

Swallownest Primary School

Rotherham Road, Swallownest, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S26 4UR

Inspection dates

13–14 September 2016

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders are not paying enough attention to making sure that pupils make good progress, especially the most able.
- Over time, teaching is not tailored well enough to meeting the needs of all pupils and as a result some pupils, and especially the most able, find the work too easy.
- Current assessment information shows that pupils are not making good progress in all year groups. There are noticeable differences in the progress boys, girls, disadvantaged pupils and the most able pupils are making in some classes.
- Senior leaders have been overgenerous in judging the quality of leadership, teaching and how well pupils are achieving. Consequently, there are times when improvement plans are not tackling key issues.
- Subject leadership has not improved enough since the previous inspection. Not enough effective checks are made on the quality of teaching across a range of subjects.
- Not enough efforts are being made to assess and report to pupils and parents and carers the progress pupils are making in a range of subjects and across the curriculum.

The school has the following strengths

- Since the previous inspection, attendance levels remain high, exclusions remain low and incidents of bullying are rare.
- Pupils and parents agree that the school provides a safe and secure environment, children enjoy coming to school and their behaviour and attitudes to learning are good.
- Outcomes for children in the early years are good. Strong leadership and effective team work have ensured that high outcomes are being maintained year on year.
- Pupils are developing their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding well. There are opportunities for them to learn about other faiths and cultures and about the importance of voting. Pupils are tolerant and respectful.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that all pupils, and especially the most able, make consistently good progress in literacy, numeracy and the wider curriculum by:
 - ensuring that teachers make better use of assessment information for learning to be sufficiently challenging
 - making sure all teachers follow the school’s marking and assessment policy and apply it equally well to all subjects as well as literacy and numeracy
 - providing pupils with more genuine opportunities to practise their extended writing skills beyond literacy lessons
 - using additional adults to support and challenge the most able pupils more effectively.
- Improve the effectiveness of senior and subject leadership, including governors, by:
 - using assessment information more effectively to pinpoint and tackle any variation in the progress being made by different groups of pupils, including the most able, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils and boys and girls
 - making sure checks on teaching, pupil outcomes and performance management give greater weight to whether or not pupils are making good progress
 - improving the accuracy and quality of the school’s self-evaluation so that the most important priorities are identified and appropriate actions are taken to successfully tackle them
 - making sure improvement plans clearly show the impact that intended actions will have on pupils’ progress, by when, and the role governors will play in evaluating the impact of these actions
 - further developing governors’ knowledge and skills in order to enable them to challenge leaders more effectively, particularly in relation to the progress different groups of pupils are making across the curriculum and the impact additional funding, such as the pupil premium, is having
 - making sure the school website complies fully with the government’s statutory requirements.

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

An external review of the school’s use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Although pupils are happy, not enough of them are reaching their potential. Leaders are not doing enough to make sure that pupils, and in particular the most able, make at least good progress across the curriculum. Teachers' expectations are inconsistent and not high enough in some classes. Consequently, some groups of pupils make uneven progress as they move through the school.
- Senior leaders are not paying enough attention to the progress pupils should be making given their starting points, including the most able, disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Consequently, leaders have an overly rosy view of how well pupils are doing.
- Senior leaders' roles and responsibilities are sometimes muddled. It is not clear who is accountable for some key strategic areas, including leading the improvements to teaching and learning and making sure there are effective checks on pupils' progress. Not enough attention is given to judging the impact of staff meetings and teacher training on ensuring that pupils make good progress.
- Senior leaders are not as challenging or questioning of each other as they should be. Parts of the school's self-evaluation are accurate but other parts are overgenerous. This has led to some key priorities not being addressed well enough in either improvement planning or on-going professional development. These include the progress of the most able, the effective assessment of pupils across the curriculum and the development of subject team leaders.
- Other features of improvement planning require improvement. Plans are not as useful a tool for school improvement as they could be. Timescales for when improvements are meant to take place and the benefits they will have for pupils' progress are sometimes unclear. Governors do not play a big enough part in checking that leaders' actions are having a positive effect on pupils' progress.
- Since the previous inspection, not enough has been done to make sure that all subject leaders are confident and effective in carrying out their duties. As a result, the quality of teaching across the curriculum varies and leaders do not have a good enough understanding of how well pupils are achieving beyond literacy and numeracy.
- Performance management is well established and linked to pupil outcomes and salary progression. However, it is not as rigorous or demanding as it could be in improving outcomes for pupils. Teachers' targets are not challenging or ambitious enough. Targets do not pay enough attention to making sure pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- Most, but not all, teachers follow the school's marking and feedback policy. The impact of this policy varies from class to class and from subject to subject. Some feedback, particularly in literacy and numeracy, helps pupils to understand how well they are achieving. However, in other subjects, including French, science, history, geography and religious education, pupils are unclear as to how well they are achieving or how they could improve further.
- The curriculum covers a range of subjects but teacher assessment is focused on the

basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics. Not enough attention is given to checking that pupils are making good progress in history, geography, science, art and French.

- Other aspects of the curriculum are stronger. Pupils welcome the various lunchtime and extra-curricular activities on offer, including choir and sports clubs. There are a range of trips, sporting competitions and events that pupils say they enjoy participating in. Those who attend breakfast club say that it helps them socialise with their friends and is a good way of starting the day. It gets pupils keen and ready to learn.
- In the past, leaders have made effective use of pupil premium funding. Historic assessment information shows that differences between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils were diminishing. However, current assessment information reveals a much more mixed picture. The progress of disadvantaged pupils is variable across year groups and differences are not diminishing quickly enough in some year groups. Plans do not clearly identify the key barriers preventing disadvantaged pupils from making better progress and how these barriers can be overcome. Neither leaders nor the governors have a clear enough view on which strategies are having the most impact.
- Leaders have shown the capacity to improve aspects of the school. Children's attainment in early years continues to improve year on year and is above the national average. Attendance remains high; persistent absence and exclusions are low. Staff morale is high. There is a culture of making sure that children feel safe and secure. Parents and pupils confirm that safeguarding is a strength of the school.
- Pupils have a growing understanding of the importance of democracy. They understand the importance of voting for members of their school council as it provides them with an opportunity to change and improve their school. School leaders have been effective in developing a culture and ethos which stresses the importance of tolerance, respect and cooperation.
- The primary sports funding is used to employ a sports coach to work alongside class teachers. This is helping class teachers improve their ability to teach physical activities. Older pupils said that they have noticed improvements in the way their teachers teach physical education. They said there are more effective opportunities for warm ups and cool downs. They are able to take part in a wider range of sports, including football.
- The school has not received enough support or challenge from the local authority. Efforts have been made by the local authority to involve school leaders in collaborative work with other schools but this has had limited impact. The local authority has not done enough to challenge school leaders on their declining rates of pupil progress and has sent mixed messages to the school. Letters praising the school for its standards at the end of key stages 1 and 2 have been received by the school at the same time as local authority officers expressing concerns about the progress pupils are sometimes making.

Governance of the school

- Over time, governors have not done enough to challenge school leaders over the progress pupils are making. A number of governors lack the skills to ask pertinent questions about the assessment information presented to them. This is partly due to the way in which leaders present this information but also due to some governors' lack

of understanding of what is meant by good progress. The training governors have received has not always been used well enough to challenge leaders.

