

# Southwold Primary School and Early Years' Centre

Kennington Road, Radford, Nottingham, NG8 1QD

## Inspection dates

5–6 March 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
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

- Teaching has not been consistently strong enough to ensure pupils make good progress throughout Years 1 to 6.
- Achievement is good in the Nursery and Reception classes but not good enough in the main school.
- Recent improvements to teaching do not always ensure that pupils' progress over time is rapid enough.
- Teachers do not consistently use the information about pupils' progress and attainment to plan work at the right level of difficulty for all groups of pupils.
- When working with the whole class some teachers are not asking questions of pupils which challenge their thinking.
- The school collects a range of data but does not make good use of it to promote faster progress for pupils.
- Leaders monitor teaching regularly, and this has helped improve its quality. However, there has been insufficient focus on how teaching affects pupils' learning and progress.
- The school works hard to involve families in supporting their children's learning at home in order to accelerate progress, but with mixed success.
- Although behaviour and safety are good attendance is below average because families continue to take holidays during school time.

### The school has the following strengths

- It is a harmonious school community which ensures that pupils feel valued and safe.
- Pupils enjoy school and their attitudes to learning are good.
- Good work with pupils at the early stages of speaking English enables them to become familiar quickly with the language.
- Leaders and managers work together effectively and have the drive to bring about improvement.
- There is good teamwork amongst staff and a strong determination to do what is necessary to improve pupils' achievement.
- Good links between the school and the partner children's centre benefit local families well.

## Information about this inspection

- At the time of the inspection the headteacher was on maternity leave and the deputy was acting as headteacher. The headteacher was present voluntarily at the school throughout the inspection to support the staff and help the inspection team in their work.
- The inspectors observed 18 lessons, including six which were observed jointly with either the acting headteacher or the headteacher. All teachers including part-time teachers and their teaching assistants were seen working with pupils.
- In addition, inspectors heard a sample of pupils from Years 2 and 6 read, attended assemblies and scrutinised pupils' work.
- Three meetings were held with randomly selected groups of pupils. In addition, many informal opportunities were taken to talk with pupils.
- The inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents including: development plans, policies, self-evaluation reports, various monitoring files, safeguarding and curriculum materials and information for families.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher and acting headteacher, the office manager, class teachers, support assistants, members of the governing body, the key staff from the partner children's centre and a representative from the local authority.
- There were no responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) but inspectors spoke individually with several parents and carers. The 18 responses to the questionnaire for school staff were also taken into account.

## Inspection team

Sue Rath, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Michael Miller

Additional Inspector

# Full report

## Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school, mainly serving families from its local area and surrounding communities.
- There are currently seven classes, two in the Early Years Foundation Stage, one in each of Years 1 to 3 and two mixed-age classes, one for Year 4 and 5 pupils, and one for Year 5 and 6.
- Two-thirds of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups and almost two-fifths speak English as an additional language. These pupils are from many cultural backgrounds with the majority being of Asian heritage. Twenty-two different languages are spoken by pupils at the school.
- About a quarter of the pupils join or leave the school other than at the start of the school year. This is a much higher proportion than in most schools.
- The percentage of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional government funding for particular groups, including those known to be eligible for free school meals) is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is average. The percentage who are supported at school action plus is below average. No pupils have a statement of special educational needs.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for the attainment and progress of pupils by the end of Year 6.

