

Inspection of a good school: Swanton Abbott Community Primary School

Youngman's Lane, Swanton Abbott, Norwich, Norfolk NR10 5DZ

Inspection date: 5 May 2023

Outcome

Swanton Abbott Community Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils comment that they feel safe and happy. Most parents agree. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their school. One pupil described the school as their 'second home'. Pupils are kind to one another. They know that being different sometimes means individuals need help and support. The positive relationships between pupils and staff are clear. The ethos of care also extends to staff expectations. Leaders want all pupils to succeed. Pupils meet these expectations through their attitude to learning and their determination in lessons. Pupils work hard because they are motivated.

Behaviour is positive. Pupils say that they can learn without being distracted and that social times are usually calm. They play well as a community. Pupil friendship groups extend beyond their year group.

Pupils comment that bullying does not happen often and that when it does, staff respond quickly. The majority of parents also feel confident that bullying is dealt with effectively.

The school offers some extra-curricular opportunities, school visits and trips but these have been more limited following the COVID-19 pandemic. Leaders are working to provide more opportunities to develop pupils' leadership and contribution to how the school is run.

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

Leaders have made the teaching of reading a priority. The phonics programme adopted by the school is delivered effectively. Pupils are taught by staff who have received appropriate training. Reading opportunities are regular and frequent. This helps pupils to access and discuss the curriculum. For example, Year 2 pupils confidently described the meaning of homonyms during their reading session. Most Reception children are able to sound out and blend words when reading to a familiar adult. Reading outcomes for pupils are in line with the national average at key stage 2.

The school has constructed a curriculum that enables pupils to make good progress. Pupils undertake challenging work, and this is usually of a high standard. Curriculum leaders are clear that their ambition is that all pupils succeed. Staff work collaboratively and have a good understanding of the curriculum approaches they are using. Pupils begin their curriculum journey in Reception and build skills and knowledge throughout key stages 1 and 2. Where pupils fall behind, there are appropriate intervention strategies to support them to catch up. These are implemented quickly. However, a small proportion of the most able pupils do not reach their potential.

Assessment is used effectively in most subjects. This information is used to determine what pupils know and can do. Intervention is then targeted to specific gaps in knowledge. However, in some foundation subjects, success criteria are not explicit, which reduces the precision of these interventions.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well. Pupils are positive about the support provided. Teachers have a thorough understanding of the needs of individual pupils. The school engages with parents at an early stage when pupils are identified as requiring additional support. Alternative provision is used where this is appropriate.

There is very little evidence of low-level disruption. Lessons are calm and pupils focus on their learning. Most parent survey responses indicate that they feel behaviour is well led and managed. Most pupils never experience bullying. Where bullying does occur, it is dealt with effectively.

Pupils can access extra-curricular activities and they enjoy these. Older pupils can also become 'play leaders' and support younger children. Pupil voice does not yet feature significantly within the school. This is an area identified within the school's development plan.

Leaders are ambitious for their community. Staff feel they are well trained and that leaders engage with them to reduce workload. However, governor training is not as well planned or implemented. This has an impact on governors' strategic knowledge of school improvement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school records pre-employment checks accurately. Leaders provide appropriate and regular training to ensure staff can identify concerns and can act on them. There is a clear reporting system in place that is well understood. Pupils comment that they feel safe, and most parents agree. Pupils feel able to talk to a trusted adult and are confident that action will be taken. Leaders work effectively with external agencies if significant concerns are identified. Prompt action is taken. Governors' safeguarding training does not always provide them with sufficient skills to act as a 'critical friend' to the headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Governors do not have a sufficiently sharp focus on their strategic role. This is because they have not been trained to fully explore all areas of school effectiveness. As a result, school leaders are not held sufficiently to account. The appropriate authority must ensure that governors receive the relevant training to enable them to fulfil their duties effectively.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we inspected the school in June 2014.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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.

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

Unique reference number	120856
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10286263
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	78
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sue Traverso
Headteacher	Emma Hamilton-Smith
Website	www.swantonabbott.norfolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school makes use of one unregistered alternative provider.
- The school is currently maintained by the local authority.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The lead inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders, staff and representatives from the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, physical education and mathematics. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum planning, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspection team spoke with staff and pupils. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead and reviewed safeguarding records. The lead inspector also reviewed the single central record of pre-

employment checks made on staff and reviewed information about the safer recruitment of staff.

- The inspection team met with pupils from different year groups to talk about their learning and experiences at school.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents provided by the school. These included the school improvement plan, curriculum documentation and school policies.
- Inspectors considered 19 responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View. This included 14 comments from parents and carers in the free-text facility. Inspectors also considered the 11 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Jonathan Rockey, lead inspector

His Majesty’s Inspector

James Chester

His Majesty’s Inspector

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