

Swanton Morley VC Primary School

Manns Lane, Swanton Morley, Dereham, NR20 4PX

Inspection dates

1–2 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
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Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- An above-average proportion of Year 6 pupils last year made more than the nationally expected rate of progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In 2014, standards in Key Stage 1 continued their consistent year-on-year improvement and were the best in recent years. Standards in Key Stage 2 are above-average and this represents good progress from pupils' different starting points.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress from their different starting points. The progress made by those eligible for pupil premium funding has improved rapidly, and gaps in attainment have been reduced.
- Pupils' behaviour in and around the school is good and they have excellent attitudes towards learning. Their attendance was well-above average last year. The school ensures pupils' safety.
- Teaching is consistently good. Since the previous inspection, leaders have addressed weaker teaching and this is reflected in the consistently good achievement.
- The school provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This helps prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.
- The school has prepared well to take account of recent changes to the way subjects are taught and how pupils' progress is assessed and reported to parents.
- Leaders and managers at all levels have been successful in moving the school forward. The governing body has recently changed its way of working and is developing clearer, more effective ways of holding the school to account.
- The provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved since the last inspection and is now good. This has a positive impact on the progress children make and how quickly they settle into school life.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not consistently ensure activities provided are sufficiently challenging for the most able pupils.
- The recording of some risk assessments and other administrative tasks are not completed in enough detail.
- Pupils do not understand many of the targets set for them so they are not always clear about what they need to do to improve.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in 11 lessons or parts of lessons. A number of these were observed jointly with the headteacher. The headteacher and assistant headteacher also took part in a range of other inspection activities.
- Meetings and discussions took place with the headteacher, a representative from the local authority, members of the governing body, staff, pupils and parents.
- Samples of pupils' work were examined, some with the headteacher present, and pupils read to the inspectors.
- Too few parents responded to the online survey, Parent View, for it to be analysed. However, inspectors took account of the 72 responses to the school's own parental questionnaire.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents produced by the school, including data on pupils' progress and attainment, procedures for safeguarding, the school's own evaluations of its work, reports to the governing body and minutes of their meetings, and the action plans for raising attainment.

Inspection team

Geof Timms, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Philip Scull

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Swanton Morley VC Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. Few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is average. A below average proportion of pupils have statements of special educational needs.
- A broadly average proportion of disadvantaged pupils are supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- Forty per cent of the pupils are from a local military base and are entitled to the service premium, which supports their learning.
- A higher than average proportion of the pupils join or leave the school at times other than normal.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' understanding of what their targets are and what they need to do to reach them.
- Ensure the activities provided for the most able pupils are consistently challenging enough to extend their learning.
- Improve the way risk assessments and other administrative tasks are recorded and stored.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The leadership and management are good because the headteacher has focused his efforts on improving the quality of teaching and raising attainment. His successful leadership has been recognised by the local authority who are using his skills to support other schools. The local authority has appropriately monitored the school's performance since the last inspection. The good teaching seen at the last inspection has been maintained and weaker teaching addressed appropriately.
- The monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning, and taking action where necessary, are good. All senior and middle leaders play a part in checking the success of the teaching in the areas for which they are responsible. Leaders' skills have improved through appropriate training and by working alongside colleagues in other schools. New staff are being effectively inducted into the school.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate and identifies what remains to be done to improve the school further. The school produces a detailed plan for raising attainment which has appropriate priorities to build on the current strengths. The regular meetings held between staff to look at pupils' progress are very effective and ensure that additional support is provided for pupils when it is needed.
- Training to develop teachers' professional skills has been used effectively. For example, training has improved the teaching of phonics and reading standards, and had a positive impact on the preparations made for the changes to the content of subjects and the way they are taught.
- Data on pupils' progress and attainment are regularly checked, and internal and external checks are carried out to confirm the accuracy of teachers' assessments of pupils' work. The school has prepared well for the full implementation of its approach to assessment following the change to remove National Curriculum levels. However, the use of targets to support pupils' understanding of what they need to do to improve is not well developed and they do not fully understand how to make good use of the targets they are set or what they need to do to improve.
- Funding available through the pupil premium is used to help eligible pupils take a full part in school life, and benefit, where appropriate, from additional help from adults. The impact of this is evident in the significant narrowing of the gaps in achievement between eligible pupils and others over the past year, and the higher standards now achieved by disadvantaged pupils. The service premium is also used well to support pupils and cater for the high turnover of pupils due to frequent movement of these families. The parents are very positive about the support they and their children receive.
- Good use is made of the extra funding available to promote physical education and sporting opportunities. There is an increased participation in a wider range of clubs and sporting activities, such as the regular lunchtime running club, contributing to pupils' healthier lifestyles. The school takes part in more competitions with other schools in a variety of sports. Staff training, from specialist teachers in other schools, is promoting notable improvements in teaching.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. There is a good focus on provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There is good preparation for life in modern Britain. The school provides a good range of clubs and extra-curricular activities, including residential visits and a range of outdoor activities, which enhance pupils' learning. In addition the school makes very effective and efficient use of its swimming pool.
- Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and enables the children to make good progress. Effective use is made of available staffing, and the outdoor areas are used well to promote learning to the full, including, for example, through den-building on the school field.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The work of the governing body required some improvement after the last inspection. There is new

