

Southwold Primary School and Early Years' Centre

Kennington Road, Radford, Nottingham, NG8 1QD

Inspection dates 11–12 February 2015

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

- Since the previous inspection, leaders have taken decisive and effective steps to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. The school is continuing to improve.
- The effective headteacher, supported by her strong leadership team, checks frequently and thoroughly on the quality of teaching and learning.
- Leaders at all levels focus on raising achievement. Teaching is now good and this has led to accelerating progress for all pupils over the last two years.
- Governors know the school well because they check its work for themselves. They have supported or challenged leaders as necessary in order to help bring about improvements.
- Pupils are now making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics throughout the school.
- Pupils behave well. Adults are very well trained and extremely vigilant in keeping pupils safe and well protected
- The school is a calm place, where pupils treat each other, and their teachers, with respect. This provides the foundation for pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Children make a very positive start to their education in the well-managed Early Years Centre. They thrive because of good teaching and the wide range of interesting resources and activities available for them.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- On occasions, the work set for the most able pupils is too easy and they could learn at a faster rate.
- Pupils are not doing quite as well in reading as in writing and mathematics.
- The marking of pupils' work does not always give clear guidance on how to improve it.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in parts of 16 lessons, four of them jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. In addition, they visited the dining hall and the playground.
- Inspectors looked at the work in many pupils' books. They listened to pupils in Years 1 and 2 reading.
- Inspectors spoke with parents, teachers, senior leaders and those responsible for phases, governors, and representatives from the local authority. They held formal and informal meetings with pupils.
- Inspectors took account of 31 responses to the staff questionnaire, and 19 responses to the online questionnaire for parents (Parent View).
- Inspectors looked at the school's records relating to: the safeguarding of pupils, their behaviour and their attendance; the progress made by past pupils and those currently in the school; the school's development plans; governing body meetings; and the monitoring of teaching and learning.

Inspection team

Terry McDermott, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Anna Streater

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Southwold is a little smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The Early Years Centre operates Nursery classes that children attend part time, either in the morning or the afternoon. Almost all Nursery class children move into the school's full-time Reception class. The governing body manages the Early Years Centre, which is part of the whole school site.
- The school has four phases, with two single form entry classes in each phase.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is above average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well above average. A high proportion do not speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- More pupils than usual join or leave partway through their primary school education.
- The school runs a daily breakfast club attended by about 30 pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that pupils' progress and standards continue to rise, by ensuring that:
 - the work set in lessons is not too easy for the most able pupils
 - pupils receive clear guidance through marking on how to improve their work
 - the development of pupils' reading skills is given as much attention as other aspects of literacy and numeracy.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The dedicated headteacher has built a very strong staff team, who are determined to make the school outstanding. It is on an upward path and has improved since the previous inspection, particularly in teaching and in the rates of progress pupils make.
- Leaders at all levels, including governors, have a shared sense of ambition and aspiration for the school. Their evaluations of its strengths and areas for improvement are accurate. They know what to improve and what actions to take to secure the necessary improvements.
- Senior leaders, and especially the very effective and energetic headteacher, encourage and enable staff to observe and share the best practice to improve their own effectiveness. The school gives staff training a high priority and links it to checks on staff performance that identify individual areas for improvement. This has led directly to a better quality of teaching.
- The leaders in charge of phases check the quality of teaching regularly and thoroughly. This has significantly aided the drive for pupils' good and better progress over the last year. It is also gradually tackling the remaining inconsistencies in marking, challenge in work for the most able, and reading skills.
- Additional funding helps disadvantaged pupils to make good progress. It provides extra teaching support where needed, subsidises a range of learning experiences, and provides equipment and resources as well as personal support for some pupils. As a result, eligible pupils are making good progress.
- The school uses additional funding for PE (physical education) well. Class teachers are becoming much more confident and competent in teaching PE and sport. Pupils are increasingly aware of what they need to do to follow a healthy lifestyle, beyond merely being active.
- The range of subjects provided for pupils is wide and interesting. Pupils learn English and mathematics effectively, but also have many opportunities to link ideas and skills. They learn a great deal about the world around them through themes and topics such as 'The Great War'. The ceramic poppies at the Tower of London inspired pupils to make their own poppies of remembrance. But unlike at the Tower of London display, at Southwold they remain as the thought-provoking centrepiece of the school's Remembrance Corner.
- The school works very effectively to accelerate pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development from their first days in school. Staff work successfully to ensure equality and fairness in a school where 23 different languages are spoken. All pupils are aware that there is no discrimination, and behave with unflinching tolerance to each other.
- The school has built strong links with the University of Nottingham and the Transform Teaching Schools Alliance to extend the skills of leaders and teachers, and to maintain its drive for improvement.
- The local authority has provided good support and guidance since the last inspection. This has helped the school on its journey of improvement.
- The school meets all the current national safeguarding requirements, and does so effectively.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are effective. They have, through their challenge, helped the school to tackle underperformance and to move forward rapidly since the last inspection. They know the school well, and are well known in the school. Many are regular visitors, and several have specific responsibilities, for example checking the impact of additional funding, or ensuring that pupils are always safe. They know the meaning of the data produced by the school on pupils' performance because they have undertaken suitable training. They fully understand the impact of the quality of teaching on the quality

