

# Swaffham CofE VC Infant School

White Cross Road, Swaffham, PE37 7RF

## Inspection dates

25–26 February 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement.

- Leaders, managers and governors have not ensured consistently good teaching and achievement.
- Subject leaders are not fully accountable for the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of learning.
- Governors do not ensure that the sound policies relating to pupils' safety are always meticulously applied in practice.
- Governors do not have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses in order to provide effective challenge and support to school leaders. They do not ensure that the school website is kept up to date with the required statutory information.
- Behaviour and safety require improvement because some pupils do not attend as often as they should. Some do not present their work well enough.
- Teachers do not all have high expectations of what all pupils can achieve and do not consistently set work which challenges them, especially the most able.
- Teachers do not always ask questions which challenge the thinking of pupils of all abilities within the class, and do not consistently insist upon high standards in the presentation of all written work.
- By the end of Year 2, the standards achieved by pupils in reading, writing and mathematics are not high enough.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher provides strong and effective leadership. She has removed previously inadequate teaching.
- Children make a good start to their education in Nursery and Reception. They are well taught and, as a result, make good progress in learning early literacy and numeracy skills and developing good learning habits.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. British values are very well promoted.
- The very large majority of parents are supportive of the school. They rightly recognise and appreciate the improvements that have taken place recently.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in 16 lessons or parts of lessons. A number of lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspectors looked at work in pupils' books and listened to pupils read. They met with a group of pupils to gain their views of the school. The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime, lunchtime and at the end of the school day, as well as in lessons. They attended an assembly.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including: assessments and records of pupils' progress; the school's checks and records relating to safeguarding, child protection and attendance; records of how teaching is managed; and the school improvement plans.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and other staff, including senior and subject leaders. The lead inspector met with the Chair of the Governing Body and had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 25 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and talked to parents at the end of the school day. They also looked at the 23 responses to the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Adam Hewett, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Andrew Berry

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Swaffham Church of England Infant School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Children in the Nursery classes attend part time. Children in the Reception classes attend full time.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are taught in five mixed-age classes.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average compared to similar schools nationally.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils – those who are eligible for pupil premium funding – is above average. The pupil premium provides additional funding for pupils eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after.
- Pre-school provision operates on the school site but is privately run and is, therefore, inspected separately and not included in this inspection.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure all policies relating to pupils' safety are rigorously applied.
- Improve teaching and learning to be consistently good or better, in order to raise pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics, by making sure that:
  - all teachers have sufficiently high expectations of what pupils can and should achieve, particularly the most able
  - teachers' questions are challenging for all abilities within classes so that all pupils are encouraged and enabled to respond
  - all teachers set high expectations for the presentation of all written work and ensure that pupils meet these standards.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring:
  - governors hold the school to account more effectively for improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement and improve their knowledge and skills in the analysis of data on pupils' attainment and progress
  - governors make sure that the school website is up to date and meets all statutory requirements
  - the work of subject leaders is further developed to enable them to make a more effective contribution to improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Improve pupils' attendance by persuading parents of the importance to their children of the education provided by the school.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management