- Recently appointed governors are helping the governing body improve. These governors are starting to use their wider skills and experience to ask questions about the progress pupils should be making from year to year and whether teachers' expectations are high enough.
- Governors have been more successful in making sure that statutory policies are reviewed in a timely manner, including child protection and safeguarding policies. However, they have not made sure that the school website meets statutory requirements.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. From parents in the playground to lunchtime supervisors and office staff, keeping children safe is seen as being of paramount importance. Leaders have created a culture and environment in which staff are encouraged to report any concerns or worries they may have about the safety of a child. Regular training helps staff feel confident that they can identify the potential signs of harm and how to go about reporting concerns. The school works well with other agencies, including the virtual headteacher for children looked after, to make sure that pupils are well cared for and achieving. Child protection arrangements are also effective and enable children to have an input during multi-agency reviews.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching and learning is inconsistent across the school and within different subjects. Over time, teaching is not challenging enough, especially for the most able, because it is not tailored well enough to their needs. Teachers' expectations are not high enough for this group of pupils. Not enough thought is given to what would be considered suitably challenging activities for the most able and so this group of pupils find class work too easy too often. At other times, the most able pupils plod through easy work before they reach more taxing work.
- Teachers do not check carefully enough whether pupils fully understand what they are meant to be doing and so time can be wasted as pupils struggle to understand new key words, ideas and concepts. In the case of the most able pupils, they sometimes select work that is too easy for them and this can go unchallenged by teachers over a series of lessons.
- Additional adults are an effective resource in many classrooms. They are more effective in supporting the lower attainers and those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Work over time shows that these groups of pupils are making good progress in some but not all classes. However, additional adults are not as effectively deployed to challenge the most able pupils. Consequently, some pupils reported being 'bored' in some lessons as the work was too easy.
- Opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills across the curriculum are sometimes hit and miss. In subjects including science, history and geography, there

are few occasions when pupils are encouraged to write at length to explain their ideas. As a result, pupils' misconceptions are not consistently picked up and addressed.

- Pupils enjoy reading. Many pupils told inspectors that they enjoyed reading a range of books. However, the most able pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 often race through the books they are reading and not enough attention is being given to helping these pupils discuss and analyse the text in more depth.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are well cared for and enjoy coming to school. Happy and smiling pupils can be seen running across the playground with their friends, keen to enter school and get the day underway.
- The vast majority of parents agreed that their children are well cared for. Staff are approachable and welcoming if parents have any concerns. This is particularly the case in early years, where staff were felt to go the 'extra mile' in making sure children are happy and settled.
- Pupils show a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. The curriculum effectively helps pupils understand how to be physically healthy, the importance of a healthy diet and the need to be physically active. There are a number of opportunities for pupils to study different faiths and beliefs. This leads to pupils being tolerant and respectful towards each other.
- Pupils also have a good awareness of the different types of bullying that can occur, including name calling, physical bullying and online bullying. While some bullying does occur, pupils say that it is rare and dealt with effectively by their teachers.
- Pupil prefects are highly visible in their luminous yellow jackets at break and lunchtimes and this also helps pupils know that there is someone they can go to if they are sad or worried.

Behaviour

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They show good levels of concentration and perseverance, even with work that is sometimes too easy. They are punctual to class and little time is lost due to poor behaviour.
- Pupils are polite and considerate and are keen to welcome visitors. Behaviour during break and lunchtimes is calm and orderly. There are good levels of supervision and pupils play well together.
- Attendance levels remain high and exclusions are low. Leaders have been active in stressing the importance of good attendance. Pupils and parents recognise the importance of attending school each day. This has been reinforced through the effective use of letters home, half-termly attendance reports to parents, rewards and trophies for good attendance and displays around the school celebrating good attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes require improvement because not enough pupils are making consistently good progress across a range of subjects including reading, writing and mathematics. This is despite standards over time being above national averages. The most able and disadvantaged pupils make expected progress over time but not enough of them make good progress given their starting points. This is because teaching is not matched well enough to their needs and leaders do not have high enough expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving.
- In 2016, results in the Year 1 screening check in phonics (the sounds that letters represent) fell significantly. School leaders acknowledge that they 'took their eye off the ball'. Not enough care and attention is taken by leaders in checking for themselves that pupils who are falling behind are successfully catching up and pupils are on track to achieve.
- The progress pupils are making in reading, writing and mathematics requires improvement. Outcomes over time have shown that pupils are not making good enough progress, particularly the most able. Current assessment information from key stages 1 and 2 show an inconsistent picture. In some classes, pupils are making good progress; however, in others the rates of progress are slower.
- The school is not promoting equality of opportunity well enough as the progress of girls and boys, the most able, those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils varies across the school. In some year groups these pupils are achieving well but in others their progress is much patchier.
- Pupils' progress is not checked well enough in other subjects, including art, science, French, history and geography. Reports home to parents provide parents with detailed comments about how well their child is doing in literacy and numeracy. These reports provide insufficient information as to how well pupils are doing across the rest of the curriculum.