of learning. They challenge the headteacher before approving rewards for good teaching.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are typically polite, friendly and considerate of each other. They are well motivated and take pride in their work, as is shown by their well-presented books.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. When they are set challenging tasks, their natural curiosity drives them to engage enthusiastically. When work is a little easy and learning slows, they do not routinely seek out more testing work.
- In classrooms, pupils settle down to work promptly. They bring the correct equipment to lessons. They sustain concentration well and persevere with things they find difficult, particularly in mathematics and writing. This contributes well to the faster progress they are now making in those subjects.
- The daily breakfast club provides a good start to the day, especially for disadvantaged pupils, so that they are in school for the start of the day and ready to learn.
- Pupils actively engage in a wide range of community-linked activities, including the school's parliament which helps to successfully underpin British values.
- Playgrounds and the dining room are harmonious places. Staff supervise pupils closely, though they can in any case be trusted to conduct themselves well. This is because they know where the boundaries lie between what is acceptable and what is not acceptable behaviour.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. Starting in the Early Years Centre and continuing throughout the school, adults engage pupils in calm discussions about all manner of topics. This not only builds their vocabulary but also shows them how to listen to others, and interact positively with all of their peers, treating them with respect.
- Attendance is now in line with national averages and improving. The school checks absences carefully, and has a systematic approach to supporting pupils whose attendance gives cause for concern. A whole-school focus on helping pupils who arrive during term time to feel welcome and at home means they feel safe and secure in school. This is also helping to raise attendance.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. The safeguarding team, which comprises many different members of staff, is a very vigilant group. All staff are crystal clear about safeguarding protocols, and apply them rigorously. Training is very frequent and high level. Communications between staff about potential safeguarding issues are strongly encouraged.
- Pupils say they feel very safe 'because we all look after each other'. They also know the school site is secure and no one can enter the building unnoticed. They are acutely aware of what situations to avoid outside school, and are very aware of the dangers of the internet. The Year 6 drugs awareness presentation to the whole school, during the inspection, with parents attending, showed these high levels of understanding.
- Pupils, staff and most parents are positive about standards of behaviour and safety. The school's records show very few instances of inappropriate behaviour. The many pupils spoken to are insistent that bullying is very rare. They take responsibility to look after each other in school. Older pupils help younger pupils to get on with each other. They swiftly report to adults things that concern them and have full confidence in all the adults in school to look after them and deal with any concerns.

