



Swain House Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 107220
LEA Bradford
Inspection number 277732
Inspection dates 21 June 2006 to 22 June 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Anthony Briggs CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Radcliffe Avenue
School category	Community		Bradford
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		West Yorkshire BD2 1JL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01274 639049
Number on roll	374	Fax number	01274 627059
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr N Traynor
Date of previous inspection	11 March 2002	Headteacher	Miss Diane Rowbotham

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Swain House School is a larger than average size primary school, although the number on roll has fallen in the last few years. The majority of pupils live close to the school in a mixture of local authority and private housing. Most pupils are of White British heritage. A few are from minority ethnic heritages but all speak English fluently. More pupils than average are eligible for free school meals whilst the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is about average. A very small number of pupils are in the care of the local authority. The number of pupils who start or leave the school other than at the usual time is above average.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

'I am very impressed with the way the school has improved recently,' and 'teachers make sure every child is made to feel safe and secure,' are just two of the positive comments made by parents during the inspection. Inspectors agree with parents, pupils and the school's own view that Swain House is a satisfactory and improving school that provides sound value for money. The school's evaluation of its own performance matches almost exactly the views of the inspection team. Through the dynamic leadership of the headteacher and the commitment of staff and governors, it is well placed to improve even further. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. It is good in the Foundation Stage where children get off to a great start to their school life and achieve well. Teaching is also good in Key Stage 1, but in Key Stage 2, pupils' achievement is no better than satisfactory, owing to inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. In 2005, overall standards at the end of Year 6 were below average.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and are well cared for. The attention given to their emotional well-being and personal development is strong. Consequently, pupils behave well, have really positive attitudes to learning and work hard for their teachers. The curriculum is satisfactory, if not a little stale, but there is a good range of enrichment activities that extend pupils' learning experiences and promote good social skills. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Managers have improved the tracking of pupils' progress, but procedures do not focus enough on how well pupils do throughout their whole time in school. Things have moved on well since the previous inspection with many of the issues identified now resolved.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure greater consistency in the quality of teaching, particularly in Key Stage 2, to ensure pupils get the best out of their learning.
- Track pupils' progress more rigorously over the whole time they spend in school to ensure that they achieve as well as they can in all subjects.
- Improve the curriculum to allow more opportunities for pupils to develop their creativity and independence.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement and standards are satisfactory overall. Children enter the Nursery with skills that are below those expected for their age. The school's records show that children make good progress in the Foundation Stage in all areas of learning, particularly in their mathematical development. This good start is built on effectively in Key Stage 1, so that, by the end of Year 2, pupils attain broadly average standards. The smooth transition from Nursery through to Year 2 is down to a settled staffing position and good teaching. The progress of pupils in Key Stage 2 has been patchy over recent years, due to the high turnover of staff and weaknesses in teaching. It is now

satisfactory, although, if staff had a longer-term overview of their progress, pupils could do even better. In 2005, as a result of weaknesses in teaching and tracking procedures, pupils did not perform as well as expected in the national tests, particularly in English. Results were below average. The school has made a concerted effort to raise standards by Year 6. Pupils' attainment is improving and the school is confident it will meet the realistic targets set for 2006. Standards in the current Year 6 are broadly average. The progress for particular groups such as looked after pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is the same as for other pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils really enjoy lessons and the other activities on offer. They are keen to learn and they get on well with each other, both in class and during playtimes. Comments such as, 'you don't feel you are going to be bullied,' sum up the good quality relationships evident throughout school. Pupils behave well and are cheerful and polite when talking to visitors. 'Don't all speak at once,' one boy quickly reminded others as they become so animated when explaining why they like coming to school. Pupils are gaining a good understanding of leading safe and healthy lives and how to look after themselves when out of school, if faced with an emergency. They eagerly join in the opportunities for physical exercise and show a good competitive spirit when taking part in team games. Their attendance is broadly average. Pupils are developing into good junior citizens, accepting responsibilities and carrying out duties sensibly. The school council gives pupils a chance to voice their opinions and help improve the school. Pupils contribute well to the wider community, for example, raising money for charity, choir performances and adopting a foal at a local horse sanctuary. The extremely well attended breakfast club provides pupils with a healthy breakfast, good opportunities for socialising and prepares them well for the day ahead.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Although there are some pockets of good and outstanding practice, and teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently good, it is less effective in Key Stage 2. This is reflected in the progress pupils make. A real strength of the teaching relates to the teachers' enthusiasm for helping pupils to learn. Lessons are usually tightly planned and most teachers incorporate a variety of ideas to keep pupils interested. In the best lessons, work is well matched to the needs of each pupil, enabling all to make at least satisfactory progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported by the teaching assistants, enabling them to learn as well as their classmates. 'Teachers really make lessons fun,' was the view of one pupil. Whilst this can be seen in the best lessons, other lessons do not have the same level of excitement or drive, because teachers

