

Mary Swanwick Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112666
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	357163
Inspection dates	22–23 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Sue Hall

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	245
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sarah Kench
Headteacher	Peter Giliker
Date of previous school inspection	5 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors, who observed eight teachers and sampled 16 lessons. The headteacher joined the lead inspector for several lesson observations. Meetings were held with the school's leaders, members of the governing body and different groups of pupils. Discussions were held with a small number of parents or carers. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of policies, planning documents, records of pupils' progress, minutes of governing body meetings and data about pupils' performance. They examined documentation and arrangements associated with how the school keeps pupils safe. Inspectors scrutinised 103 completed questionnaires returned by parents and carers, 109 by pupils and 21 by staff.

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

- How well do all groups of pupils achieve, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, particularly in English?
- Does pupils' behaviour have a positive impact on learning and is attendance improving?
- How well do staff use assessment information to plan lessons in order to provide challenging activities for all groups of pupils?
- How accurate and effective are school leaders in monitoring and evaluating the quality of provision and identifying further areas for improvement?

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school in an outer area of Chesterfield. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is slightly above the national average. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below average. A very small number of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with the national average. These additional needs are mainly related to moderate learning difficulties. Provision for those attending the before- and after-school activities is not managed by the school's governing body and is reported upon separately. The school has achieved National Healthy Schools status.

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

This school provides a satisfactory quality of education and care for its pupils. Most parents and carers believe their children are well taught and helped to develop healthy lifestyles. Many pupils think staff explain things well in lessons and that they learn a lot. Behaviour is satisfactory overall. The large majority of pupils behave well in lessons and have positive attitudes to their learning. However, in discussion and in their completion of the inspection questionnaires, a number of pupils, parents and carers indicate they have concerns about behaviour. Pupils indicate they generally feel safe but there is 'name calling and hurtful words' that cause upset and which are not acted upon well enough by staff to eliminate concerns.

Children enter Year 1 with skills that are close to the expectations for their age. Most make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Current progress is often good in Key Stage 2 but there are still gaps in the knowledge and understanding of some older pupils that staff are working hard to address. Standards at the end of Year 6 are broadly average and information about younger pupils' attainment suggests they are set to rise in future years. Pupils do better in mathematics than in English. Most have a secure understanding of numbers and can solve problems with reasonable confidence. Standards in speaking and writing, though, are lower because many pupils have quite limited speaking skills and do not have a wide, descriptive and imaginative vocabulary on which to develop depth in their writing. Therefore, relatively few reach the higher levels in English.

The quality of teaching, learning and the curriculum is satisfactory overall; in several classes, especially in Key Stage 2, teaching is now good or better. All teachers have good relationships with pupils and use praise to encourage their efforts. Where teaching is outstanding, there is a real sense of enthusiasm shown by the staff and pupils alike. Where teaching is less effective, staff do not always challenge the pupils well enough to produce higher level work and the pace of activities can be quite slow. Staff often miss opportunities for pupils to discuss their ideas in order to extend their vocabulary. The school provides satisfactory care, guidance and support for its pupils.

The leadership of the school is satisfactory. The school is in a transitional phase of development and is improving following a period when standards fell. Senior staff share a clear vision for improvement and are working hard to further embed ambition. Literacy and numeracy coordinators lead by example and are making an impact in improving the expectations of pupils. However, the management and organisation of the school is not always effective. Senior staff do not check what happens well enough which leads, for example, to key policies not being reviewed regularly. School self-evaluation has been piecemeal and generous and does not provide a good steer for improvement planning.

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Nevertheless, there is an improving picture of teaching and learning and with some skilled practitioners, the school has satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the management and organisation of the school and strengthen the drive for improvement by:
 - ensuring that the monitoring of all aspects of school life is regular, rigorous and thorough
 - reviewing school policies and self-evaluation procedures to ensure information is up to date and used to inform improvement planning
 - taking notice of the concerns of pupils, parents and carers so that they feel their opinions are valued and, where appropriate, acted upon.
- Improve progress in English by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to discuss their ideas and develop a wider and more descriptive vocabulary
 - developing the necessary skills for pupils to produce more extended pieces of writing.
- Ensure that teaching and learning are consistently good, and especially in Key Stage 1, by:
 - planning activities that provide the highest appropriate level of challenge for pupils based on the prior attainment of different groups
 - improving the pace of lessons in order to interest and motivate pupils to do their best.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

In Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress and standards are broadly average. In Key Stage 2, progress is often now better than it is lower down the school. This helps pupils to develop a range of skills to equip them for their future. However, tracking information indicates that pupils have not always made consistent enough progress. The school, therefore, is placing greater focus on developing a more challenging curriculum and this is helping to raise standards by Year 6. It is starting to pay off especially in mathematics though some initiatives have not been able to address all the gaps in prior learning. A key factor limiting progress in English is that some pupils do not develop a wide and descriptive vocabulary or grammatical accuracy in their speaking and this has an adverse effect upon their writing. Nevertheless, excellent progress was seen in some English lessons, for example, when the oldest pupils watched clips of a classic film and used this to help produce their own radio scripts that were read aloud for critical discussion. There is little difference in the achievement of boys and girls, and the very small number speaking English as an additional language make similar progress to their peers. Data suggests that some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities

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have not done as well as similar groups of pupils nationally. With improved expectations of all pupils and work that is better matched to different needs, including problem solving mathematical challenges, this is not currently a concern.

Pupils understand how to keep safe and readily take on roles within the school such as 'peer buddies' to help younger pupils play together. Observations and school records show though that sometimes behaviour slips when pupils are not well supervised. The play-leader provides a good range of equipment which promotes an active lifestyle and which pupils enjoy using at lunchtime. But no equipment is available at breaktime and supervision is somewhat 'low key' which allows some pupils the opportunity to 'make mischief'. The school's large sports hall is a valuable asset in promoting physical activity but an understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle is not always reflected in packed lunch choices and the fruit snack shop is not available for pupils for large parts of the year. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory with numerous opportunities to work in pairs and small groups and a basic knowledge of a range of beliefs and other cultures.

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

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?

While the quality of teaching, learning and curriculum planning is satisfactory overall it is now consistently good or better in half of the lessons seen and pupils' work shows that this is improving. There is some teaching in Key Stage 2 that is outstanding, for instance,

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in a lesson in Year 3 where pupils' interest was engaged in imaginative ways when solving capacity problems. Here, the teacher stressed the need for accuracy in measurements and with very effective use of questions, probed what the pupils had observed and understand. The work was very well matched to the abilities of the pupils and resulted in them being keen to solve the problems set for them. However, in some lessons and especially in Key Stage 1, activities are not as demanding which leads to some pupils finishing activities quickly and becoming restless. Occasionally, staff do not demand enough of pupils in their speech or model high level and grammatically accurate communication.

The pastoral care of pupils is effective and staff know their charges well. Where additional support is required, this is often of good quality and is making a positive impact particularly in supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities because it meets their particular needs. Where such work is most effective, this is often because of the good working relationship between individual teachers and support staff in recognising and addressing specific needs. However, the special educational needs coordinator has not developed the role well in checking the progress made by these pupils and monitoring the impact of different initiatives. There is no overall strategic plan for pupils with additional needs. Transition arrangements into and from the school are satisfactory. The attendance of some pupils has improved as a result of school strategies for working with individual parents and carers and also in stressing the negative impact of holidays in term time.

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	3

How effective are leadership and management?

With enthusiastic staff in key roles, there is a growing thrust in the senior leadership team towards improvement. The deputy headteacher provides high level teaching skills and works well with other subject leaders to push developments forward. This is having most impact in Key Stage 2. However, with no Key Stage 1 leader and the ineffective development of the role of the special educational needs coordinator, whole school improvement is not yet consistent. A hindrance to improvement has been that the management and organisation of the school is not smooth and efficient. For instance, there is no plan for the review of provision including school policies in several key areas. While day-to-day practices are generally effective, the checks of policies and procedures have not ensured they are always up to date. Governance is satisfactory and members of the governing body are very supportive of the school and recognise its strengths. They are now poised to extend the programme of focused visits to enable them to develop the role of critical friend further.

