

Even Swindon Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126213
Local Authority	Swindon
Inspection number	360022
Inspection dates	13–14 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Derek Aitken

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	420
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jo Vizer
Headteacher	Robin Phoenix-Stone
Date of previous school inspection	11 December 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. Fifteen teachers were observed teaching 18 lessons. In addition, inspectors sampled five lessons which included focused support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Meetings were held with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils and discussions were held with a few parents and carers. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at documents, including policies and procedures relating to the safeguarding of pupils, self-evaluation records and assessment information. The inspectors analysed questionnaires from 118 parents and carers, 104 pupils and seven staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- How successfully pupils who speak English as an additional language are supported in their learning.
- How well pupils are using assessment opportunities to promote their learning and progress.
- How well basic skills are being promoted in literacy and numeracy lessons and in other subjects.
- Whether outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are outstanding, as the school judges them to be.

Information about the school

Even Swindon is a much larger than average school. The majority of pupils are White British. One quarter of pupils, an increasing proportion, are of minority ethnic backgrounds. Sixty pupils speak English as an additional language. These include some pupils who have just joined the school with little or no English. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is also average, but this varies significantly between year groups. These pupils have a range of difficulties including moderate learning, behaviour, and speech and language. The school operates a unit on behalf of the local authority for statemented pupils with severe speech and language difficulties. The Early Years Foundation Stage is made up of two Nursery and two Reception classes. The school opened an additional voucher-funded Nursery in September 2010 which operates in the morning and also provides wraparound lunchtime care for 16 children. This provision is also managed by the governing body and is included in this inspection. The school has received a number of awards including those reflecting its commitment to promoting active lifestyles and has a Basic Skills Quality Mark award.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Even Swindon is a satisfactory school. Its main strengths lie in the Early Years Foundation Stage, the speech and language unit, and the good quality of pastoral care provided for pupils. An imaginative curriculum enables children in Nursery and Reception to get off to good start and make rapid gains in their learning. Provision in the unit is well organised and the frequent opportunities pupils have to work alongside their peers in mainstream classes promote their progress well. The school's successful commitment to the welfare of its pupils ensures that newcomers, including those pupils who have recently arrived from abroad, settle in quickly at school. Attainment in English, mathematics and science in Year 6, while remaining average, has risen since the school was last inspected. However, some pupils underachieve in mathematics in Years 3 to 6. Consequently, pupils' overall achievement and outcomes are satisfactory and this means that Even Swindon prepares pupils satisfactorily for the next stages of their lives.

Pupils make better progress in reading and writing because assessment procedures and initiatives to raise standards in these subjects are more firmly embedded than in mathematics. Assessment information is not used consistently to match work closely to pupils' needs and pupils have fewer opportunities in mathematics to make use of assessment to contribute to their learning. While some of the teaching is good, this is not shared effectively enough across the school to ensure that pupils make good, as opposed to satisfactory, progress. Teachers' strong expectations for pupils' behaviour are not always backed up by similar expectations for their academic progress and this sometimes takes the edge off pupils' learning.

School leaders devote considerable energy and resources to meeting the pastoral needs of its pupils, which are steadily growing as the nature of the school roll becomes more diverse. The quality of this work is evaluated accurately and it is reflected in some very positive outcomes for pupils' personal development. By contrast, systems for ensuring and monitoring the academic progress of pupils are less well developed. Consequently, there are some weaknesses in the school's self-evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' progress. Overall, the school has made satisfactory progress since it was last inspected and demonstrates a satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good by:
 - sharing good practice more effectively across the school
 - ensuring that teachers always have high expectations for pupils' progress

