

Swaffham CofE VC Junior School

Brandon Road, Swaffham, PE37 7EA

Inspection dates

26–27 February 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures.

- Pupils' attainment has declined since the last inspection, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Too much teaching is inadequate. Teaching is not good enough over time to help all groups of pupils reach the levels of which they are capable, especially the more able.
- Support staff in lessons do not have clear roles and responsibilities in order to support all pupils to make more progress.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are not robust. Inspectors drew governors' attention to a number of concerns, including the lack of rigour in the recording of safety checks.
- Leaders are not doing enough to improve low attendance, make sure pupils are supervised at break times and that staff manage pupils' behaviour effectively.
- Senior leaders have not demonstrated capacity to improve because they have failed to bring about improvements in the quality of teaching and in the pupils' achievement.
- There has been a lack of urgency shown by leaders and managers in recognising the need for additional external support to help the school improve.
- The strategies to boost achievement do not secure better progress for those pupils who find their work difficult.
- Behaviour is inadequate and some pupils show a lack of respect for staff.
- The governing body has not checked that extra government funding is used effectively. The gaps in achievement between pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and others in school are getting wider, especially in writing and mathematics.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils who are house captains and members of the school council are proud to represent their school.
- Pupils have access to a wide variety of lunchtime clubs and after school activities.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed teaching in all classes. They saw 14 lessons, three of which were observed jointly with the headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made a number of other short visits to lessons and learning areas.
- Discussions were held with groups of pupils, teachers, support staff and three members of the governing body. The inspectors also had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke informally to parents after a 'sharing assembly' and at the start of the school day. They also considered the 14 responses to the online questionnaire Parent View.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read, spoke with them about their learning and reviewed work in their books.
- The inspection team reviewed a number of documents, including the school's checks on how well it is doing, the school development plan, data on pupils' current progress, leaders' reports following lesson observations, minutes of governing body meetings, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Nicola Edwards, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Janette Daniels

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is above average. This is additional funding from the government for specific groups of pupils, such as those looked after by the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children with a parent serving in the armed forces.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well-above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Concerns raised during the inspection are being examined by the appropriate bodies.
- There have been significant changes in teaching staff, with five new teachers starting in September 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching in all classes by ensuring that:
 - errors and misconceptions are picked up and corrected as they occur in lessons and in pupils' work
 - work is marked regularly
 - high expectations are set for pupils, so that they do their very best work
 - activities are provided at the right level of difficulty to interest and challenge pupils, particularly the most able.
- Improve the achievement of pupils whose progress is slow, particularly in writing and mathematics, by:
 - ensuring that assessments about pupils' attainment are accurate
 - improving the use of systems for tracking pupils' progress, identifying those at risk of underachieving and taking swift action to accelerate their progress.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - immediate actions are taken to ensure that arrangements for pupils' safeguarding are robust and that the carrying out and recording of safety checks is regular and rigorous
 - senior and subject leaders assess the quality of teaching, taking into account the impact teaching is having on pupils' progress over time
 - the roles and responsibilities of support staff in lessons are clear and appropriate training is

provided

- the school development plan is refined, focuses sharply on the main priorities and has clear targets which measure the effect of actions on pupils' achievement.

■ Improve pupils' behaviour and safety by:

- ensuring that all staff take full responsibility for managing pupils' behaviour effectively at all times
- raising attendance levels, particularly for the pupils with the lowest attendance rates
- raising pupils' awareness and understanding of e-safety
- ensuring that there is adequate supervision of pupils at playtimes, especially in the garden.

■ Improve the effectiveness of governance by:

- monitoring closely the arrangements to safeguard pupils
- making sure that the pupil premium is used more effectively, so that gaps in attainment and progress close between eligible pupils and others in the school
- seeking suitable additional support for the leadership and management of the school.