leadership and the governing body has changed and improved the way it carries out its statutory duties. The governors now provide the school with a good level of support and challenge. They have carried out an assessment of their skills and this has led to extensive training over the past two years to improve their understanding of how to hold the school to account.

- Governors check the school's work through a good range of visits, such as to observe and monitor the use of sports funding. Members of the governing body have a sound understanding of the system used to determine teachers' effectiveness in enabling pupils to make progress. Governors check how well school leaders improve the quality of teaching. Decisions about teachers' pay are appropriately linked to their performance and responsibilities.
- Governors track finances well and lead the school in deciding how to spend additional money, such as that to support disadvantaged pupils or to extend sports and physical education opportunities. They are aware of the particular needs of the pupils who are at the school especially those from the local military base. They ensure that all the requirements for safeguarding pupils are met although the formal recording of some of the checks that are correctly carried out by the school are not kept in enough detail.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- In all lessons observed, and in the Harvest Festival, the dining room and at playtimes, most pupils were well behaved. School records confirm that this is the norm. Pupils demonstrate excellent attitudes to learning and are always fully engaged in lessons and activities. This was supported by what pupils told inspectors about how much they enjoyed school, and it has a positive impact on their progress.
- Pupils talk enthusiastically about lessons and other aspects of school life. One told inspectors that this is 'the best school in the world'. Pupils show respect for the learning environment and do not drop litter. They praised the way teachers help them learn and said that 'everyone is nice and kind if you get stuck'.
- Pupils' attitudes demonstrate they respond well to the school's expectations of their behaviour and social development. They have a number of opportunities to take responsibility, such as on the school council or as play leaders helping younger children at lunch times, and they treat them seriously and conscientiously.
- Pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes towards others. They do talk about incidents that occasionally have a negative impact on their learning but these are rare and teachers deal with this if it happens. They are polite and interested in other people. There have been no recent exclusions from school.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school, and parents strongly confirm this view. The school provides a good range of activities to help pupils learn to stay safe, and they are taught how to use computers and the internet safely.
- The pupils have a sound understanding of different types of bullying and say that if it occurs it is effectively dealt with. They have adults in school they would trust if worried or concerned about something.
- Attendance has improved rapidly and, last year, it was well above the national average. It has improved as a result of the school's strong and successful focus on encouraging better attendance, and monitoring and addressing persistent absenteeism. Most parents appreciate the importance of their children's full attendance. Pupils are punctual.

The quality of teaching**is good**

- Pupils' work, the school's assessment data on their achievement, and evaluations of teaching, together with inspectors' direct observations in lessons, all provide evidence that teaching is consistently good. Although it was good at the last inspection there have been some staff changes and leaders have ensured improvement to teaching throughout the school, partly by addressing areas of weaker teaching. This improvement in teaching has resulted in pupils' current good progress and rapidly rising standards.
- Teachers ensure that pupils' attitudes to learning, and their interest and engagement in their work, are good. Pupils are often encouraged to learn through imaginative tasks and well-chosen resources. Other adults often provide high quality support for pupils, especially those with disabilities or who have special educational needs. This enables them to take a full and active part in lessons and school life.
- The learning environment throughout the school is kept very tidy, with most material resources easily accessible. Year 6 pupils are able to use a thesaurus and dictionary confidently and correctly. Displays of pupils' work create good opportunities for teachers to support pupils' learning and vocabulary.
- Pupils throughout the school talk positively about how they enjoy lessons, especially mathematics. They describe the progress they have made and talk with pride about their work. This pride is reflected in most of the pupils' books, which are tidy and well presented.
- Teachers' use of assessment information and other data is good. Assessments are used to group pupils accurately by ability and provide work that is well targeted for their different capabilities. Teachers are more aware of how different groups are learning in lessons, and adjust their practice to make sure that everyone does well. However, there are times when the most able pupils are not consistently provided with sufficiently challenging work until they have finished other work they do not need to do.
- Teachers and other adults are good at assessing the success and impact of their teaching and adapting tasks if necessary. This happened in one small group session when the teaching assistant altered the level of calculation because of one pupil's struggle to understand.
- The marking of pupils' work has been a focus for improvement since the previous inspection. This is now more regular and provides pupils with clear and constructive suggestions for improvement. Pupils are beginning to get better at responding to the marking and this is having a positive impact on their progress. However, the use of individual targets for pupils is at an early stage. Too many pupils do not understand what their target is or what they need to do to achieve it.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well supported. This ensures they are able to take a full part in school life and that they make good progress from their different starting points.
- Teachers have responded well to recent national changes to the curriculum. For example, in computing, plans have been drawn up to ensure that the curriculum covers all new aspects such as coding. Even so the school is aware that teachers need further training to be able to deliver aspects of the subject successfully.

