

Swinton Queen Primary School

Queen Street, Swinton, Mexborough, S64 8NE

Inspection dates 17–18 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils reach broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. The progress pupils make is adequate rather than good.
- In writing, standards are lower than they should be and too many pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Lesson planning does not focus enough on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills as a firm foundation for writing.
- There are inconsistencies in teaching and too much that is adequate rather than good.
- Pupils do not make the best possible progress in some lessons because work does not challenge pupils of all ability levels and activities are not always interesting enough to engage them fully.
- The school leaders, including governors, are not precise enough in their planning, and targets for pupils' achievement are set too low.
- Leaders are too generous when making judgements about the performance of the school because they do not have an accurate picture of the overall progress pupils make.

The school has the following strengths

- The senior team is successful in maintaining high morale among staff during a period of change and has ensured that this is an improving school. Staff show determination to succeed and make this a successful school.
- The school is identifying and tackling weakness well; for example, teaching in mathematics has been improved. Subject leaders are making a positive contribution to the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects.
- Pupils' behaviour is good because of teachers' high expectations. Consequently, classrooms are happy and orderly and pupils take a pride in their work and their school.
- Parents are supportive and appreciate the range of additional activities offered to pupils such as clubs and educational visits.
- Standards are rising, as shown in the increasing proportion of pupils now reaching and exceeding expectations in reading and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector held meetings with a group of parents, staff, groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative from the local authority.
- The team inspected a range of evidence including: the school’s improvement plan and its self-evaluation document; the school’s data for tracking pupils’ progress; the report of the previous inspection; the work pupils were doing in their books; and the school’s documentation relating to planning and to safeguarding.
- The inspector observed teaching and learning in 21 lessons and listened to a group of pupils read.
- The inspector met some parents informally at the start of the school day. There were 17 responses from parents to the online questionnaire (Parent View).