An external review of governance, including the school's use of the pupil premium, should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- Pupils' attainment has declined since the last inspection. The schools' current information and work in pupils' books shows that progress is inadequate in all year groups, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Attainment at the end of Year 6 in 2013 was below average in reading and well-below average in writing and mathematics. The pupils in Year 6 last year made inadequate progress.
- Pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium underachieve. They do not make enough progress and the gaps between their attainment and that of other pupils in the school are not closing. By the end of Year 6 in 2013, the pupils eligible for the pupil premium were six months behind their classmates in mathematics and were around a year behind them in reading and writing.
- Pupils of all abilities underachieve. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs do not make as much progress as similar pupils in other schools.
- More-able pupils do not reach the levels of which they are capable; too few of them reach higher levels of attainment, often because writing activities are not challenging enough.
- Teachers are not accurate at making judgements about pupils' attainment. Their assessments are frequently generous. Pupils who underachieve are, therefore, not identified quickly enough. Teachers do not all understand the school's systems for tracking pupils' achievement, so they do not take swift action to boost the performance of pupils who make slow progress.
- High absence rates prevent some pupils from making the progress they should, as they are not in school.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- Teaching is inadequate because it fails to ensure that all groups of pupils make the progress they should.
- Common errors made by pupils are not always corrected as they occur. This means that pupils continue to misspell everyday words. This is the case within lessons and in group activities led by support staff. Teachers do not check on how well pupils are doing in lessons to make sure they are concentrating and making good progress.
- Marking of pupils' work is not thorough enough. In some classes marking is infrequent, with too much work not checked at all. Not all teachers have the appropriate subject knowledge in mathematics, and their marking of pupils' work is often inaccurate. Teachers' comments, particularly in writing, praise pupils' efforts, but do not tell them what they need to do to improve their work.
- The lack of effective leadership means that there is no expectation on teachers to use the school's data about pupils' progress to prepare lessons. Therefore, more-able pupils are too often expected to do essentially the same work as other pupils and to sit through explanations when they already know what to do.

- Teachers and support staff in lessons do not always check that pupils are working at the right level or making sufficient progress. They do not have high enough expectations of what the pupils can achieve and too often accept incomplete or poorly presented work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils is inadequate

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate. Teachers and support staff do not take enough responsibility for tackling poor behaviour in and around the school. The behaviour policy is not followed consistently by all staff and poor behaviour is not always reported.
- In some lessons, pupils show little respect towards adults. There is backchat and often a failure to respond to direct requests from adults. This disturbs the activities for the other pupils and hinders progress.
- Attendance rates are low and there is a relatively high proportion of pupils with a track record of persistent absence.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is inadequate. Leaders and managers have not done enough to ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are met. Insufficient guidance has been given to staff about their responsibilities when on duty at the start of the day and at break-times. As a result, the supervision of pupils is poor. Inspectors identified a number of shortcomings in safeguarding arrangements and have drawn these to the attention of governors.
- Some of the parents and carers who gave their views to the inspectors and those who responded to Parent View have concerns about their children's safety at school.
- Pupils have a basic understanding of what constitutes bullying. Pupils do not know enough about e-safety and how to keep themselves safe when using the internet.
- Pupils who are house captains and members of the school council enjoy their roles and show enormous pride in the work they do. These pupils are positive about their experiences of school.

The leadership and management is inadequate

- The headteacher has too many responsibilities to be able to cope effectively with monitoring the school's work and improving provision. This situation has been made worse by a high turnover in staff, a problem for which the school did not seek external support quickly enough. The local authority has only recently become aware of the concerns and while some support has been provided, this has been too late to halt the school's decline into inadequacy.
- Despite recent appointments, leaders have not checked sufficiently on the quality of teaching throughout the school. Subject leaders and managers have not supported teachers in developing their knowledge, to ensure high-quality teaching, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Where checks of the quality of the work of staff are undertaken by the headteacher, a number of areas for improvement are correctly identified. However, there is insufficient rigour in the way that concerns or issues are followed up, or in the way checks are made to ensure what was intended to happen actually does.
- The pupil premium funding is used to employ support staff in lessons. However, roles and responsibilities are not clear enough to ensure that these additional adults know what is

expected of them and how they should support eligible pupils to make the progress of which they are capable.

- The school does not adequately promote equality of opportunity. Gaps between the attainment reached by different groups of pupils are not closing rapidly enough.
- The subjects and activities taught help to promote pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development. A range of visits, visitors and clubs provide memorable experiences for pupils. Pupils told inspectors that they were 'really excited' about their planned residential trip. However, pupils are not given enough guidance about how to behave acceptably which has a negative impact on their moral development.
- The school has used additional primary school sport funding well and this has enabled new sporting activity to be introduced, such as bowls. Participation rates have increased and staff have been trained by sports coaches. Pupils say they enjoy sport and that there are lots of lunchtime clubs and after-school activities to attend.
- The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has accurately identified concerns, including those related to safeguarding, and has begun to take appropriate actions. However, governors have not checked sufficiently that improvements regarding safeguarding have actually been made. Governors know about additional funding, including the pupil premium, but do not know the impact it has on pupils' attainment and progress. The governing body receives regular information about teachers' pay progression and sets suitable performance targets for the headteacher. However, not enough action has been taken by the governors when targets have only been partly met. The governing body has identified appropriate training, which it is keen to attend, but this has yet to be confirmed by the local authority.

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	121089
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	441170

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	Junior
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	172
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Ward
Headteacher	Tracey McCarthy
Date of previous school inspection	16 June 2011
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