

Swaffham Prior Church of England Primary School

Station Road, Swaffham Prior, Cambridge, CB25 0LG

Inspection dates

10–11 July 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 make good progress in all year groups and achieve well in mathematics and English, particular in reading. Standards are above average by the end of Year 6.
- Good teaching, and some that is outstanding, contributes well to pupils' good progress and their ability to work together productively.
- Pupils are very well-prepared for the next stage of their education. They are strongly influenced by the school's values of tolerance, democracy and respect for each other. The school benefits from the close links it has with the church.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because their learning is well-planned. Conscientious teaching assistants contribute significantly to their good personal development.
- Staff have high expectations of their pupils' behaviour and the quality of their work. As a result pupils are industrious, considerate and gracious to each other and adults. Pupils are happy at school and feel safe.
- The good leadership and management of the headteacher and governors have led to improved teaching, assessing and marking pupils' work. Middle leaders have greater impact on increasing pupils' progress since the last inspection.
- The headteacher, staff and governors have worked with determination and commitment to establish a stimulating and much-improved place to learn.
- The governing body, led by its very experienced chair, has made a marked contribution to the continuing improvement of the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all Year 1 pupils acquire effective phonic skills (the sounds letters make) as well as they should in order to improve their reading and writing.
- The small number of more-able pupils in Year 2 do not achieve as much as they should, especially in writing and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons and made short visits to physical education sessions and the Early Years Foundation Stage outdoors area. Three observations were done jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector talked to pupils in all classes, to the school council and with a small group of pupils from Year 5. She held discussions with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders. She held a meeting with eight members of the governing body.
- The inspector scrutinised pupils' work and displays in all classes.
- The inspector listened to six pupils reading and talked with them about their books.
- The inspector took account of 45 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View and 11 staff questionnaires. She also talked to individual parents about aspects of pupils' behaviour.
- The inspector looked at a range of school documents including progress data, governing body minutes, the school development plan, self-evaluation reports, the headteacher's reports to governors, safeguarding documents, attendance and behaviour data and school policies.

Inspection team

June Woolhouse, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is smaller than the average-size primary school.
- Children begin the Early Years Foundation Stage in the mixed Reception and Year 1 class. There are three other mixed-age classes.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium is well below the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children in local authority care.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Since the last inspection, the school has had significant staff changes. Teachers in the Reception class and in two other classes took up their posts or returned from temporary absence in 2013. Some teachers returned in 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality and consistency of phonics teaching in Year 1 by:
 - ensuring that all teachers plan and deliver phonic activities systematically, thereby enabling pupils to learn key skills in a clear and logical order quickly, so that they are better able to read and spell words.
- Expect higher standards of writing and mathematics in the small number of younger, more-able pupils by:
 - providing writing and mathematics activities that make pupils think deeply and which extend their knowledge and skills.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Most children enter the Reception class with skills that are typical for their age. They thrive in a well-organised setting and learn to cooperate well with each other. They enjoy finding things out, on their own and with each other. A group successfully increased the depth in the water tray by carrying buckets of rainwater from a flooded sand tray so that they could test out which objects would float. The majority of children reached good levels of development by the end of the year, an improvement on last year's results.
- Results in the phonics screening test (the sounds letters make) dipped in this year, 2014, because teaching does not build effectively on pupils' phonic knowledge and skills. As a result not all pupils reached the expected level. Nevertheless, recent changes in staff have injected the class with increased enthusiasm for learning and most pupils have made good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Standards by the end of Year 2 are in line with national averages and have improved in reading and writing this year. Progress was good given pupils' starting points. However, not enough more-able pupils achieve the higher levels in writing and mathematics.
- Progress begins to accelerate from Year 3 and standards are above average by the end of Year 6. In this school year progress has been good. All pupils achieved the expected progress in reading and mathematics and half of them achieved more than the expected progress. Very small numbers missed their writing target. This is a noteworthy achievement and the result of consistently very good teaching.
- The rates of progress and the standards pupils achieve by the time they leave school are much better this year than in the previous two years because teaching and the accuracy of assessments of pupils' work have improved a great deal. Over-estimation of how well pupils learned in previous years at the beginning of school has affected progress results later on.
- Older more-able pupils achieve well by the time they leave school in Year 6, particularly in mathematics where they receive specialist teaching and benefit from good quality individual support.
- There were too few pupils eligible for the pupil premium leaving Year 6 in 2013 to make a reliable judgement of their attainment in either English or mathematics relative to other pupils. The vast majority of pupils eligible for the pupil premium across the rest of the school, as well as those who are disabled or who have special educational needs progress as well as their classmates because school leaders identify their weaknesses early and provide the right support.
- Pupils respond well to specialist games, gymnastics and swimming provided by extra Primary Sports Funding. Healthy school meals complement these resources. School leaders are preparing a formal report on how well pupils have improved their sporting skills using National standards in physical education.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality of teaching has improved and is now typically good. Increasingly there are examples of outstanding teaching and learning which have resulted in older pupils achieving more than

