

Swaythling Primary School

Mayfield Road, Southampton, SO17 3SZ

Inspection dates 19–20 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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 do not consistently make good progress. As a result, they do not always reach the levels of attainment of which they are capable by the end of Year 6.
- Not all teaching is of high enough quality to secure good progress by pupils.
- Tasks set are not always hard enough for all groups of pupils, including the most able, to enable them to make good progress.
- Pupils do not always achieve as well as they could when teaching does not sustain their interest.
- Teachers do not always help pupils to be as productive as possible by making sure that they understand how much time is available to complete set tasks, and how much they are expected to achieve.
- Expectations for neat presentation and correct letter formation are not always high enough.
- The targets set for pupils do not help them sufficiently to improve. Pupils do not develop a clear understanding of what more they need to do to reach higher levels of attainment.
- Feedback to pupils from marking does not consistently indicate the next steps in their learning.
- Pupils do not have consistently good opportunities to act on teachers' advice.
- In their efforts to improve the school, senior leaders do not make the best use of arrangements to set targets for teachers to improve the impact of their teaching and to enhance their pupils' achievement.
- Governors are not well enough informed about the appraisal of staff, the impact of teaching, or the implications of national information about the school's performance.

The school has the following strengths

- The school has a warm ethos, and a strong and successful focus on pupils' pastoral care.
- The headteacher has an ambitious vision for the school. He provides principled and caring leadership.
- In the Reception Year, children make good progress to reach levels of attainment that are above average.
- The pupil premium funding is spent well. As a result, eligible pupils' achievement has improved.
- Pupils display positive attitudes to learning. Their behaviour is good and they feel safe.
- Governors are very supportive of the school. They understand its context and are proud of its positive ethos.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 11 lessons, of which one was a joint observation with the headteacher. Inspectors also scrutinised examples of pupils' work in English and mathematics, and heard a sample of pupils in Years 1 and 2 read.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the school's staff, the chair and two other members of the governing body, and a telephone discussion took place with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors analysed the 18 responses that were recorded on the online survey (Parent View) by the end of the inspection, and spoke with small numbers of parents accompanying their children to school.
- Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' current attainment and progress, planning documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding, performance management, the pupil premium, and the curriculum.