occasionally talk too much and do not let the pupils learn for themselves. Pupils say they learn best when they are 'not just listening to the teacher but doing it for ourselves'. Teaching has been driven by a focus on literacy and numeracy, and ensuring the structure of lessons is uniform. However, pupils say they are becoming bored with every lesson starting in the same way and they thirst for more creativity in their learning. Recent training in 'thinking skills' has resulted in teachers trying new ideas and making lessons more exciting. However, the full impact of this has yet to be seen.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils say, 'the drama club is wicked. It is an opportunity to express yourself and have fun.' The computer suite and the school library are both positively commented on by the pupils, as they express their appreciation of the good range of extra activities and residential experiences that have a strong impact on their enjoyment, as well as their learning. Since emerging from special measures, there has rightly been a focus on the acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills to help pupils to make at least satisfactory progress, but there is not yet enough emphasis on developing pupils' creativity to bring excitement to all lessons. Managers are tackling this. For example, in science, pupils have more practical opportunities to conduct experiments and investigations, resulting in greater achievement. Significant emphasis is also placed upon developing thinking and speaking skills, which has also had a positive impact on achievement and self-confidence. This initiative starts with a clear emphasis on communication skills as soon as children enter the Nursery.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support for pupils are good. Parents appreciate the 'welcoming atmosphere in school', and say they are very happy with the care shown by staff. 'You feel safe in school,' was a comment from a number of pupils. Good initiatives are in place to support those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, vulnerable pupils and those with social or emotional difficulties. A well organised programme for personal health, social and citizenship education (PHSCE) helps pupils understand the importance of healthy lifestyles. Transition to the next phase of learning is carefully managed, and self-confidence and mutual responsibility promoted strongly. Procedures for ensuring pupils' safety, such as child protection, risk assessments and health and safety are in place. Assessment information is used well to provide extra help to those pupils who are identified as making slower than expected progress in their learning. However, pupils' progress is not tracked rigorously enough over their whole time in school to ensure they are improving enough.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership of the headteacher is characterised by a commitment to raising standards and improving the quality of learning that takes place throughout the school. She has managed the necessary changes expertly to secure further improvement since she steered the school out of special measures. Some very difficult decisions have been made and several staff have moved on, but the clear vision for getting the best deal for the pupils prevails. Her commitment and drive are shared by the deputy headteacher and between them they have identified the strengths and weaknesses of all aspects of the schools work really well. Governors also play their part in holding the school to account and checking on how well it is doing. Recently improved monitoring procedures ensure that weaknesses in teaching are quickly identified and dealt with, although there is still more work to do in this area, especially in Key Stage 2. Tracking how much progress pupils make is not robust enough. It does not take enough account of the bigger picture of how well a pupil does from entering the school to leaving. The curriculum is being reviewed because managers agree that it is stifling creativity. Subject leaders and other teachers with responsibility understand their roles but because several are new to them, they have not yet had time to incorporate the necessary monitoring systems into everyday use. It is for these reasons that leadership and management are currently satisfactory rather than good and the capacity to improve is good.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for being so friendly and polite when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed talking to you and listening to what you had to say and what you like best about Swain House. We would like to share with you what we thought about your school.

What we liked most about your school:

- we were particularly impressed by the way in which you all get on with each other and really want to do well in your lessons
- Miss Rowbotham has done a great job at improving the school over the time she has been with you
- we agree with you that the adults in school really look after you and make you feel safe and that most teachers make lessons fun
- the work you do for charity, such as your choir concerts and adopting a horse, shows that you really care for others
- you told us that the breakfast club provides a great start to your day and we agree.

To help your school as it improves, we have asked Miss Rowbotham and the other adults to do the following things:

- make sure all lessons are as good as the ones in the earlier years
- look more carefully at how well you are doing from the moment you arrive at Swain House to the day you leave, so that they know how well you are learning
- make the lessons more interesting so that you can be involved more in creating things and learning on your own.

I hope that you continue to enjoy working hard for your teachers.