expected progress by the end of Year 6, especially in reading and mathematics.

- Teachers know their pupils well and the warm relationships between them foster positive attitudes and a love of learning. Teachers have high expectations, plan interesting and relevant lessons, ensuring pupils can apply literacy, numeracy and communication skills. In an outstanding mathematics lesson, for example, pupils successfully applied their knowledge of proportion to adapt a menu, originally for four people, to feed ten.
- Teachers provide opportunities for children to develop their communication and language skills through good quality questions and time for discussion in pairs or very small groups. This opportunity to articulate what is going on in lessons helps pupils to organise their thinking and understanding. Pupils learning about compass points and direction consolidated their understanding because of very skilled teaching and a well-chosen practical demonstration of applying knowledge of compass points to get from one place to another.
- Teaching assistants are deployed well to support disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. As a result of this support these pupils make good progress.
- The teaching of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium is also good. Consequently, these pupils are quickly able to close any gaps between their attainment and the rest of the class as they move through the school.
- Until recently, more-able pupils in Year 2 have not been given hard enough work and this has restricted their progress. Test results showed that too few pupils were reaching the higher levels, especially in mathematics. This relative lack of progress has been identified by the subject leader and is a priority for improvement next term.
- The accuracy of teachers' assessments of pupils' work has been improved throughout the school. Teachers' grading of work is now confirmed by external consultants using national criteria to reinforce this improvement. There have been some fluctuations in previous Reception class results but external checks show that children's progress over this year give an accurate picture of how well they are learning and developing.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly and is carefully linked to what they have been taught in a particular session or subject. Comments are clear and offer appropriate praise for what pupils have done well but also identify what needs to be improved. There have been improvements, especially in the marking of pupils' work in writing and mathematics, and there is now a consistent approach to marking in all classes.
- Homework is set regularly and increases as pupils move through the school. This helps pupils to consolidate the knowledge and skills they have acquired in school and make good progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their learning which enable them to make good progress, both in the classroom and when involved in out of school visits or physical activities such as games and dancing.
- Pupils are keen to learn and the school routines they are taught mean they are well-organised before and during lessons. They make very good use of learning time and full use of play-time when lessons end. They understand the school's rewards system and share in celebration

assemblies when their class-mates' efforts are recognised or to remember birthdays.