Inspection team

Chris Grove, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Liz Strange

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a primary school that is smaller than average in size.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional funding which in this school supports pupils known to be eligible for free school meals) is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school is a member of the Cantell Federation, a 'soft' federation of 11 local schools.
- The breakfast club and the after-school club are managed by the governing body and formed part of this inspection.
- The school holds the International School (Full) and the Healthy Schools (Enhanced) awards.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of all teaching so that it is good or better by improving the extent to which all teachers:
 - provide work that is hard enough for pupils of all abilities, including the most able
 - make sure that teachers sustain pupils' interest throughout lessons
 - ensure that pupils know exactly how much they are expected to achieve in a given time so that they are highly productive
 - set high expectations for neat presentation of work and correct letter formation.
- Accelerate pupils' progress by ensuring greater consistency in teachers' feedback about how they could improve the quality of their work through:
 - better use of target setting so that pupils develop a clearer understanding of what they need to do in order to reach higher levels of attainment
 - marking that indicates more clearly the next steps in their learning
 - more opportunities to respond to teachers' advice about improvement.
- Make improved use of arrangements to manage teachers' performance by setting clearer targets to improve pupils' achievement and the impact of teaching.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' progress across the school is not consistently good, and shows too much variability from year to year.
- Pupils' attainment has been variable in recent years. Attainment by the end of Year 6 was well below average in 2011, especially in reading and writing, whereas attainment in reading and writing was higher in 2012, and it was lower in mathematics. In 2013, there was further improvement in attainment. However, the school's information indicates that pupils' attainment in the current Year 6 is not on track to sustain the positive trend of improvement seen in the last two years.
- Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 has been similarly variable. In 2011, pupils' attainment was broadly average in all subjects. In the following year, their attainment was lower and below average in each subject. However, in 2013, attainment was again broadly average.
- The variability in attainment is the result of pupils' uneven progress, which is evident from the nationally produced information on the school's performance. The school's tracking information also indicates considerable variability between current year groups in the extent of progress.
- Over the last three years, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs have made better progress than their national peers.
- By contrast, over the same period of time, the progress of the most able pupils, and also of those who speak English as an additional language, has not been as good as that of their national counterparts.
- Children's knowledge and skills when they first enter school vary considerably, but are typically well below those expected, especially in their use of language and in early skills in literacy and mathematics. Children make good progress in the Reception Year. Their skills in listening and speaking, and also in reading, writing and number work, develop well, so that attainment by the end of the year reaches above average levels.
- Pupils are keen to participate in sports and other physical activities, as shown by the high levels of participation in the multi-skills and fitness clubs.
- In national assessments at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2013, the gap in attainment between those supported by the pupil premium and others narrowed considerably in writing and mathematics when compared with the previous year. This represents a gap of approximately one and a half terms in writing, and one term in mathematics. These gaps are similar to those found nationally. In the case of reading, there was no gap in 2012 between pupils supported by the premium and others, and indeed, in 2013, eligible pupils did rather better than others.
- Inspection evidence shows that pupils supported by the premium continue to make good progress. The school makes appropriate use of its pupil premium funding, in support of its commitment to promoting equal opportunities and to tackling discrimination. The school has used the funding principally to provide additional tuition, individually or in small groups, for pupils who are identified as needing further support. The funding has also subsidised music tuition and educational visits.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, including in literacy and numeracy, requires improvement because in recent years it has not resulted in consistently good progress by pupils.
- Where teaching is less than good, teachers do not always ensure work is hard enough for pupils, including the more able, in order to ensure that they make as much progress as possible. Sometimes, teaching does not sustain pupils' interest throughout lessons.
- Some teachers set high standards for pupils' presentation of their written work, including correct letter formation and careful layout. However, not all set high enough expectations for neatness. As a result, some pupils pay too little attention to the quality of their handwriting and

presentation of work.

- Even teachers who regularly interest and enthuse pupils do not always make the most effective use of time when they set pupils tasks. Teachers do not routinely specify in advance how long pupils will have to complete an activity, or how much they are expected to achieve, in order to ensure high levels of productivity in the time available.
- The school's approach to target setting does not help pupils sufficiently in their learning. The school does not link target-setting arrangements to pupils' progress in different subjects.. Consequently, target setting is not used effectively to help pupils to understand what more they need to achieve in order to reach higher levels of attainment.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work regularly acknowledges their achievement. However, at present, only the best marking indicates clearly the next steps in learning, and ensures that pupils have opportunities to act on advice about how to improve their work.
- Across the whole school, adults foster good relationships with pupils. This makes a significant contribution to the positive climate for learning. Every parent who completed the online questionnaire agreed that their child is happy at school.
- In those lessons where pupils make the best progress, there is a well-devised purpose to the learning. There is a lively approach, and teachers check pupils' learning effectively, providing harder tasks where necessary.
- The quality of teaching in the Reception class is good. Lessons are carefully structured and well organised. The teacher and assistants cooperate and provide well for all aspects of children's learning. Adults also ensure that children make good use of the outside area.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The warm ethos and strong focus on pastoral care lead to pupils' confidence and pride in the school. Adults are good at fostering relationships with pupils, which leads to their positive attitudes to learning and their enthusiasm for school. Even where teaching has less impact, pupils continue to be positive and to apply themselves well to their work.
- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are attentive and responsive in lessons. They themselves say that most pupils' conduct is good. They show a mature and balanced understanding about the very few occasions where behaviour falls short of the norm. In their responses to the online questionnaire, most parents agreed that the school makes sure pupils are well behaved.
- Around the school, pupils are polite and well mannered towards others. At breaktimes, also, pupils behave well in the playground, and return to lessons in an orderly way. At the midday break, the atmosphere is calm in the hall where pupils eat lunch. In assembly, pupils listen thoughtfully and respond well to opportunities for reflection.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They are taught how to keep safe and how to deal with various risks. The school attends well to issues of safety, including those associated with use of computers and the internet. All the parents who took part in the online survey agreed that their children are safe at school.
- Pupils show a good understanding of different forms of bullying. They say that teachers deal quickly with the few incidents that occur. There have been few exclusions of pupils.
- Attendance has improved, and is broadly average, as a result of the efforts of school leaders and the federation's attendance officer.
- The breakfast club is very well supervised, and offers healthy food options and activities that pupils clearly enjoy. The club encourages good attendance by providing a very positive start to the school day.

