

# Southwick Community Primary School

Shakespeare Street, Southwick, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear, SR5 2JX

## Inspection dates

3–4 October 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Determined leadership, including from the governing body and an energised staff team are tackling past weaknesses successfully.
- The proportion of pupils gaining expected levels in English and mathematics is improving rapidly.
- Pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning contribute strongly to the generally good and sometimes outstanding progress they are now making from often very low starting points on entry into school.
- Good use of the pupil premium funding has made sure that pupils entitled to free school meals and those in the care of the local authority attend regularly and make similarly good progress.
- Leaders' dogged focus on improving the quality of teaching has paid dividends. Most is good and some is outstanding. Improvements to the teaching of reading have made an impressive difference to pupils' skills and fluency.
- The outstanding Early Years Foundation Stage makes certain children settle in quickly, enjoy their time, and make good gains in their learning and development.
- A caring and nurturing atmosphere surrounds the school and contributes well to pupils' safety, their positive relationships with one another and their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Partnerships with parents are strong. They, their children and staff speak very positively about the difference leaders' actions have made to pupils' attendance, enjoyment and achievements.
- Pupils' progress is accelerating rapidly because of leaders' relentless and successful focus on raising standards and aspirations, eradicating previous underachievement and improving all aspects of the school's work.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In a few lessons, teachers spend too long talking and plan activities that do not always match pupils' different abilities. This slows the rate of progress for some lower ability pupils, particularly in mathematics.
- Occasionally, lower ability pupils in Year 1 are given work that they are not ready for.
- Although all teachers use the school's marking policy, the quality and usefulness of written feedback varies.

# Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning and teaching in twenty part-lessons, of which four were joint observations with senior leaders.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils informally in lessons and around the school at break times. They also spoke to groups of pupils at break time on day two.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, staff, four representatives of the governing body and a representative from Sunderland local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a number of documents, including the school's records on the quality of teaching and evaluation of its own work, 2012 provisional end of key stage assessments and test results and information about pupils' current progress across the school.
- The inspectors took account of the school's very recent parent and carer survey and ten parent and carers responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View).
- A number of parents reported technical difficulties in accessing the online survey which is reflected in the low number of responses.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the school gates at the start of day one and met with a large group at the start of day two.

# Inspection team

Margaret Farrow, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Philip Scott	Additional Inspector
Mark Randall	Additional Inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005 (as amended), Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.*

### Information about this school

- Southwick is a larger than average sized primary school.
- Over two-thirds of the pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is significantly above that found nationally.
- A much lower than average proportion of pupils is from minority ethnic communities.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action and the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- New Beginnings Neighbourhood Nursery adjoins the school and is based in Austin House Children's Centre. This provision was not part of the inspection.
- The school has achieved a number of nationally recognised awards, including the International Schools Award and Healthy School Gold status.
- When the school was last inspected in July 2011 it was given a notice to improve. Significant improvement was required in relation to pupils' attainment and attendance.
- An Ofsted monitoring inspection in March 2012 judged the school to be making satisfactory progress in tackling the issues identified as in need of improvement.
- Since the last inspection, a new leadership structure has been put in place. It includes two assistant headteachers and a group of middle managers called phase leaders. A new Chair of the Governing Body was appointed in spring 2012.
- Provisional 2012 Key Stage 2 school performance information indicates the school has met the government's current floor standards, which sets the minimum expected for pupils' attainment and progress. This was not the case at the time of the last inspection.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of good and better teaching by making sure teachers always:
  - provide time for pupils to take an active part in lessons, to develop their independent learning skills and have time to complete work set
  - use the information they have about pupils' current abilities to pitch work that helps them move on from their different starting points, particularly in mathematics
  - provide written feedback in pupils' books that always helps them to understand what they need to do to improve their work and how to achieve their next steps.
- Embed the emerging good transition arrangements from the Reception class into Year 1 so that pupils access work that they are ready for, in a way that builds on their previous experiences.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