The quality of teaching is good

- Children learn well in the Nursery and Reception classes. They have many opportunities to build and extend their skills in counting, calculating and speaking because adults encourage them to explain their reasoning or explanations.
- Relationships between pupils and adults are very good, based as they are on treating each other with respect and as human beings with equal rights.
- Teachers show high expectations that pupils will behave well and work hard. Pupils do, especially when the work set by teachers encourages them to apply what they already know to solve a new problem. This shows clearly in pupils' writing and mathematics books.
- Pupils learn well in lessons throughout the school. They are now demonstrating a good range of skills and understanding. They have become adept at checking their own and each other's work, and teachers challenge them to think more deeply. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils thought up questions for 'Calico Jack', a pirate who had come through a time portal by accident, and landed in Southwold School. Having asked their questions, they received some unexpected answers about a world before televisions and refrigerators. Consequently, they wrote enthusiastically about, and gained a much deeper understanding of, living conditions in the 17th century.
- Teaching assistants are well trained and effective. They work confidently with different groups of pupils, sometimes helping those who are unsure to catch up, and at other times supervising and checking that the most able pupils keep on task while the teacher is working with other groups.
- Marking is regular and frequent. It often celebrates good effort, but rarely points to what a pupil would need to do next to move on quickly.
- Teachers track the progress pupils are making in reading, writing and mathematics closely. They are aware that reading skills are not yet as good as they could be.
- Learning is sometimes held back a little because tasks do not always challenge all groups of pupils, especially the most able, to think hard and produce as much work as they can.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' progress, particularly in Years 3 to 6, has been accelerating rapidly since the last inspection. By the end of Year 6 in 2014, pupils had made progress at a faster rate than other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. The school was in the top quarter of schools nationally in 2014, for the progress made by pupils between Years 3 and Year 6.
- The school's accurate and reliable data show that all groups currently attending, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Those new to learning English are making significant progress in speaking and reading.
- Pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs achieve well because a skilful team of adults provides strong support. This enables them to make good progress.
- In Year 6 in 2014, disadvantaged pupils had made progress more slowly than other pupils in the school in reading, writing and mathematics, but at a rate comparable to other pupils nationally in these subjects. Their attainment was a term in advance of other pupils in the school in mathematics, broadly similar in writing, and a term behind in reading. The gap in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally was a year behind in reading, and about half a year, in mathematics and writing. The gap is now closing because through the school, this group is making faster progress.
- Many children start school in the Nursery class with skills and understanding below the levels typical for

their age, especially in writing. They make good progress in the early years, and this prepares them well for moving up to Year 1. By the end of Year 2, they are reaching average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. This has been the case for the last two years.

- In Year 6 in 2014, the proportion of pupils making expected progress in writing and mathematics compared favourably with national averages. The proportion exceeding expected progress was high in reading and mathematics, and compared favourably with the national average in writing.
- Very often, pupils' mathematical skills are enhanced by having to solve intricate word-based problems. Current pupils' writing skills are impressive, because writing about their own experiences motivates pupils well. Writing often flows as a consequence.
- The development of pupils' reading skills is not quite as good as other aspects of literacy and numeracy. Though reading lessons are well organised, reading records show that pupils often read the same book several times, and some mispronounced words are not always corrected.
- Usually, teachers set the most able pupils work which is well matched to their skills. Sometimes, however, the work is not sufficiently demanding so they finish easy work quickly, and their learning slows unnecessarily.

The early years provision

is good

- Very good leadership and management of the Early Years Centre by the co-leaders have created a very strong staff team. They look after children very well and keep them safe. They undertake regular training and receive feedback from colleagues, so that the quality of teaching is good and continually improving.
- Very effective arrangements ensure that when children join the Nursery classes they settle quickly into their new routines. They enjoy school life and all the new experiences they encounter.
- Most children arrive in Nursery class with limited skills, especially in terms of early writing and social skills such as working in groups. They make good progress in their social development, not least with the development of empathy through 'Wednesday walks' through the Remembrance Garden, and in reading and mathematics. As a consequence, they are well prepared to join Year 1.
- Children behave well. This lays a good foundation for pupils' very good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in later years in the school.
- Children experience a wide range of activities, described by a parent as 'amazing, fun, stimulating, fact-filled classrooms' that cover all the areas of learning. They were fascinated by exploring the theme of 'Dinosaurs'. They explained in great detail, both verbally and beautifully spelled out in writing, about the Stegosaur's spines and the Pterodactyl's wings on their Lego models.

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	122465
Local authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	453558

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	219
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alan Clark
Headteacher	Kate Clifford
Date of previous school inspection	5 March 2013
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