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- improving the rigour of lesson observations carried out by senior leaders by placing a sharper emphasis on the quality of pupils' learning.
- Improve pupils' achievement in mathematics by:
 - ensuring assessment information is used to match work closely to the needs of pupils
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to contribute to their learning through assessment.
- Strengthen academic monitoring systems by:
 - ensuring robust systems are available for planning and measuring the impact of support programmes
 - sharing more widely amongst the senior leadership the responsibilities for checking on pupils' learning and progress.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children's skills when they join Year 1 are now slightly below average, which represents a rise from previous years, when they were below average. Pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science in Year 6 followed a similar pattern to 2009 but dipped in 2010 to below average. Inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of the current Year 6 pupils is average. Pupils' progress, however, is better in reading and writing than in mathematics, where progress is less consistent. For example, pupils in a good Year 1 mathematics lesson enthusiastically carried out a range of measuring tasks, estimating water volumes in cups and buckets. The teacher used a wide range of resources, including visual clues, which enabled pupils to carry out accurate calculations of the different volumes. By contrast, few of the more able pupils in Year 5 had a sufficiently secure understanding of the relationship between inches and centimetres to enable them to estimate height and length with reasonable accuracy. Pupils at an early stage of learning English as an additional language make good gains in their learning in Years 1 to 2, especially in literacy. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress in their learning. Outcomes for pupils in the speech and language unit are good. Despite their language difficulties, these pupils can make themselves understood using simple language with a few descriptive adjectives linked to real life experiences.

Pupils enjoy school and have positive attitudes towards their learning. They relate well to each other and the staff and most are responsive in lessons. They say that they feel safe and are well cared for. The school's awards for promoting healthy lifestyles are well merited. Pupils make full use of the varied playground facilities to engage in vigorous physical activity and they have a good awareness of factors which could be harmful to their health. Pupils' good sense of community is reflected in the willingness of the younger members of the school council to work hard to acquire play equipment for the older pupils. This is reciprocated by the Year 5 playleaders who support younger pupils effectively as friendship buddies. The head boy and head girl carry out their duties with pride, conscious of their responsibilities as role-models for their fellow pupils. Although older pupils make good use of local enterprise schemes to develop teambuilding skills, their workplace skills are only satisfactory overall due to their average standards in literacy and numeracy.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
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	3
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?

Teaching has some strengths. Classroom routines are firmly established, and teachers manage pupils well and are vigilant in ensuring pupils' safety and well-being when they work indoors or outdoors. Good relationships ensure pupils are responsive and keen to engage in paired partner routines which sustain their interest and develop their speaking and listening skills well. Teachers use new technology well to motivate pupils and enhance their learning. They annotate their planning after a lesson but these evaluations do not regularly inform planning for subsequent lessons. This reduces the pace at which pupils acquire basic skills, especially in mathematics, as planning is sometimes not tightly matched to the needs of all groups of pupils. Opportunities are sometimes missed to challenge pupils through varied and extended questioning and pupils are not given enough chances in mathematics to summarise and reflect on their understanding to consolidate and develop their learning. Pupils are aware of their targets, but these are not tied in closely enough to teachers' marking to accelerate pupils' progress.

Enrichment opportunities make a significant contribution to pupils' personal development and their enjoyment of learning. Good partnerships have been established with a range of local providers to widen pupils' experiences and to enable them to collaborate with pupils from other schools, for example through the Tenner fundraising project. Opportunities are,

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however, missed for the application and development of basic skills in other subjects. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are satisfactorily supported.

The school works successfully to nurture the personal and social skills of its pupils. New pupils whose first language is not English are welcomed into the school by staff and pupils alike and their self-confidence blossoms as they move through the year groups. The school provides an ever-increasing range of services to enable parents and carers to support their children's wellbeing and learning. The quality of support for mainstream pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and other pupils who would benefit from intervention is only satisfactory, as some shortfalls in identifying and monitoring these pupils hamper their progress in Years 3 to 6. By contrast, the work of pupils in the speech and language unit is monitored and cross-referenced to tracking procedures which include good individual education plans. The school has good procedures in place to promote attendance but the overall rate is affected by unauthorised term-time holidays and extended visits to home countries.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders share a strong drive and ambition to accommodate the diverse pastoral needs of their pupils. The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion both locally and internationally and has been successful in engaging various groups in its work, for example through family learning programmes. The impact of this good work is reflected in the harmonious environment, which, as parents and carers agree, keeps their children safe. Leaders have built effectively on the school's former involvement in an improving schools programme to raise pupils' standards in literacy. Some shortfalls in monitoring, evaluation and review systems relating to the curriculum and pupils' academic performance mean that some pupils at risk of underachieving in Years 3 to 6 are not identified quickly enough. New strategies put in place in Year 5 and Year 6 to address this issue are too recent to have had a measurable impact. The governing body is satisfactory in its effectiveness and works well with senior leaders, for example in monitoring procedures for child protection, to ensure that pupils are safeguarded well. The school promotes equalities and tackles any discrimination to only a satisfactory level as its good work for supporting pupils pastorally is not yet matched in similar outcomes for pupils' achievement.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