### requires improvement

- Leaders and managers have not established a culture across the school where teaching is consistently effective and pupils' behaviour is good – although both aspects are, currently, improving.
- The headteacher has set a clear direction for the school. She has taken strong action since the last inspection to remove any inadequate teaching and improve its overall quality and this is beginning to have an impact on improving achievement. However, her action has not yet had the full impact intended to make teaching and progress consistently good throughout the school.
- Behaviour has improved as there is now a consistent approach by all staff to managing behaviour. Incidents of inappropriate behaviour are now rare. However, pupils do not take sufficient care with the presentation of their work and attendance is still below average.
- The headteacher has applied new systems for checking and monitoring the quality of teaching and pupils' progress and achievement. Data about how well pupils are doing are analysed well and are used to set challenging targets for improvement. Arrangements for the management of teachers' performance are clearly designed to establish links between decisions on their pay and their performance in the classroom and this helping to improve teaching.
- School improvement planning has been significantly improved and this has led to more accurate identification of key priorities that focus firmly on improving teaching in order to raise achievement.
- The role of subject leaders is developing and they are becoming more skilled in checking and evaluating pupils' performance. However, they are not yet fully involved in checking on and improving the quality of teaching and learning in their areas.
- The leadership of the early years provision is good and this has resulted in consistently good teaching and children making good progress.
- The pupil-premium funding is used effectively. It is used to provide daily one-to-one and small-group support in both reading and mathematics. As a result, disadvantaged pupils are now making more rapid progress. Consequently, any gaps between the performance of different groups of pupils are closing. This shows the school's commitment to equal opportunities for all pupils.
- The local authority has provided additional support and advice over the past two years and this has helped to support the school in monitoring its effectiveness.
- The school has developed its curriculum well so that it meets new national requirements. There are good opportunities for pupils to use the skills and knowledge that they have learnt in writing and mathematics in other subjects, such as science and geography. Learning is made relevant and exciting for pupils through topics, such as the study of the 800-year history of Swaffham Market that focuses on helping pupils develop their historical understanding and learn about business skills.
- The good range of trips and visits is appreciated by pupils and enhances their learning. They also value the visitors who come into school. These included local artists and a group of visitors who recently helped them celebrate Chinese New Year, which helped widen their understanding of different faiths and beliefs.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported well. There is a strong focus on helping pupils understand what is right and wrong and in extending their understanding of other cultures and beliefs through international days and studies of world religions. Pupils develop a good understanding of democracy in class and through their involvement in the school council. This helps to promote British values successfully, as well as fostering good relations and preventing discrimination. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

- The school makes good use of the additional primary physical education and sport premium to extend opportunities for pupils and to develop teachers' confidence and skills in teaching a wider range of sporting activities. Specialist sports coaches, including staff from the local high school, work alongside teachers. This has resulted in a wider range of physical activities and all pupils taking part in competitive sports competitions against other local schools.
- The school's systems for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements. However, the rigour with which managers and leaders monitor health and safety requires improvement, as procedures have not always been followed meticulously in practice. There are effective partnerships with outside agencies.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are not effective. They recognised that they lacked knowledge and understanding of the effectiveness of teaching and its impact on pupils' achievement. They carried out their own analysis of their skills at the beginning of the school year and this has resulted in a more systematic approach to the visits they make to school. However, they still do not fully use or understand all the information that is available to them, including data on pupils' attainment and progress, and this limits their effectiveness in making judgements about the quality of teaching and the progress that pupils are making. They recognise that they can improve further and welcome an external review of governance. Governors are aware of the steps taken to tackle underperformance. They ensure that there are clear links between teachers' performance and pay progression. The governing body ensures that the finance and resources that are available to the school, including pupil premium funding, are used effectively. It is less sure about the impact the spending has on pupils' progress. Governors have not ensured that the school website has sufficient information about the curriculum for all classes or that all required policies are available on the website.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils

## requires improvement

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. While the very large majority of pupils behave well in lessons and show positive attitudes towards learning, not all pupils show sufficient care and pride in the presentation of their work.
- Pupils are polite, caring and well mannered. They show consideration for each other and adults. They play together well on the playgrounds.
- The school has effective systems for recording inappropriate behaviour. These records show that there are relatively few instances of poor behaviour. If pupils do misbehave, staff act appropriately and consistently.
- Pupils understand the system of rewards and sanctions that promotes good behaviour, and they say that they are all treated fairly.
- Pupils who find it difficult to manage their behaviour are given good support. Adults help them to understand the consequences of their actions. Most pupils respond well to the extra help they are given and exclusions are rare.
- Pupils have a good understanding of most types of bullying, including cyber-bullying. They say that there is very little bullying in school and that when it does occur they know it will be dealt with quickly.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement. The school's policies fully meet requirements, but are not always followed meticulously, such as the stated regularity of practice evacuations of the building.
- School leaders have worked hard to improve attendance and the number of pupils who are persistently away from school has fallen this year. However, attendance is still below average and a small number of parents do not ensure that their children attend regularly and on time. The school has recently appointed

a welfare worker to address this, but it is too early to see the impact of this on pupils' attendance.

- Pupils say they feel safe in school and understand how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations, including when using the internet. Almost all the parents who completed the Parent View survey stated that their children felt happy and safe in school. Arrangements for checking visitors and site security are thorough and effective.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the effect that derogatory language could have and as a result are careful to ensure that they show respect for other people.