- Pupils respond quickly to their teachers and other adults. There is very rarely any low-level disruption because learning is interesting and they have opportunities to talk to each other at frequent intervals during lessons.
- The very few occasions of disruptive behaviour that have caused concern to some parents and pupils have been thoroughly and formally investigated by the headteacher and appropriate members of the governing body. Any challenging behaviour by a small minority of pupils is managed very effectively by all staff.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel safe in school and talk knowledgeably about bullying, what it means and how they are taught to deal with it, including cyber bullying. The older pupils show a considerable maturity in their understanding of why bullying might occur. The headteacher rapidly intervenes in the very rare occasion it happens and pupils are confident that all adults are there in case they have any problem they would like to talk about.
- There is a harmonious atmosphere around school and pupils conduct themselves with consideration and respect for each other and their surroundings. Their attendance is above average and they are punctual for the start of school. Lunchtimes are civilised occasions. Playtimes are sociable and older pupils look out for the younger ones.
- School council members commented on the importance of 'buddy' roles to help younger pupils manage the outdoor facilities better. They have also been instrumental in preparing their case to present to the governing body for the use of funds to improve resources. Overall, good behaviour and attitudes contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, staff and governors have worked well together to improve teaching and learning in all classes since the last inspection. The school's own evaluation of its effectiveness is broadly accurate. Weaker teaching has been dealt with effectively and recognised by staff as the main barrier to pupils making good or better progress.
- Teaching requiring improvement has been subject to high quality support from the local authority and is now rare. Teachers have targets to improve their practice, including the accuracy with which they evaluate pupils' work, and what they must aim for so that pupils reach or exceed the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The headteacher's determined leadership has resulted in many areas of improvement this year, in particular the appointment of good quality teachers. A strong leadership team has emerged as a result. Subject leaders have increased their understanding of what good work looks like and their regular discussions held with staff have resulted in more consistent and accurate judgements. In turn, teachers are planning work that is more closely matched to what pupils need to learn next. There is a good capacity for further improvement.
- Senior and middle leaders have a clear understanding of how well each pupil achieves in reading, writing and mathematics. Anyone, including those new to school, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, who is falling behind, receives extra individual or

small-group teaching from well-trained teaching assistants. Any gaps in knowledge are closed as quickly as possible and few pupils now underachieve.

- Teachers' performance is checked regularly against the progress their pupils make and identified weaknesses are the focus of further training. This information forms the basis of whether or not teachers' salaries are increased.
- The majority of parents and carers support the school's work and believe their children are safe and happy. Pupils love their school and this is reflected in their enthusiasm for learning. The school is at the centre of the community and, with its links to the church, enables everyone to contribute to its determined efforts towards creating an outstanding education for its pupils.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is particularly well developed because the strong values that underpin the school's work and the good links it enjoys with the local church. Adults treat all pupils with respect, care and consideration. In turn pupils treat each other with the same levels of tolerance and respect which extend to the way they value the school environment, the contributions they make to those less fortunate and to their understanding of different ways of life.
- The money available through the pupil premium is used well to support eligible pupils to improve their literacy and numeracy skills. These pupils are also able to participate in school trips and have extra music tuition, all of which enhance their learning and personal development.
- Pupils benefit from specialist teaching in games and swimming due to extra sports funding. Resources have been improved and after-school sports clubs such as football, netball and dance provide more opportunities for participation. There is planned training to enable teachers to increase their own knowledge of gymnastics. The evaluation of the impact of these facilities is at an early stage.
- The local authority has given good support to the school and recognises the improvements that have and are being made.
- Safeguarding arrangements fully meet requirements. Members of staff are trained in caring for the pupils and keeping them safe. Checks are made on the suitability of staff and any volunteers who work in school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is good. Governors have a wide range of professional skills which they use very effectively to carry out their roles of support for and challenge to the school in how successfully it educates its pupils. They are well-trained and understand how well the school is performing in comparison with other schools and which aspects it needs to do better.
 - Governors ask probing questions about the progress pupils make and, for those who do not, what steps the school is taking to remedy the situation.
 - They know how pupil premium funds are spent and the impact they have had on pupils' learning and progress. They also approve the way extra sports funds have increased opportunities for participation by pupils and further training for teachers.
 - They have supported the headteacher fully in her successful bid to recruit good-quality teachers and have a good understanding of why teaching is much better than it was.
 - They are rigorous in their oversight of all financial and other resources and plan well ahead for improvements and contingencies. Safeguarding, pupil safety and parent concerns are managed well for the benefit of the whole community.

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	110794
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	441984

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	125
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Roz Chalmers
Headteacher	Hannah Curtis
Date of previous school inspection	4 October 2012
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