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

- Increase the proportion of good or better teaching and improve the quality of pupils' learning and progress by:
  - ensuring that teachers use assessment information to plan lessons at the right level of difficulty for all groups of pupils and individuals
  - using questioning during whole class sessions which makes appropriate demands of all pupils.
- Improve the leadership and management of the school by:
  - sharpening the ways that leaders at all levels analyse, evaluate and use the data they collect in order to accelerate pupils' progress
  - rigorously monitoring the impact of the quality of teaching on pupils' learning so that leaders can help teachers to be more effective and hold them to account for the progress that pupils' make.
- Extending the school's partnership with parents and carers by:
  - providing additional information and guidance to support and help them to supplement their children's work, particularly with reading and letters and sounds
  - improving pupils' attendance and the continuity of their education by encouraging families not to take holidays during term time.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Pupils' progress, including that of those from a range of backgrounds and those who have joined the school at different points in the year, is too variable. Not enough pupils make progress which is better than that expected nationally.
- Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with levels of skills below those expected for their age. Their communication skills and their language development are often particularly low. Progress is good because the careful assessment of children's skills on a daily basis ensures that their individual needs are planned for well. The close links between the school and its neighbouring children's centre mean that the children of families who have benefitted from the centre's services make better progress than other children starting in the Nursery year.
- The good progress most children make in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not built upon well enough when pupils move into Years 1 to 6, and their rate of progress slows. Pupils' attainment at the end of both Years 2 and 6 remains broadly average. Boys and girls make expected progress overall.
- Good progress was seen in a Year 6 mathematics lesson. Here, pupils' understanding of how to solve 'two step' problems, was developed through good support and questioning from the teacher and teaching assistant. Pupils knew exactly what they were expected to learn and how they could improve. At the end of the lesson they were able to assess effectively the quality of their work. The teacher's good questioning during the lesson identified pupils who needed additional support, and this was provided by a teaching assistant later the same day.
- Pupils who speak little or no English are given good individual support to help to develop the communication skills necessary for them to understand their work. Specialist support, and that of their friends, means that they settle quickly and often make good progress particularly in mathematics.
- The tracking and setting of targets for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs has not proved sufficiently rigorous in the past and this has meant that a few pupils have not made as much progress as expected. However, well targeted support for these pupils has now been put in place but the impact of this has not yet been sufficiently evaluated.
- Last year, those pupils who were eligible for the pupil premium funding slipped a little further behind their classmates in English, than in 2011. They left Year 6 about two terms behind them. However, in mathematics their attainment was very similar to other pupils. This was a marked improvement on the position in 2011. This year the school is using the funds well to provide additional resources and small group teaching for these pupils.
- The attainment in reading of the current Year 6 pupils is below average overall, but school data show pupils have made expected progress. Recent staff training to improve the teaching of reading has now begun to accelerate the progress pupils are making.
- Younger pupils are taught about the sounds that letters make (phonics) and use this knowledge to help them in their reading. They regularly take books home to read, but these are usually part of the school's reading scheme so pupils do not have the opportunity to share other books with their families. Pupils enjoy reading and happily share books with each other. However, discussions with pupils, and scrutiny of their reading records, show limited evidence of reading

at home with parents and carers; this often limits the progress they can make at school. In the recent phonics checks that test pupils' understanding of the sounds that letters represent, at the end of Year 1, the percentage attaining expected levels was lower than in most schools.

### **The quality of teaching**

### **requires improvement**

- Teachers have been involved in a range of training to develop their skills. This focus on developing teaching since the last inspection has meant that it has improved, but is not yet consistently good across the school. Good and outstanding teaching was seen, but a small minority of weaker teaching is slowing the pace of progress in some lessons across Years 1 to 6.
- Sometimes planning for groups is too general. Teachers are not always clear enough about how pupils of different abilities will be given suitably demanding work. They are not using the data collected by the school about individual pupils' achievements regularly enough.
- Discussions with all members of the teaching team show a determination to build on the school's progress since the last inspection and to ensure pupils' achievement improves. The school is poised well for further improvement. Teachers and their assistants work effectively together to plan, assess and support pupils. They willingly share the joint responsibility for promoting learning.
- Pupils say that their learning is fun and they show positive attitudes in lessons because they appreciate what their teachers have to offer them. They concentrate well, work hard and can talk about what they are learning and how to improve their work.
- Teachers regularly give pupils written feedback in their books highlighting what they have done well and areas for improvement. Pupils say that this helps them to improve their work. They value the opportunity they are given to respond to marking and say this is making a positive contribution to their learning. In some classes, pupils use their 'steps to success' to reflect on how good their work has been and where they can improve. This helps them to be clear about what they need to learn next.
- However, teachers do not always use questioning well enough when working with the class as a whole. When this happens opportunities to deepen pupils' thinking, and extend their understanding, are missed. It is not that the teachers do not have these skills, it is that they use questioning more effectively with small groups or individuals rather than whole classes.
- Since the last inspection, the school has developed a range of additional activities specifically for higher attaining pupils. During the inspection a group of Year 6 pupils visited their new secondary school to play 'ping pong punctuation' with a student from the school. In playing this, they were challenged to compose a piece of writing using all the punctuation marks on the ping pong balls they had collected.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is consistently good or better. Teachers and their assistants use insightful evaluations of the children to plan stimulating experiences for them. These engage children in enjoyable learning. During each session, teachers use questions effectively to develop children's thinking and extend their understanding. There is a constant focus on developing children's speaking and listening skills.