Early years provision

Good

- Children start the early years with skills that are at least typical for their age, with a significant number with skills above those typically expected for their age. Through good leadership, the numbers of children achieving a good level of development are rising year on year and continue to be above the national average. Consequently, the majority of children are ready for Year 1.
- The leader of early years provides good leadership. Teachers and additional adults work very well together. This means that teachers and other adults know the children well. Assessments are accurate and pinpoint the strengths and areas of a child's development that need addressing. Teaching is good as activities provide children with lots of opportunities to practise what they have learned in a range of ways.
- Teachers help children learn clear and simple routines from the very beginning of their time in school. This includes routines for tidying up and putting things away safely.

Good use is made of rewards and praise for children showing good attitudes to learning, including good listening and the use of kind words, and for behaving well.

- Additional funding has been used effectively to employ additional adults. The progress of disadvantaged children in particular is improving and is in line with that of other children. This is because learning journals and records accurately and regularly capture the small steps of improvement children are making and the use of timely interventions further accelerates progress.
- Teachers and other adults communicate well with parents. Parents are encouraged to attend a wide range of sessions to see how their children are progressing and how they can help their child at home. These include helpful 'stay and play' sessions, welcome meetings and phonics workshops. Good partnerships have been established between school and the local pre-school. This means that children adapt to their new setting quickly and smoothly.
- The early years leader has a clear understanding of what is working well and what can be further improved. Given the starting points of many of the children, even more could be exceeding the good levels of development than currently are. A few children who are working below age-related expectations sometimes do not make rapid enough progress and so are not ready for learning in Year 1, particularly in reading, writing and number.
- The leader of the early years has benefited from meeting with other early years providers and this has helped introduce new ideas and approaches and secure sustained improvements over time. The recently appointed special educational needs coordinator has already established links with learning support services to help and support children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- As with the rest of the school, leaders see the safeguarding of children as being of paramount importance. The site is safe and secure and safeguarding checks are effective and detailed and these help contribute to children feeling and being safe.

School details

Unique reference number	106860
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	10003023

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	228
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Hainsworth
Headteacher	Richard Chipchase
Telephone number	0114 287 2484
Website	www.swallownestprimary.org.uk
Email address	swallownest.primary@rotherham.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	11–12 October 2011

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the curriculum, pupil progress or details regarding the teaching of phonics or reading schemes being used.
- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is slightly above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is below the national average.
- The school meets the government's 2015 floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school runs a breakfast club.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors gathered a wide range of evidence during the inspection, including through observations of teaching, some of which were undertaken with the headteacher. They also carried out work scrutinies in classrooms checking literacy, numeracy, science, modern foreign languages and topic books.
- Inspectors held meetings with school staff, including the headteacher, other senior leaders and staff in charge of aspects of the school's work. Inspectors also spoke with a number of parents in the playground at the start of the school day. The inspectors also met with three governors, a local authority officer and held a telephone conversation with the local authority's virtual headteacher for children who are looked after.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils during formal interviews, during lessons and during breaktimes.
- Inspectors considered a wide range of documentation related to the school's work, gathering the school's view of its performance and information concerning pupils' attainment, progress, attendance and behaviour.
- Inspectors scrutinised records concerning safeguarding, pupils' behaviour over time and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Inspectors analysed parental responses submitted to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, during the inspection. They also considered 17 staff surveys submitted to Ofsted and 34 pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Phil Smith, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Don Parker	Ofsted Inspector
Mujahid Ali	Ofsted Inspector

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