

# Inspection of a good school: Swan Lane First School

Rynal Street, Evesham, Worcestershire WR11 4QA

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Inspection dates:

21–22 January 2020

## Outcome

Swan Lane First School continues to be a good school.

There is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if we were to carry out a section 5 inspection now.

## What is it like to attend this school?

At this lively, friendly school, pupils' positive attitudes to learning and life are plain to see. Pupils thrive in lots of ways, academically and personally. They make a real contribution to school life through the school council and the eco council. The recently created adventure playground was built because pupils asked for it. Together, pupils and staff have compiled a list of '50 things to do at Swan Lane', such as having a picnic in the park and growing vegetables. These activities create special memories for pupils.

Pupils show great care for others. They respect each other's views. Pupils who join the school from countries other than the UK are welcomed with open arms. They make friends easily and settle quickly into the well-established routines. Pupils celebrate their many different home languages on European languages day.

The headteacher and other leaders set very high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils receive rewards for demonstrating the school's values of resilience, curiosity, compassion, respect and loyalty. This might be a certificate in a celebration assembly or a tea party with the headteacher. Bullying is extremely rare. If anyone is unkind, pupils are reminded to think about, 'what would be the kind thing to do?'

## What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Pupils' needs are at the heart of the carefully planned curriculum. In each subject, pupils learn in manageable steps, building on what they have learned before. They have regular opportunities to revisit previous topics so that they can recall their learning and practise their skills. Teachers assess pupils' learning frequently and adapt their teaching to fill any gaps in pupils' knowledge. As a result, pupils achieve highly.

In mathematics, lessons are lively and engaging. Pupils regularly practise mental arithmetic through weekly 'Big Maths' challenges. They are keen to test themselves and

improve on their previous scores. Teachers ask pupils to 'prove it' or 'be the teacher', spotting deliberate mistakes in teachers' examples. Pupils rise to this challenge, working out the correct answer and explaining how they did it. Pupils discuss mathematical problems confidently, using the correct vocabulary. Pupils love mathematics and understand how important it is. One pupil summed this up by saying, 'Maths is everywhere.'

Pupils learn to read quickly because phonics sessions are well planned and taught. In Reception, familiar stories and poems help to develop children's language skills. Their confidence grows very quickly, which helps prepare them for Year 1 and beyond. Older pupils learn poetry by heart and perform dramatic recitals in front of the whole school. In this and lots of other ways, pupils develop a love of reading. Pupils whose first language is not English learn to read quickly in English and soon catch up with their peers.

Developing pupils' language skills is a priority. Teachers teach key vocabulary for each subject. Pupils frequently discuss their learning, justifying and explaining their thinking. Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) or those who lack confidence in speaking, particularly disadvantaged pupils, benefit greatly from these opportunities.

In history, the curriculum is designed to help pupils learn about the significance of historical events, not just the facts. For example, in Year 4, pupils put the achievements of the Anglo-Saxons in order of significance. Pupils explained their thinking confidently, justifying their opinions using evidence from the sources. They understand how to put their views across politely, even when they might not agree with their classmates.

Despite the fact that the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) is new to the role, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive excellent support to achieve as well as they can. Leaders find practical ways to remove any barriers to pupils' learning. Staff use sign language so that they can communicate more easily with pupils who have a hearing impairment. A lift has been fitted so that pupils with disabilities can access all parts of the school building. Pupils who join the school with challenging behaviour receive lots of care and support to help them concentrate and learn. The school's success in supporting pupils with SEND is impressive.

The headteacher leads the school with genuine care for all pupils and with humility and integrity. This sets the tone for the positive relationships between adults and pupils. Staff are proud to work at the school. They say that leaders support them well to do the best they can, so that all pupils achieve their full potential.

At the time of this inspection, the headteacher had announced her intention to retire. Governors are determined to recruit the right person to lead this school into the future.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The care and protection of all pupils are at the heart of this school. Staff are well trained to spot the signs of abuse and neglect. They report any concerns to the headteacher, who

is also the designated safeguarding leader (DSL). She makes sure that actions are followed up quickly and pupils receive the support they need. Pupils and their families can get support from staff in school when they need it. Many parents say that this helps them overcome challenges.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The current headteacher is due to retire at the end of the spring term 2020. The governing body is currently recruiting a new headteacher for September 2020. Governors have put in place robust interim arrangements for the summer term. Governors should ensure that temporary leaders receive the support and mentoring they need to develop their skills so that the high standard of education being provided in the school is maintained and pupils continue to flourish.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2010.

## **How can I feed back my views?**

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## **Further information**

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	116673
<b>Local authority</b>	Worcestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10122554
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5 to 10
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	337
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Acting Chair of governing body</b>	Kevin Harper
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ruth Roberts
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.swanlanefirstschool.worcs.sch.uk">www.swanlanefirstschool.worcs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8 March 2016

## Information about this school

- Swan Lane Primary School educates children from Reception to the end of Year 5, when pupils move on to middle school.
- The school has a higher than average proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.

## Information about this inspection

- Before the inspection, I reviewed documents on the school's website, as well as published assessment information and the previous inspection report. I spoke to the headteacher and other leaders on the telephone about the school's development plan and the approach to curriculum planning.
- I spoke to parents as they picked their children up from school. I considered 30 responses to Parent View, including 12 free-text responses.
- I spoke to pupils in lessons and at breaks and lunchtimes about behaviour and bullying, life at school and how they are taught to keep themselves safe. There were no responses to the pupil survey, but I met with pupils to discuss how the school supports their personal development.

- A meeting was held with the interim SENCo, SENCo designate and the pupil premium leader to discuss how pupils' needs are identified and addressed, as well as the use of pupil premium funds.
- I spoke to teachers about the curriculum, their workload and pupils' behaviour, and considered 17 responses to the staff survey.
- I met with the full governing body. I spoke to a representative of the local authority on the telephone.
- I discussed safeguarding procedures and practice with the headteacher, who is also the DSL. Pre-employment checks and case files were reviewed. Records of incidents of bullying and behaviour were checked, as well as records and analysis of attendance information and exclusions. I spoke to members of staff and pupils about safeguarding throughout the day.
- I looked in detail at early reading, mathematics and history. I met with subject leaders, visited lessons (including phonics sessions), looked at pupils' work and met with teachers and pupils for each subject.

### **Inspection team**

Jane Spilsbury, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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