### **The quality of teaching**

### **requires improvement**

- Teaching does not ensure that pupils make consistently good progress and achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics over time. School records and inspection evidence show that teaching is improving and that this is beginning to raise achievement and improve progress.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils should achieve in lessons are not always sufficiently high and are not made clear to the pupils. The work that is set in lessons is not consistently challenging for all abilities, especially for the most-able pupils, and limits progress.
- Teachers too often pose questions that do not challenge the thinking of all abilities. Questions are sometimes too easy for the most able. Consequently, they are not required to think deeply enough about the subject involved.
- Pupils are, currently, making better progress in writing because they are provided with good opportunities to apply the skills they have learnt by writing more and more often. However, their progress is not rapid because teachers do not always insist upon high standards of presentation of written work. This is also the case with the setting out of some work in mathematics.
- The teaching of reading has improved since the last inspection. Teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make in words) is helping pupils to develop the confidence and skills to tackle unfamiliar words.
- The school has introduced a thorough, regular and effective system of assessing pupils' progress. Teachers meet together to ensure that their judgements are accurate and use the information to set individual targets for improvement. However, this has not been in place long enough to ensure all pupils make good progress over time.
- There is a consistent approach among staff to the marking of pupils' work. This approach is helping pupils to understand what they have done well and to improve their work.
- Teaching assistants work closely with teachers to support the learning of pupils who need extra help. This includes those who are disadvantaged, the disabled and those who have special educational needs. Pupils who are most in need are particularly well supported and this is beginning to enable them to achieve as well as their classmates.

### **The achievement of pupils**

### **requires improvement**

- Achievement requires improvement because pupils do not make consistently good progress across the school. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are not high enough. Progress in the past has been hampered by too much weak teaching and a lack of focus on the different needs of pupils. This focus has improved and standards are rising.
- In 2013 and 2014, the standards attained by pupils by the end of Year 2 were below average. All groups of pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 are making better progress and have higher attainment, but their achievement is still not consistently good.

- The most-able pupils attain standards that are higher than those of other pupils in school but too few of them reach the highest standards and make good progress. This is because they are not consistently given work that is sufficiently challenging.
- Children start in Nursery with skills and knowledge that are generally below those that are typical for their age, particularly in communication and language, and personal, social and emotional development. They make good progress and, in 2014, the proportion reaching a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year was in line with national results.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check has been below average for the past two years. A stronger focus on phonics is enabling pupils to understand and enjoy what they are reading more. As a result, attainment is rising rapidly. School data and evidence gathered during the inspection indicate that pupils currently in Year 1 are predicted to have expected attainment in 2015.
- Work in pupils' books shows that pupils make steady and improving progress in writing. They are given a good range of opportunities to write longer pieces of work. However, they do not always take sufficient care with the presentation of their written work.
- Pupils' basic skills in mathematics are improving and they are able to use these skills to solve practical problems.
- Disadvantaged pupils have not in the past achieved as well as other pupils. In 2014, the standard reached by these pupils was below that of other pupils in the school and nationally. School data show that this gap is closing rapidly and that they are making at least the same progress as other pupils in school.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs have in the past made slower progress than that of other pupils. However, due to the good-quality support they now receive from teachers, teaching assistants and other adults, they are making progress that is at least in line with that of other pupils.

### **The early years provision** **is good**

- Early years' provision is good. Leaders have an accurate view of how well children are doing and have used this information effectively to adapt teaching and learning activities so that they accurately meet the needs of all the children. This results in children making good progress.
- Teachers have good systems that enable them to share assessment information with parents and carers.
- Safeguarding requirements are met.
- The staff from the Nursery and the two Reception classes work well together to plan activities that enable children to develop social and communication skills. As a result, children settle in very quickly when they start in school and make good progress in all areas. By the end of the Reception year the proportion achieving a good level of development is broadly average.
- Teaching is consistently good, and children are well motivated and engaged through the wide range of exciting activities delivered through the well-planned curriculum. There is a good balance of activities between those that are adult-led and those children choose for themselves. In all cases, learning meets the needs of all children, including the most able and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs. Relationships between staff and children are very positive.
- Children behave well and make good progress with their personal, social and emotional skills. They form good relationships with each other. They listen attentively to their teacher and are confident in expressing their own ideas and thoughts. For example, children in the Nursery class were enthralled by a story about a boy and some dinosaurs that was read to them by the teacher and offered sensible comments about

what was happening to the characters in the book.



## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	121059
<b>Local authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	453580

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	220
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Grant Harwood
<b>Headteacher</b>	Marion Link
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 March 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	01760 721357
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