The leadership and management require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because action to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement has not yet had sufficient impact, notwithstanding the recent

improvement in attainment at the end of Year 6.

- One reason why teaching across the school has not improved as much as it could is because senior leaders do not make the best use of arrangements to set targets for the improvement of teachers' performance. As part of the appraisal process, leaders assess teachers' work using the national criteria for judging the standards of teaching. It is clear that the senior leadership has a realistic and accurate view of the quality of teaching. However, the assessments do not always result in measurable objectives for teachers to improve the impact of their teaching, and to enhance their pupils' achievement.
- The headteacher has provided the necessary support to enable middle leaders to become effective in their roles. Senior and middle leaders regularly check on the quality of teaching, pupils' work and teachers' planning. The feedback given to teachers is positive, but could sometimes explain in greater detail the identified points for improvement.
- The headteacher has an appropriately ambitious vision for the school. He provides a principled and caring approach to leadership, and is well supported by the governing body. This leads to a positive team spirit in the school. Leaders' improvement planning has identified appropriate priorities in the light of pupils' current achievement.
- Leaders track pupils' progress termly, and have rightly decided to increase the frequency of tracking. Where they identify weaknesses in pupils' progress, they provide additional support.
- The curriculum includes a broad range of learning opportunities. The school pays careful attention to developing pupils' basic skills, with a focus on phonics (linking letters and sounds). However, leaders acknowledge the need for improved provision for reading and mathematics by ensuring work is always hard enough for pupils. There is a particular strength in the teaching of French. Music is a prominent feature of the school, indicated by the choir and the tuition available on a range of instruments. The school recognises the range of pupils' ethnic backgrounds well through events celebrating different cultures. The International School award attests to its work in broadening pupils' horizons. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- The school uses its primary sport funding effectively. It has extended the role of the sports coach, leading to additional provision, improved participation in extra-curricular clubs, and a programme to improve teachers' skills in the subject. The school also holds the Healthy Schools award in recognition of its promotion of pupils' physical well-being.
- Leaders focus meticulously on all aspects of child protection and safeguarding, which fully meet requirements.
- The local authority has a clear overview of the school's context and performance, and has categorised it as meriting medium-level support.
- The capacity for improvement is shown by leaders' impact in raising attainment in writing by the end of Year 6. The school has also effectively addressed issues identified at the previous inspection, such as improving middle leaders' action planning and better use of the outside space for Reception children.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is very supportive of the school. Governors have a clear understanding of its context and are proud of the positive ethos. They meet their statutory obligations. Governors undertake the management of the headteacher's performance effectively, but are less well informed about how well other staff are appraised. They are not fully aware of the impact of teaching, or of the implications of national information about the school's performance. However, they are well informed about how the pupil premium funding is spent, and its positive impact. Governors understand the importance of holding the school to good account, but have not had sufficient training to do so effectively.

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	115109
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	441022

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	201
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Gary Philbrick
Headteacher	John Draper
Date of previous school inspection	5–6 July 2011
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