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The school has satisfactory links and partnerships with parents, carers and other organisations. Where support for pupils and their families is required, the staff ensure this meets individual needs. The school promotes equality of opportunity satisfactorily and helps tackle different forms of discrimination. The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures is satisfactory. All adults who work with the pupils are vetted to ensure they are appropriate to do so and staff undergo regular child protection training. There are good examples of the work undertaken to safeguard those pupils whose circumstances make them most vulnerable. The school's promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory: it unites groups in the local community well but the development of national and global links is more limited.

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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with widely varying skills, knowledge and understanding which overall are a little below expectations for their age. This is particularly so in communication, language and literacy and in some aspects of their personal, emotional and social development. They make satisfactory progress and in some areas, such as their personal development, progress is good and they become much more confident young learners. Staff in the Nursery and the Reception class work well together and develop themes, such as 'monsters' and 'food' that link activities well together. For example, the youngest children enjoyed thinking about what they could put in a 'monster's stew' and played with a range of resources in the 'monster's cafe'. Slightly older children enjoyed learning more about numbers to 10 when wearing number tabards and identified one more than a given number.

Teaching, learning and the curriculum are satisfactory. While there is a reasonable balance of adult-led and child-chosen activities, occasionally activities that children choose for

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themselves do not have a specific focus and they simply run around outside with no clear purpose. At times, staff miss the opportunity to develop speaking and writing skills further and do not encourage children to answer questions in greater depth. Leadership and management are satisfactory but staff enthusiasm and the school's commitment to extending the outdoor facilities mean that there is clear scope for further improvement.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

An above average number of parents and carers responded to the inspection questionnaire. Of those parents and carers who returned the inspection questionnaire, most say that their children enjoy school. They also believe that teaching and learning are good and that the school helps their children to develop healthy lifestyles. Several echo the thoughts of one that 'teachers and all assistants seem to know all children personally'. However, there are quite mixed views in some areas, especially about behaviour, whether the school takes account of their concerns and about how well it is led and managed. Inspectors found that teaching is satisfactory but an increasing amount is good, especially at Key Stage 2. They explored points raised by parents and carers and found that pupils' behaviour supports their learning satisfactorily although it is a little thoughtless and uncaring of others at times. Inspection findings show that leadership and management are satisfactory. A very few parents and carers expressed concerns about routes of access into and out of the school. The inspection found that regular checks of the school site are made and that the school has broadly satisfactory procedures to ensure pupils are kept safe.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Mary Swanwick Community 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 103 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 245 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	63	62	33	32	5	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	51	50	47	46	4	4	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	42	41	55	54	4	4	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	42	41	55	54	3	3	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	45	44	56	55	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	34	33	58	57	7	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	34	33	67	66	1	1	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)	24	24	64	63	6	6	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	41	40	58	57	2	2	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	23	60	59	11	11	4	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	23	64	63	7	7	4	4
The school is led and managed effectively	29	28	62	61	8	8	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	42	41	54	53	4	4	1	1

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.



24 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Mary Swanwick Community Primary School, Chesterfield, S41 9QW

Thank you very much for making the inspectors welcome when we visited your school recently. My colleagues and I enjoyed meeting you, especially the groups we talked to who told us about the things you all do. We also liked meeting you in lessons and at break times and I enjoyed chatting to some of you over lunch. I found it was very useful to talk to a group of Year 6 pupils and I really enjoyed seeing the outstanding progress the oldest ones of you made in using a film extract as a source for producing radio scripts. Thank you also for the questionnaires that many of you filled in for the inspection.

We found that your school provides you with a satisfactory education. Most of you make satisfactory progress and you often do well in mathematics. We were pleased to see that where the teachers plan exciting activities that capture your interest and challenge you, that many of you make even better progress.

The headteacher, governing body (who are the people who help to run the school) and staff have agreed to work on some main areas to improve the school. We have asked them to:

- improve the way some things are organised and to make sure there are more careful checks of everything that happens
- improve the progress you make in English by enabling you to discuss your ideas more in order to make your writing even better
- make sure that work is a little bit harder for some of you and that teachers move onto the main activities quickly.

You could also all help by thinking even more about what you say to others so that they are not upset, and by talking to your families to help make sure you eat healthy packed lunches.

Yours sincerely

Sue Hall

Lead inspector

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