Inspection team

Bernard Jones, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Steve Rigby

Additional Inspector

Rajinder Harrison

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average primary school.
- A smaller than average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs through school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The large majority of pupils are White British.
- In 2012 the school exceeded the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school has recently experienced disruption as the site was developed and a new building was constructed. At the same time there was a larger than average number of changes to the teaching staff.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the progress pupils make in English and mathematics in general, and in writing in particular, by:
 - setting higher targets for pupils in order to raise standards in English and mathematics and ensure that the number who meet and exceed national expectations increases
 - improving pupils' speaking and listening skills so they can be used as a foundation for extending their writing skills
 - using a wider range of approaches to engage pupils and promote their interest in writing
 - capitalising on good relationships with parents to engage them more fully in order to encourage pupils to write at home.
- Ensure a larger proportion of good and better teaching by:
 - ensuring that all teachers use the information they have about attainment and progress to match lesson demands to pupils' abilities with greater precision so that all achieve the best they can
 - striking a better balance between teachers talking while pupils sit and listen and more independent work so that pupils maintain their concentration and enjoy their learning.
- Improve leadership and management, including governance, by:
 - taking a more rigorous approach when evaluating the school's performance, using the achievement of pupils as a major consideration
 - planning the school's priorities and targets more precisely and raising expectations of pupils' achievement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- On entry to Nursery, children's skills vary year on year but are generally lower than those typically seen for their age.
- Good liaison between home and school ensures children settle in quickly and enjoy coming to school. They learn how to work and play together happily. Children grow in confidence and are willing to make choices for themselves. They make good progress and pupils join Year 1 with broadly average ability.
- Standards in mathematics are broadly average. There has been a marked improvement in pupils' achievement over the past year, and more pupils currently in Key Stages 1 and 2 make expected progress in mathematics. The proportion making expected and better than expected progress is in line with national expectations.
- Pupils have secure mathematical calculation skills including quick mental recall. They are proficient in applying these skills to solve practical problems in a variety of real-life situations, for example when Year 4 pupils used coins to explore different strategies for adding totals in rows and columns on a grid.
- Reading levels are broadly average throughout the school, and consistently so. Pupils say they read often, at school and at home, and they talk with interest about a wide range of books and authors.
- Achievement in writing is too low. Throughout Years 1 to 6 too few pupils meet or exceed the expected rate of progress.
- There is no significant difference between the achievement and learning of different groups. Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium benefit from funding that is targeted effectively on raising their achievement. They make the same level of progress as other pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make expected progress in common with their peers. Their individual needs are identified early and a variety of intervention programmes are put into place to ensure these needs are met.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- There are still too many inconsistencies in the quality of teaching across the school and too much that is adequate rather than good. This is the main reason for the lack of good progress overall.
- Staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage work effectively as a team to ensure they meet the individual needs of the children. There is a good balance between adult-led tasks and activities chosen by children so that they quickly become independent and successful learners.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and explain ideas clearly and confidently. They use question and answer effectively to check pupils' understanding and tackle any misunderstandings. However, opportunities are often missed to improve pupils' speaking and listening skills in these sessions.
- Teachers throughout the school usually prepare effectively to provide activities that are interesting and which fully engage pupils so that they mainly enjoy their lessons. However, pupils sometimes spend too much time sitting and listening, with a resultant loss of concentration. Where teaching is less successful, pupils are not given enough opportunities to learn for themselves.
- In the best lessons teachers use the information they have about pupils' attainment and progress to plan precisely to ensure that pupils make the best progress of which they are capable. This is not consistently the case.
- Teaching assistants provide good support and challenge to those pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium and those who are disabled or have special educational needs.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are courteous, polite, open and welcoming to visitors. They behave well in classrooms and around the school. They show positive attitudes in lessons, cooperate well when sharing learning and can be trusted to work effectively when left to their own devices. This makes a strong contribution to the friendly atmosphere and harmonious relationships that characterise the school.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are consistently punctual and their attendance is broadly average. They respond positively to the school's consistently applied behaviour management strategies.
- Pupils understand and are sensitive to bullying. They are aware of the different kinds of bullying such as teasing and name-calling as well as physical abuse. They say that such instances are rare and are confident that any issues they raise will be dealt with promptly and effectively by their teachers.
- Pupils are fully knowledgeable about how to keep themselves and others safe. This is taught effectively so that they learn about the risks of inappropriate use of computers and the dangers associated with roads, railways and water. They know how to react if approached by a stranger.
- Pupils are very willing to take on responsibility, for example in helping out in classroom organisation or, more formally, in taking part on the school council.
- The reason why pupils' behaviour and safety are not yet outstanding is rooted in the lack of opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning, particularly in classrooms where teaching is not good.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The school is now enjoying a period of stability after experiencing some significant staffing changes and an extended new-build programme. Senior managers have capitalised on this and are now leading an improving school. They and leaders at all levels show a determination to improve further and have put in place good systems and strategies to guide future development.
- However, there are still some weaknesses that mean that leadership and management are not yet good. The wealth of data about pupils' performance is used effectively to help individual pupils but is not used well to judge the school's performance as a whole. As a result, self-evaluation is too generous. Not enough emphasis is placed on how well pupils are achieving when coming to judgements about the effectiveness of teaching and the leadership and management of the school.
- Whole-school targets are set too low because they are not sufficiently informed by the data the school possesses about national expectations and how the school's performance compares to other schools.
- School leaders have ensured that morale is high and there is a shared determination throughout the school to improve. Subject leaders have received good-quality training and are increasingly playing an effective part in raising the quality of education and the standards attained.
- The leadership of teaching, including professional development and performance management, has successfully improved the quality of teaching and raised pupils' achievement, particularly in mathematics and reading. Staff reflect professional standards in all of their work.
- Teachers are accountable for the progress that pupils make and regular meetings are held to check that pupils are on track to meet the challenges set for them. However, some of these challenges are set too low and have led to adequate rather than good achievement. Carefully targeted interventions ensure that any pupils identified as underachieving are quickly given extra support to boost their performance.
- Despite money from the pupil premium being a relatively modest amount, the school makes sure

that it benefits targeted pupils. The impact is seen as the gap in their attainment and progress has narrowed in comparison to their peers and compared to national expectations.

- The curriculum is not planned well enough to promote good progress for pupils in speaking, listening and writing, and in consequence their attainment in writing is lower. However, the extra-curricular provision is strong and enhances and extends pupils' experiences.
- Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is fostered well through experiences that expand their understanding of the beliefs and lives of others. They have good opportunities to learn about cultures different from their own. Teachers promote moral and social development by high expectations of behaviour and encouragement of pupils to work collaboratively.
- The local authority has been effective in the setting up of a community of local schools that offer mutual support. The school benefits from external expertise as well as providing help to its partnership of local schools.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are fully involved in evaluating the school's performance and helping to set its strategic direction. As well as supporting the school they challenge senior leaders where appropriate. Their relationships with staff, parents and pupils are constructive.
 - The governors ensure that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities in respect of safeguarding pupils. Thus all staff have been vetted and have received appropriate training to keep pupils safe and free from harm.

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

Unique reference number	106879
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	405063

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	339
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Richard Myerscough
Headteacher	Mrs Sharon Joyce
Date of previous school inspection	22 September 2010
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