The achievement of pupils**is good**

- When they start in the Reception class, many children have levels of knowledge and understanding which are below those typical for their age, especially for their communication skills and speech. Children make good progress in all areas of learning, although attainment in speaking, their understanding of the world and the expressive and creative aspects remain lower than the other areas. However, last year, an above-average proportion of the children reached or exceeded the expected good level of development.
- Standards in the national tests at the end of Year 2 have risen consistently and in 2014 were the highest for many years. Standards are above those expected nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. This represents good progress from pupils' different starting points.

- Attainment at the end of Year 6 has been above average for the past two years. This is the result of good progress throughout Key Stage 2. Last year, an above-average proportion made expected or more than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics. In addition, the results in the new spelling, punctuation and grammar test improved markedly from 2013 as a result of more focused teaching.
- In 2013, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 in mathematics, reading and writing was around half a term behind pupils nationally and over two terms behind other pupils in their year group. Last year, the school significantly narrowed the gap between the attainment of these pupils and others, especially in reading and writing. The gaps between their attainment and that of their classmates are now down to half a term in mathematics and less in writing; pupils attained better than their peers in reading.
- The results of the Year 1 check on pupils' skills in linking letters and sounds (phonics) show that in 2014 standards were above average and this represented good progress given pupils' starting points. This reflects improved teaching using a new scheme and after extra training for staff, that is helping pupils to grow into good readers with an interest in a range of books.
- Progress in reading, writing and mathematics is good throughout the school. There is evidence of good achievement in other subjects, such as geography, history, science and computing. The effective use of the sports funding money has improved teachers' expertise and so raised standards in physical education.
- Throughout the school the most-able pupils make good progress and an increasing proportion attain higher levels in most subjects. Even so, their progress in some lessons could be better, especially where teachers give them tasks that do not challenge them sufficiently.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because of the extra help they receive. Last year, pupils in all years made progress similar to or better than that of their classmates. The school's data show that pupils who are at the school from Reception to Year 6 make good progress and reach above average levels of attainment. Those who join the school at times other than normal also make rapid progress but their attainment is slightly below that of the others.

The early years provision

is good

- The early years provision has improved since the last inspection and is now good. This is because the children make good progress from their different starting points. Children in the Reception class have quickly got used to the school's routines. They start the day happily and productively, quickly settling down to their activities. Talking to the children shows how much they enjoy school and the range of activities provided for them.
- The accommodation is good, well-organised and provides a productive and imaginative learning environment. The outdoors is used well to extend children's learning through a range of adult-led activities and those that the children choose for themselves. Some children enjoyed riding a range of wheeled toys while others uncovered articles hidden in a sand tray. They were all developing their skills in co-operating and sharing.
- Teaching is good. Teachers make good use of their assessments of what the children know and can do in order to plan the children's next steps and activities that help to move children's learning on. All adults have an input into observing children's progress. Parents are regularly informed about progress and they are invited to record their comments in the children's records of learning.
- The progress children make, including those who are disabled or who have special educational needs, is good. The most-able children are well provided for and staff are very aware of all individuals' prior knowledge and skills. In one case, an able child could explain to the teacher why they were using certain colours as they represented autumn. In addition, the good work of other adults enables children with significant learning and other difficulties to take a full part in the activities.

- Children's good progress helps prepare them well for the next stage in their education. They learn to behave well, are clearly happy at school and are kept safe. There is good provision for their health, safety and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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	121083
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	448519

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	158
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ruth Robinson
Headteacher	Richard Lord
Date of previous school inspection	24 March 2010
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