

Southam Primary School

St James Road, Southam, CV47 0QB

Inspection dates 21–22 May 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires Improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
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.

- Pupils enjoy school and achieve well. They learn to read fluently and write neatly and imaginatively. Their number skills develop well and they become confident communicators.
- Standards in English and mathematics are above average by the end of Year 6 and pupils are well prepared for secondary school.
- Teaching has improved. It is now typically good and sometimes outstanding. Teachers set high expectations and teach English and mathematics well throughout the school.
- Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school and pupils feel safe and well cared for.
- Pupils supported by additional funding make good progress because of effective extra support. The attainment gap between these and other pupils is closing steadily.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because staff accurately identify their needs and provide good individualised support.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership. She sets high expectations for teachers to improve their practice and is supported well by senior leaders.
- Governors know the school well. They ask school leaders searching questions to ensure that all groups of pupils make good progress and that all staff contribute appropriately to this effort.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet of a consistently high standard in all year groups.
- Standards in spelling, punctuation and grammar have not kept pace with the markedly improved content of pupils' writing.
- Pupils do not sufficiently use their mathematics skills outside of mathematics lessons.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 20 lessons and saw all the teachers teaching. They also heard pupils read and looked at the work in their books. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and other senior staff joined inspectors in some of these activities.
- Meetings and discussions were held with staff, groups of pupils, governors and a representative of the local authority. The inspectors took into account the 78 responses to the Parent View questionnaires that were available and comments by a number of parents spoken to around the school.
- The inspectors examined a range of documents including safeguarding policies and procedures, the school's view of its own performance, lesson plans and records of the progress of past and current pupils.

Inspection team

Peter Kerr, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Helen Booth	Additional Inspector
Suha Ahmad	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is smaller than is usually found, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The school currently supports an above-average proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs through school action. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is broadly average. In this school, this additional funding is allocated for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and looked-after children.
- The school meets current government floor standards, which set minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Breakfast and after-school clubs are run in the school by an independent provider.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportions of good and outstanding teaching by ensuring that all teachers:
 - follow the best examples in questioning pupils during lessons and make sure the work is not too easy nor too difficult for them
 - keep all pupils' interested throughout the lesson so that they concentrate on the tasks in hand.
- Improve pupils' punctuation, spelling and grammar by ensuring that pupils' writing does not continue to contain errors that have previously been corrected.
- Increase the opportunities pupils have to use their mathematics skills beyond mathematics lessons by ensuring that all teachers have the training and support needed to fully implement the school's mathematics improvement plan.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter Reception with broadly typical skills, knowledge and understanding for their age, though there is a wide range. They develop good personal and social skills and show high levels of independence. These aspects of their development help them to learn well in all other areas.
- Progress is now good in all key stages. Standards have been typically average at the end of Year 6. Attainment is above average in the current Year 6 and above age-related expectations in most other year groups.
- The good rate of progress being made in all year groups and by all groups of pupils reflects the success of the school's focus on ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils and eliminating any discrimination.
- Pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportions making more than expected progress from Year 2 to Year 6 increased significantly in 2014 and are now above average.
- The school's results in the phonics (linking letters and sounds) screening check were above average in 2013. Pupils learn well in the regular phonics group lessons because the work is pitched at just the right level.
- Results in the Year 6 grammar, punctuation and spelling tests were broadly average in 2013 but standards are rising and pupils in the current Year 6 are at an above average level in these aspects of their writing.
- Standards of grammar, spelling and punctuation are not yet consistent throughout the school, however. In samples of the pupils' best writing these aspects are good. However, the quality varies from class to class in the pupils' everyday-writing. In some books, errors that have been corrected re-occur soon afterwards without comment so that pupils do not routinely re-enforce their new learning.
- Pupils enjoy reading. Lower-attaining pupils in Year 1 use their knowledge of letter sounds well to tackle new words while pupils in Year 6 read widely and confidently discuss the books they are reading.
- Pupils express themselves well when talking to adults and to each other because they have plenty of time and support to improve their spoken language. This is reflected in the good quality content of their writing. Their accounts and stories show an increasing use of adventurous words and sentences.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics because as well as learning new skills in lessons, they regularly tackle problems that require them to call on skills they have previously learned. This helps them to develop confidence in deciding what aspects of mathematics are required to solve new problems.
- Pupils use their literacy skills well in other subjects, for example in writing about science and history. They cover a wide range of mathematics in class but do not use their knowledge and skills so much beyond subject lessons.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. In the main

they work at tasks set at the right level for them within the class lesson and make at least similar progress to other pupils. The few pupils with the most significant needs and lowest attainment make good progress in separate individualised lessons.

