

Sawtry Infants' School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110714
Local Authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	356802
Inspection dates	10–11 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Roderick Passant

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	153
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jan Thistleton
Headteacher	Fiona Wheatley
Date of previous school inspection	2 October 2007
School address	Middlefield Road Sawtry, Huntingdon PE28 5SH
Telephone number	01487 830678
Fax number	01487 832826
Email address	office@sawtryinf.cambs-schools.net

Age group	4–7
Inspection dates	10–11 February 2011
Inspection number	356802

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They saw six class teachers teaching 11 lessons and held meetings with members of the school's senior leadership team, representatives from the governing body and school council and a group of Year 2 pupils. They observed the school's work, including two assemblies, and looked at a range of documentation and policies associated with safeguarding and school improvement.

They scrutinised the questionnaire responses from 20 staff and 43 parents and carers.

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

- How effective are the school's systems for monitoring pupils' progress and targeting support?
- How effective have the school's initiatives been in improving reading and the progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities?
- What are the key features that would lift aspects of the school's provision to the next level?

Information about the school

The school is smaller than average. Almost all pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The overall proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average, but the proportion who have a statement detailing their educational needs is above average. There are fewer pupils than at the time of the last inspection, reflecting a fall in the local population.

The school has close links with the children's centre on the same site. This provides outreach parental support programmes for schools in the outlying villages. The school is part of the Sawtry extended services cluster and provides core services. There are close links with the pre-school settings in the village. The school has achieved healthy school status and the Active School Kitemark, and is a member of the local school sports partnership.

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 has improved since it was last inspected. This is because the school's leaders identify and evaluate what needs to be done accurately, and plan effectively for improvement. Standards showed a significant step-change and further improvement in 2010 from the above average standards generally seen. The headteacher has an accurate view of the quality of learning and teaching; she sets challenging targets for pupils. The deputy headteacher, a relatively new appointment, brings added expertise to the senior leadership team, and, because the headteacher is now able to delegate aspects of school development to her, additional momentum to the process of development. This reinforces the school's good capacity for sustained improvement.

Pupils make good progress, enjoy their work and achieve well because teaching is good. Where teaching and learning are at their best the pitch and challenge of the work, based on detailed knowledge of the levels pupils have reached in their learning, fully engage pupils' interest and application and they make exceptional progress. In order to bring more lessons up to this level, the school is using additional assessment materials to build staff's skills and confidence in tracking pupils' work, so they can judge short-term progress and identify the next steps in pupils' learning with even greater precision. As yet staff are not yet fully confident in the accuracy of their judgements. The senior leaders monitor the progress of all pupils carefully based on data submitted by staff, and have introduced regular meetings with class teachers to discuss pupils' progress. This key feature ensures that all pupils are making good progress and identifies early any pupil whose progress is slipping so that an appropriate action plan can be drawn up and strategies put in place. As a result of this work the school ensured that the pupils in Year 2 did especially well last year.

Outstanding care, guidance and support and a good curriculum ensure that pupils make good progress in their personal development. Consistently good relationships between adults and pupils give the school its warm ethos and as a result pupils report that feel very safe. They are confident that they will be listened to and any concerns dealt with swiftly. Most pupils behave well for most of the time and understand the school rules; they play and work together well. They have a satisfactory understanding about other cultures. Overall, pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is good, but limited exposure to other cultures means that their multicultural understanding, while satisfactory, is a relative weakness.

Children in the Reception class develop very positive attitudes to learning which underpin their later good progress across the school. They are currently making good progress in response to stimulating provision, but the outdoor curriculum does not always provide enough physical challenge to fully engage all children, particularly some of the boys, and so help them accelerate their progress.

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

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To take teaching to the next level and accelerate pupils' progress further, consolidate staff's confidence through focused training to ensure that:
 - teaching is always informed by high-quality assessment, so that the pupils' next steps in learning are planned at exactly the right level to maximise progress for each individual
 - the quality of data used to monitor pupils' progress across the school is as accurate as possible.
- Ensure that the outdoor curriculum for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage channels the energies of all pupils, and helps accelerate their progress.
- Extend pupils' knowledge of how others live by developing the school's global and national links.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Classes have a positive purposeful ethos. Pupils concentrate, are involved, try hard and work with care and concentration, showing good self-discipline and control. They work with talk partners well, sharing their ideas, consolidating prior learning and bringing new learning into context by rehearsing their ideas. Pupils are proud of their work and keen to show how well they have done.

Standards at the end of Year 2 in 2010 were high in reading, writing and mathematics and a significant improvement over previous years. These pupils made particularly good progress from their broadly average starting points. Both genders performed above national averages and there was little difference in boys' and girls' attitudes and performance in the lessons seen. The most able pupils are challenged appropriately, as seen in the significantly above average proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels. Current progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good; there is usually a good match of work in lessons to their needs, additional support in classrooms is targeted well and their progress, along with the progress of all other pupils, is carefully monitored.

Pupils have a well-developed understanding of nutrition and the importance of exercise, and respond well to the steps taken by the school to promote these aspects. Pupils have a good foundation for their future workplace skills, given their good personal qualities and their above average basic skills. Attendance is average because the school suffered a period of extended illness in the autumn term. The school council meets with the headteacher regularly and its members takes their role seriously, consulting with their classes to collect views and contributing to school organisation, and sometimes making decisions about how to spend money they raise. Pupils are actively involved in local community events and collect for local and national charities. They are currently raising funds for playhouse for a school in Moldova.

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

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	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
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	3
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?