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

### **are good**

- Pupils' behaviour in and around the school is good. The school is a harmonious community

within which pupils can work and play. If pupils have a problem they know who to go to. They say they feel safe and well cared for and if there is ever any bullying it is dealt with quickly and fairly. The school's records support this view.

- Expectations of behaviour are high and this is clearly understood by pupils. They respond to the reward system and the positive praise which builds their self-esteem. This ensures that pupils respect each other, are polite, socialise well and are self-confident.
- All pupils feel that, whatever their background, they are treated fairly and no one is made to feel different. One pupil said, 'We are just one big happy family where everyone looks out for each other.' This goes a long way to explain why pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- Pupils who sometimes find school difficult are well supported by the learning mentor who helps them to understand how to manage their behaviour. The impact of this support is evident when observing pupils in lessons and around the school.
- Pupils respond positively to opportunities to take responsibility. The 'innovation team', comprises of the school parliament, green team and community rangers, which develops projects that will support the school and its wider community.
- The school has worked hard to encourage pupils to attend regularly and implements a rigorous attendance policy. All their efforts have not, as yet, been entirely successful in discouraging some families from taking holidays during term time. As a result pupils' attendance is below average overall.

### **The leadership and management**

### **requires improvement**

- The acting headteacher is providing good leadership and direction for the school in the headteacher's absence. He has maintained the drive to bring about improvements in teaching, but this has slowed with the reduced leadership team. Regular monitoring of lessons and pupils' work is helping teachers to develop their teaching skills, but this has not been focused sufficiently on the progress all groups of pupils make in lessons.
- School self-evaluation is accurate and the inspection judgements reflect the school's own view of its current position. Joint observations and discussions with the acting headteacher and the headteacher confirm the accuracy of their judgements.
- Since the previous inspection leaders and managers, including governors, have developed a more sharply focused school improvement plan that identifies the key priorities for improvement. Success criteria enable the school to judge the effectiveness of their plan but there is insufficient information about who will monitor the plan and when this will be done.
- The school regularly collects data on pupils' attainment and progress. Leaders at all levels use this to identify underperforming pupils and target interventions. This information is not always used effectively enough to support the school in measuring the effectiveness of their work.
- Leaders of the two key stages have been trained to fulfil their role and take an active part in the leadership and management of the school. They describe themselves as the 'engine of the school' making sure that the staff they lead are delivering what is expected of them. Along with senior leaders they form a strong team that is capable of improving outcomes for pupils at the school.

- Pupils are taught a broad range of subjects which engage them in their learning. A wealth of extra-curricular activities enriches pupils' experiences. For example, the additional drum and flute lessons enable all Year 4 pupils to play instruments as well as learning about notes and rhythm.
- The school shows a strong commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity for its pupils. This is reflected in their policies and also in the way that staff ensure that all pupils benefit from lessons particularly those who are new to speaking English.
- The local authority has provided a good range of support which has been purchased by the school. Regular monitoring by the local authority has enhanced the school's self-evaluation and staff training sessions have helped to improve the quality of teaching.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body carries out its statutory duties with care. A core of long-standing governors has a very clear picture of the quality of education in the school. They examine data in order to keep a close eye on the progress that the school is making. Focused monitoring weeks enable all governors to gain an understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Training ensures that governors keep up to date, and that newly appointed governors are supported as they grow into their role. Recent training has enabled governors to reflect on their present structure and consider an alternative model linking more closely to the school's priorities for improvement. Along with the headteacher, they play a full role in the performance management of staff ensuring that targets are set to reflect the school's priorities for development. The relevant committee keeps a close check on the school's financial position and monitor whether staff salaries reflect performance. The governing body takes the safeguarding of pupils very seriously. Governors have ensured that the school uses the additional funding it receives from the government for particular groups, including those known to be eligible for free school meals wisely.

## 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>	122465
<b>Local authority</b>	Nottingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	406093

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>	208
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Alan Clark
<b>Headteacher</b>	Patrick Betts (Acting Headteacher)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 October 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	0115 9155756
<b>Fax number</b>	0115 9155757
<b>Email address</b>	admin@southwold.nottingham.sch.uk

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