**is good**

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with well below average skills and abilities. High quality teaching and an array of exciting and constantly improving opportunities help them to thrive, enjoy their time and make good progress.
- Pupils' attainment has accelerated quickly over the past year and they are making generally good progress in their lessons. Some make outstanding progress.
- Careful assessment of pupils' work and well-planned interventions by teachers make sure that those at risk of falling behind are well supported to catch-up. Consequently, pupils previously identified as underachieving are making similar progress to their peers.
- There is little difference between the progress of pupils who are entitled to the pupil premium, or those who require additional school support because of their special educational needs and other pupils. This was not the case at the time of the last inspection.
- Provisional 2012 Key Stage 2 test results show an average proportion of pupils' attained expected levels in English; virtually all achieved the expected level in reading. This represents significant improvement from 2011. Although still below average, mathematics results improved by over seventeen percentage points.
- Most pupils are developing their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding well. They are able to describe different strategies for working out calculations and talk confidently about their targets and what they are learning. Occasionally, when activities are not accurately matched to their current levels of understanding, progress of lower ability pupils' slows.
- An improved focus on writing, including smaller teaching groups for pupils of similar ability and strategies, such as the 'big write' is ensuring most pupils currently in school are making good and sometimes outstanding progress.
- However, strategies did not have time to impact fully on Year 6 pupils' attainment in summer 2012. Nevertheless, the proportion making expected or more than expected progress compares favourably to that found nationally.
- Teachers' good, systematic approach to teaching reading has made an impressive difference to pupils' confidence, competence and fluency. Pupils thoroughly enjoy reading from a wide range of resources that captivate the interest of boys and girls alike. They tackle unfamiliar words with gusto, using the strategies they have learned successfully.
- Pupils aged six achieved the national average in their phonics test (a test on their knowledge of the sounds that letters make). This is particularly good given their much lower than average literacy skills on entry into the Early Years Foundation Stage.

### The quality of teaching

**is good**

- Lesson observations, discussions with pupils and leaders' records on the quality of teaching show it has improved quickly and is good over time. The proportion of teaching that is not good is low and an increasing proportion is outstanding.
- Typical of all lessons observed are the high quality relationships between adults and pupils and pupils' very positive attitudes. Pupils are keen to get on with their work and behave well.
- Good and outstanding teaching is well-planned, invariably exciting, challenging and captivating. Teachers' high expectations of what all pupils can achieve and accurate understanding of their current abilities are well-used to set varied tasks that move pupils on quickly.
- Perceptive questioning helps to tease out pupils' understanding, identifies any misconceptions so they can be put right, and challenges them further. Opportunities for pupils to talk and discuss their work are frequent and help them to share ideas or work things out for themselves.
- In such lessons, teachers' constantly scan the room, even when working with a group, to make

sure no one is wasting time or to identify those who may need additional support or advice either from themselves or well-deployed teaching assistants.

- Pupils report enthusiastically about how useful their targets are in helping them to strive for the next level and how they value teachers' usually informative marking that identifies what they are doing well and what they need to learn next.
- Such qualities are not fully embedded in all teaching. Occasionally, teachers' spend too much of the lesson talking, planning does not build on pupils' prior understanding precisely enough and written comments do not always identify clearly what pupils need to do next. On such occasions, pupils' progress slows, especially in mathematics for lower ability pupils.
- Sometimes less-able pupils in Year 1 are given formal work that does not build well on the practical ways they learned in reception. Leaders know, and are taking action to tackle this.
- The regular use of homework and homework clubs has supported pupils' hastening progress, raised parents' expectations of what their children can do and helped them to support their children's learning successfully.
- Teachers' half-termly progress meetings with parents ensure they are clear about how well their children are doing and what they need to do next. One parent summed up the views of many when she said, 'this school is a great school, it not only cares for our children but makes sure now that they are doing well'.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils**