Pupils make good progress in most lessons. Teachers manage their classes well in a quiet, calm and well-organised manner, targeting praise and encouragement effectively. Their good relationships with pupils support learning because they view them as partners in the process and foster their independent learning skills. There is good teamwork with teaching assistants, who are effective in their support to individuals or groups. Pupils are usually actively engaged in their learning, often helped by good use of the interactive whiteboard, and good examples were seen where pupils explored a real task to develop, practise and apply their skills. Teachers generally make good use of questioning to check on learning in lessons, often involving pupils in assessing how well they have understood. Some marking is particularly good.

In the few lessons where progress was satisfactory, some pupils found the tasks too difficult and became confused. The school is aware that teachers are sometimes not yet fully confident when assessing pupils' progress against precise National Curriculum levels.

The school is in the process of redesigning and refining the curriculum. This process has contributed to improved standards, greater engagement and interest of all pupils but particularly boys. The 'learning log' sets imaginative home learning opportunities, providing a means for parents and carers to support their children's learning. There is now a focus on planning and providing memorable learning through first-hand experiences, trips and visitors. Good links and partnerships within the community and partner schools

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

extend the curriculum and pupils' learning opportunities, although the school is not yet making the most of its wider links to enhance pupils' global cultural awareness. Cross-curricular links are providing a wider range of contexts to develop pupils' writing skills. Along with the raised profile of reading through, for example, targeting parental involvement and encouraging more frequent changing of free readers, this has contributed to improved attainment in reading and writing. In mathematics, attainment has been raised by the school planning additional opportunities for pupils to apply the skills that they have learnt earlier.

The school is a very inclusive community. It fosters and recognises the uniqueness of each pupil extremely well. Adults' high-quality vigilance, care, support and commitment towards the pupils in their charge are deeply embedded within the school's ethos. Consequently there is high quality support towards vulnerable pupils and their families or pupils with medical or behavioural or other needs, drawing on the expertise of outside agencies and additional staff training when necessary. Attendance is improving, helped by the joint working with the educational welfare officer and school encouragement. Strong and developing liaison with the Junior School has led to improved knowledge and understanding of pupils at the time of transition.

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 and senior managers have been instrumental in raising attainment and establishing a momentum for improvement by establishing strong teamwork among staff. Staff are proud to be members of the school, know what the school is trying to achieve, are involved in that process and feel that their contribution is valued. The governing body has improved its effectiveness since the last inspection and displays a clear appreciation of its role, both strategically and in providing appropriate challenge to the school. Safeguarding is good. Procedures follow good practice, all statutory and training requirements are met and reviewed regularly, and the headteacher shows tenacity in following up concerns.

The school works hard to identify underachievement and remove possible barriers to learning through close monitoring of pupils' progress and early intervention. The school is a cohesive and harmonious community. It knows the wider local community well and has sought successfully to engage parents and carers more in their children's learning and to develop the school as a common focus within the community. The school is aware that it has not yet been fully successful in developing pupils' awareness of national and global cultural diversity, and has appropriate plans to improve this aspect of pupils' education.

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

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

Children's attainment on entry to the Reception class is broadly at the level expected nationally for their age. Historically standards at the end of Reception are broadly average, but they are now improving. Children are currently making good progress because teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. Their good progress in developing personal qualities and positive attitudes for learning provides a good springboard for their later good learning and progress. Children are happy and settled and participate fully in well-established routines. They enjoy taking responsibilities and respond actively to adults' advice and guidance in a welcoming and stimulating environment. Good relationships support their learning development and welfare. Almost all children behave well and when on occasion individuals do not, they are refocused and appropriate behaviour is taught explicitly. There is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities, although planning for outdoor activities does not always channel and direct the energies of the more-boisterous boys to accelerate their progress. The coordinator and other staff are committed to improving children's outcomes and the leader has an accurate view of the strengths and areas for development. The team's work is leading to improved standards, particularly in early literacy skills.

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

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 proportion of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire was below average for a primary school, but their responses were positive and supportive. All parents and carers are happy with their children's experiences at the school, and feel that it keeps their children safe and helps them support their children's learning. The large majority of parents and carers are happy with all aspects of the school. The very small number of concerns raised followed no particular pattern.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sawtry Infants' 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 43 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 153 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	29	67	13	30	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	29	67	14	33	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	19	44	23	53	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	49	19	44	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	25	58	17	40	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	58	18	42	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	40	25	58	1	2	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)	12	28	26	60	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	13	30	27	63	3	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	23	28	65	0	0	2	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	9	21	29	67	1	2	2	5
The school is led and managed effectively	18	42	21	49	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	24	56	19	44	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.



14 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sawtry Infants' School, Huntingdon, PE28 5SH

I very much enjoyed my brief stay in your school. I would like to thank those pupils who gave up some of their lunchtime to talk to my colleagues. What you had to say was very helpful.

This is a good school. You make good progress in your work and by the time you leave Year 2 your skills in reading, writing and mathematics are above average. Last year they were even higher. The school is helping you to grow up well. You behave well, the school is friendly and you told us that you feel safe. Almost all of your parents and carers thought you enjoyed school and learning. This is because you have good teachers who care a great deal about you and keep a very careful eye on your progress.

I have asked the headteacher to work with the teachers to help them practise their skills in assessing your work even more precisely, so that they can judge your progress over a shorter period of time and to use this information to help you make even better progress in your learning in lessons. I also asked the headteacher to ensure that the activities Reception children do outside really provide challenge for those of you who really enjoy being very active. Finally, I have asked the school to give you a broader experience of the wider world, and how people in other places live their lives.

The school has improved since it was last inspected. You can help it continue to improve by making sure that you take to heart the school motto: 'Be caring, be happy and always do your best.'

Yours sincerely

Roderick Passant

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.