When children start Nursery, their skills and knowledge are well below those expected for their age. A major strength of the setting is the close work with parents and carers, school staff and between the Nursery and Reception which ensures excellent transition arrangements at all points in the setting. This is enabling the new additional Nursery provision to bed in well. Good safeguarding arrangements ensure that children's welfare needs are fully met. The lunchtime club provides a useful good quality facility for working parents and carers and complies with statutory requirements. Good leadership and management across the whole Early Years Foundation Stage has ensured that children make good progress as they are provided with a well-balanced curriculum which stimulates their interests in the outside world and enables them to become active, curious learners. For example, two girls had great fun making a scarecrow out of paper, could explain the purpose of scarecrows and planned a test to make sure their scarecrow worked, as every farmer would do. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children with English as an additional language are identified early and provided with the support they need to make similarly good progress. Outcomes for children are good rather than outstanding because children's achievements in all areas of learning have yet to be systematically tracked and boys' writing skills require further development.

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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

Questionnaires were returned by almost 30 per cent of parents and carers. Responses indicate a good measure of support for the school's work. Parents and carers are almost unanimous in their view that their children enjoy school and are safe in school. Inspection evidence endorses these views. The statistical responses indicate a very small minority of concerns about the management of pupils' behaviour, but very few written comments were received on this issue. The school acknowledges that some Year 6 pupils who have just transferred to secondary education presented challenging behaviour. Inspection evidence, as described elsewhere in the report, judges behaviour to be good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Even Swindon Primary 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 118 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 420 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	56	47	58	49	3	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	61	52	54	46	3	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	38	32	63	53	10	8	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	44	37	60	51	3	3	4	3
The teaching is good at this school	42	36	65	55	4	3	3	3
The school helps me to support my child's learning	40	34	62	53	6	5	3	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	41	35	69	58	4	3	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)	35	30	58	49	7	6	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	40	34	64	54	4	3	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	34	29	54	46	16	14	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	35	30	55	47	11	9	3	3
The school is led and managed effectively	37	31	64	54	8	7	4	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	48	41	60	51	3	3	2	2

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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 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. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

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.



15 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Even Swindon Primary School, Swindon SN2 2UJ

I would like to thank you for your help when the inspection team visited your school recently. This is what we found out.

Yours is a satisfactory school but there are some good things about it. The following are particularly important:

- Children get off to a good start in Nursery and Reception.
- Pupils in the speech and language unit make good progress and the staff take good care of you so that you all get on well and new pupils settle in quickly.
- You enjoy school and develop your personal and social skills well.
- You feel safe and practise healthy lifestyles well.
- You behave well, which helps you concentrate on your learning.
- You make satisfactory progress overall and by Year 6, your standards are average.

To improve your progress, especially in mathematics, I have asked the staff to do some things.

- Teachers should make sure that they regularly challenge you in lessons, make full use of assessment, and match work closely to your needs.
- They are to share good ideas about how to make your learning better.
- The staff are to make better use of the records they keep on your progress to step in quickly to support those pupils who need extra help with their learning.
- Senior leaders are to share more widely the responsibility for checking up on your progress and concentrate on how well you are learning when they observe your lessons.

All of you can help by working hard, especially in mathematics.

Yours sincerely

Derek Aitken

Lead inspector

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