- The school uses its additional pupil premium funding well to provide wide-ranging support for those for whom it is intended. As a result, the gap in attainment between these and other pupils is reducing term by term. In 2013 they were three terms behind their classmates in mathematics, two terms behind them in reading and level with them in mathematics. Data for current pupils show that this gap in reading halved in the current Year 6 and along with that in reading and mathematics is reducing further in lower year-groups.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Weak teaching has been eradicated and teaching is sometimes outstanding. Pupils' work shows that over time it is consistently good in Reception and in Years 5 and 6.
- The Reception classes are very well organised to stimulate the children's interest and engage them in purposeful play. Teachers and teaching assistants work very effectively together to teach basic knowledge and skills and to support the children's learning.
- In a Year 5 literacy lesson the teacher challenged the more able to use complicated sentences while at the same time supporting lower-attaining pupils with tasks at just the right level of difficulty for them. Staff regularly questioned all pupils and challenged them to do their best. This ensured that all pupils made rapid progress.
- Outstanding progress was also achieved in Year 2 in a lesson in which the pupils' interest was maintained throughout by the use of music to generate a 'spooky' mood while staff helped pupils to use spooky words in their descriptive writing.
- Some of the lessons seen failed to spark the pupils' interest. Progress was not good because some more-able pupils lost interest while some others needed more explanation to make progress.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work together effectively with the inclusion manager to provide good individualised support to disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Tasks are suitably adjusted for these to make at least similar progress to others in the class.
- Pupils learn well in the regular phonics and guided reading sessions and in literacy lessons. Teachers provide opportunities and support for pupils to develop their ideas through discussion before writing, leading to improved vocabulary and creativity in their writing.
- Mathematics is also taught well. The pupils' books reflect good coverage of all aspects of mathematics and the setting of problems that provide practice in the use of wide range of skills. The work is marked thoroughly and pupils respond well to pointers for improvement.
- The marking system for writing is used throughout the school. It clearly improves the content of writing but is not consistently effective in eradicating spelling errors and improving pupils' punctuation and grammar.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They behave well in lessons where their enthusiasm for learning and willingness to work hard help them to achieve well. Lunch and play times are relaxed and civilised.
- When talking in groups with inspectors, pupils agreed that behaviour in school is generally good. They say that when some children behave inappropriately in class, the teachers deal with it so that it does not slow their learning.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel safe and well cared for in school. They know about the dangers and risks that face them in their daily lives and how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet. The school's cycling competency programme helps pupils to keep safe using the roads.
- Pupils like the buddy system. It worked well during the inspection when Reception children sought the help of their Year 6 buddies to help them discover facts about the hedgehog they have found in the outdoor play area. They were bursting with enthusiasm when they relayed their new knowledge to one of the inspection team afterwards.
- Pupils take on a range of responsibilities around the school, including representing their class on the school council. They are mature and responsible in the way they set about these tasks.
- Pupils say that bullying occurs from time to time, for example when an older pupil picks on younger ones, but that it is usually dealt with quickly and successfully. They mentioned cases that had happened in the past and had taken a little time to sort out.
- Most respondents to Parent View agreed that the school manages behaviour and tackles bullying well. Very few disagreed. The inspection found that behaviour is well managed and that bullying is not tolerated.
- Overall, the pupils are very happy, friendly and hard working. They have impeccable manners, enjoy good relationships with each other and the staff and are well prepared to move on to the secondary stage of their education.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher leads the school well. Together with senior leaders she has successfully tackled the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. High expectations for the quality of teaching relate to the progress pupils make in each class. Appropriate training and support is provided and robust measures are taken to eliminate any inadequate teaching.
- The leader of literacy ensures that the subject has a high profile throughout the school, with lots of pupils' writing on display related to different topics the pupils have studied. Effective support for pupils' writing has greatly improved its content and style. Systems for improving spelling, punctuation and grammar are good but are not yet consistently implemented throughout the school.
- The leader of mathematics has successfully improved the pupils' problem-solving skills through the introduction of problem-solving sessions that require pupils to draw on previously learned knowledge and skills. Initiatives to extend mathematics beyond the classroom, such as an outdoor mathematics trail, have sparked interest among staff and pupils but not all teachers are

skilled and confident enough yet to fully implement these plans.

- The inclusion manager has had a very positive impact on the quality of provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. She uses her time well to accurately assess individual pupils' needs and then prepare and oversee the implementation of suitable programmes of support. Parents are fully involved in this process.
- The additional sport funding (provided to all primary schools) has been used well to improve the pupils' health and wellbeing. The school contributes to the employment of a sports co-ordinator and employs specialist coaches directly to expand the range of opportunities open to all pupils.
- Arrangements for keeping pupils safe meet all current statutory requirements. School staff work very effectively with outside agencies to ensure that pupils who are most vulnerable receive a high level of support.
- The local authority has provided support to the school since the last inspection to complement the independent support the school has engaged. It is of the view that school now has a good capacity to sustain improvements. The inspection supports this judgement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance has improved well since the last inspection. There is now a full complement of governors who organise their work well to give optimum support to the school while at the same time challenging leaders to continue raising standards.
 - Governors are well informed about the progress pupils make in each class. They make sure that the contribution of staff to raising pupils' achievements and improving the management of the school is linked to the pay they receive.
 - The budget is managed effectively and governors are aware of how the pupil premium is being spent to support eligible pupils' progress and raise their attainment.
 - Governors keep themselves abreast of developments in the school through regular visits and discussions with the headteacher and other staff.

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	130905
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	442516

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	271
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Clare Chevassut
Headteacher	Emma Longworth
Date of previous school inspection	29 January 2013
Telephone number	01926 812520
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