**are good**

- Pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes are notable strengths. Pupils are polite, friendly and are respectful of adults in school and of each other. These qualities are as a result of high expectations of conduct and behaviour, consistent application of the behaviour management policy and the caring and supportive atmosphere that surrounds the school.
- Parents and staff all report that pupils are safe, behaviour is usually good and any issues are tackled well. Pupils who spoke to inspectors confirm this and value the positive behaviour strategies that include praise, rewards and sanctions. They consider the sanctions to be fair because this 'helps the school to be a happy place'.
- Pupils report confidently about how safe they feel; physically because of the tight security systems in place and emotionally because of the care and support from adults and their friends.
- Pupils express a good grasp between falling out and bullying. They say they are well-informed about issues like cyber-bullying and prejudiced-based bullying including name calling, and these things are virtually unheard of. They are adamant that adults deal with any rare issues robustly.
- The good approach to managing behaviour can be seen in the very low numbers of pupils temporarily excluded. The pastoral system in school and headteacher's high profile within the community make sure that pupils and parents are supported quickly when behaviour concerns arise, or in any times of need.
- Parents report the headteacher is always prepared to confront difficulties head-on. They describe the actions taken to improve attendance and how they are rigorously held to account for making sure their children attend. They evidence this by their good knowledge of current attendance rates, accurately reporting they have risen from below to above average.

### **The leadership and management**

**are good**

- Leadership and management have been revitalised by the development of the roles of the assistant headteachers and phase leaders. Together with the headteacher and governing body, they have become a united team with a very secure and sharp focus on monitoring and evaluating the actions they have put in place to improve the school.

- Phase leaders say they relish their increased accountability and involvement and they have made a strong contribution to its recent successes. The collective efforts of all can be seen in improvements in the quality of teaching and in pupils' progress and achievements.
  - Regular assessments of pupils' work and achievements inform half-termly pupil progress meetings between staff and leaders. Phase leaders speak with conviction about the difference pupil progress meetings are making in holding them to account for their pupils' achievements. Information is discussed and is used to inform teachers' planning and any additional actions they need to take to help those who are underachieving in any way.
  - Focused professional development opportunities have supported improvements in the quality of teaching. Actions include whole school training sessions, good support from experts in the local authority and observation of good practice within school and further afield.
  - Performance management arrangements for teachers were rightly focused on the key issues identified at the time of the last inspection. As the school has successfully tackled these, new arrangements are being embedded that are more precisely linked to the national teachers' standards and pupils' performance.
  - The inclusion of all pupils lies at the heart of the pastoral system and concerns of any kind are quickly tackled to ensure all pupils are fully included into the life of the school.
  - Pupils' progress information is interrogated to see if any groups are underachieving and action taken to improve matters. For example, in order to tackle the issue of boys' reading, new resources were secured and teaching strategies changed to interest them in books. This has made a positive difference to their skills and in, and enjoyment of reading.
  - Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and prioritised successfully through the good curriculum, good development of relationships and interesting assemblies that help pupils reflect on right and wrong and the spiritual dimensions of faiths across the world.
  - The international schools work has extended pupils knowledge, understanding of the diversity of cultures across the world and has been particularly poignant in their understanding of war and conflict through the relationships they were developing with young people in Syria.
  - The curriculum has been correctly adapted to focus on raising pupils' achievements in literacy and numeracy, including incorporating these elements into other subjects. It is enriched well by after-school clubs, a range of visitors into school and visits out of school. These are aimed to inspire and challenge pupils' thinking and add to their enjoyment of school.
  - Pupils talked enthusiastically about their memorable extra-curricular experiences. They spoke authoritatively about their increasing use of information and communication technology and how much they enjoy activities such as the problem solving club that extends their mathematical knowledge in a fun way.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - the governing body has worked closely with the senior team and local authority to increase its effectiveness and to good effect. Representatives constantly seek ways to improve and partake in regular training sessions; including fortnightly training sessions in school
    - the governing body regularly uses a range of information to question the impact of actions. Information is clear and includes regular reports about the progress of all pupils across the school, groups of pupils identified at risk of under achieving and those in receipt of the pupil premium
    - the governing body regularly reviews the school's improvement plans and leads half termly challenge meetings with the senior team. Consequently, governors, along with staff have a very clear idea about the strengths and weaknesses of the school and the impact of the actions they have collectively taken to improve achievement and attendance
    - the governing body has ensured that safeguarding arrangements are secure and meet statutory requirements and has robust financial management arrangements in place.
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## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	108769
<b>Local authority</b>	Sunderland
<b>Inspection number</b>	386129

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	318
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Michael Wilson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Patricia Stoker
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5-6 July 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 553 5500
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