wider communities is evident in their work as monitors and class or school councillors. Through strong links with a school in Zambia, pupils develop an excellent understanding of world citizenship which enhances their understanding of other cultures especially well.

Both staff and governors are committed to providing a high level of care and pastoral support. Regular risk assessments ensure any outstanding issues are speedily rectified. Child protection and staff vetting procedures are good and parents are confident that their children are very well looked after at all times. All adults working in the school know individual pupils well and relationships are excellent. Through the very good personal, social and health education programme, and reward and sanctions procedures, support and guidance for pupils' personal development are very good. The work of the new Family Liaison Worker is already benefiting pupils. Pupils' academic progress is tracked regularly so that programmes of work can be adjusted, or additional support provided when needed. The information is used to set pupils' improvement targets which are increasingly supporting their progress well. In the main, the school has adjusted its provision effectively to accommodate the lower standards on entry. However, it had been slower in checking that pupils could use their literacy and numeracy skills in different situations. This led to some weakness not being identified and addressed quickly enough and was partly responsible for the fall in Year 2 standards last year. This issue is now a development priority and improved assessment procedures are already helping to increase progress although the school recognises still more needs to be done.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The provision has improved well over the past year and continues to do so. Excellent induction procedures help children settle confidently into school life. Very good attention is paid to their safety and welfare. Relationships between staff and children are excellent and there is a lot of fun and enjoyment in the Reception class. Teaching, which had some weaknesses in the past, is much improved and is now good. Together with the well-designed curriculum, it encourages children's good progress. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are effectively taught, with good attention being paid to the specific language and social needs of a growing number of children. The very experienced classroom assistant gives especially good support, particularly to those children who find learning difficult. By the time they enter Year 1, the majority of children reach the standards expected for their age. Children's personal development is supported well and they are gaining independence and responsibility. The positive learning environment encourages children to find out things for themselves. Children's progress is assessed accurately, with day-to-day planning effectively adjusted to help children move on quickly to the next stage. Tracking of children's progress and management of the provision are currently undertaken

by senior staff with the new Reception teacher increasingly taking on more responsibility for these aspects.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching so that pupils are consistently able to learn easily by ensuring that in all lessons they are clear what they have to do and can get on with their work quickly.
- Develop assessment systems which provide staff with secure information on how well pupils use their skills and knowledge in a range of different situations.

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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 ¹ 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	1
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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

15 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Southwick CofE VC Primary School, Southwick, Trowbridge, BA14 9PH

Thank you for welcoming me to your school and being so friendly and helpful. I particularly want to thank the pupils who gave up their break time to talk to me. You like your school very much and think it is giving you a good education and I agree with you.

This is what I thought was good about the school:

- You make good progress and by the end of Year 6 standards are above average.
- You like your teachers and think lessons are fun and I agree that they help you to learn well.
- Teachers plan interesting tasks for you and you have lots of special activities, such as going on residential visits or learning to play the cornet.
- Teaching assistants are very good at helping you in lessons.
- Most of you behave well and often behaviour in lessons is excellent. You are good at taking on responsibility and are developing many of the skills that will help you in the future.
- Adults look after you very well so you feel safe and secure in school.
- Staff give you good advice on how to improve your work and you are increasingly referring to your improvement targets to try and do even better.

What I have asked your school to do now:

- Make sure that teachers always explain things well so that you can get on with your work quickly. You can help by making sure you do not waste time in lessons and always ask for help if you need it.
- Make sure that, when they assess your work, they check how well you can use your skills in different situations or tasks.

Thank you again for all your help and good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

D Wilkinson Lead inspector

15 November 2007

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D Wilkinson
Lead inspector