



Swindon Village Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 115744
LEA Gloucestershire
Inspection number 279668
Inspection dates 13 March 2006 to 14 March 2006
Reporting inspector Helen Barter AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Church Road
School category	Foundation		Cheltenham
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Gloucestershire GL51 9QP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01242 690016
Number on roll	403	Fax number	01242 690017
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Adam Flaughter
Date of previous inspection	25 September 2000	Headteacher	Mr Chris Chamberlain

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This larger-than-average primary school is located in a village on the outskirts of Cheltenham. Most pupils are of White British heritage, with a small number from other backgrounds. The proportion of pupils entitled to claim free school meals is below average. The proportion with learning difficulties and disabilities is average. The headteacher was appointed to the school in September 2004.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to teaching and the pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6.

The school judges its own effectiveness as good. However, the inspection judges it to be inadequate because pupils from Years 3 to 6 do not do well enough, given their starting points and capabilities. Standards at the end of Year 6 and the progress that pupils make have declined since the last inspection. The school currently does not provide satisfactory value for money.

The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage are good. Children settle well and make good progress in the Reception classes. Good teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 help pupils to continue this good progress so that they reach good standards by the end of Year 2. Progress slows in Years 3 to 6 so pupils do not achieve sufficiently well in these years. Standards are broadly average by the end of Year 6 but pupils do not reach the challenging targets set for them and consequently their achievement is inadequate. Teaching and learning in these years are inadequate because information about pupils' learning is not used well enough to plan work which will help them all to achieve to the best of their abilities.

Pupils' personal development is good. They behave well and contribute positively to the school and local community. Pupils feel well cared for and enjoy school. Parents are positive about the school and many are pleased with the changes brought about by the new leadership. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has worked hard with staff and governors to identify what needs to be done to help pupils reach their potential. There is a shared determination at all levels to improve the school. However, everyone realises that there is more to be done if the decline in pupils' standards and achievement in Years 3 to 6 is to be halted. Through newly developed self-evaluation processes, the school has identified clear priorities for improvement aimed at raising standards. While the monitoring and evaluation roles of staff now require strengthening in order to raise pupils' achievement, there are clear indications that the school has the capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6 by ensuring that teachers make rigorous use of information about all pupils' learning to plan work which consistently meets their needs.
- Set challenging targets for individual pupils from year to year and track their progress towards them so that underachievement can be identified quickly.
- Make more effective use of the monitoring systems to check how well the school is doing to ensure that weaknesses are dealt with promptly.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Achievement and standards are inadequate. Standards are broadly average by the end of Year 6, but pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory because of wide variations in progress across the school. Pupils make good progress in the Reception classes from their starting points. By the end of the Reception year, children's attainment is better than that found nationally in all areas of learning. Good progress is maintained in Years 1 and 2. Good teaching builds well on what pupils already know and, by the end of Year 2, standards are above average.

The rate at which pupils make progress in Years 3 to 6 has fallen significantly in the last two years and pupils do not achieve well enough. National test results, as well as the school's own assessment data, show that pupils do not consistently make enough progress from year to year. The school sets suitably challenging targets for achievement in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 but these were not met in 2005. Although the school is working hard to plug some of the gaps in learning by providing support for pupils who have fallen behind, this has not yet been sufficient to raise overall progress to satisfactory levels. Pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities make satisfactory progress in Years 3 to 6 because they are given helpful support by teachers and teaching assistants. Test results at the end of Year 6 in 2005 showed that girls make slower progress than boys, but this is not evident in work in the current year.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' good personal development and well-being are underpinned by warm and friendly relationships between staff and pupils. Children in the Reception classes settle quickly into school and are happy and confident. Their personal, social and emotional development is good. This firm foundation is built on in subsequent years. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They make a positive contribution to the work of the school through the pupil council and the many responsibilities that they take on. Pupils are developing personal skills to help them in later life. They cooperate well with each other and work effectively in teams. They support the wider community well through their work to raise funds for charity. In lessons, there are more limited opportunities for pupils to work independently and use their initiative. Pupils are positive about school and enjoy learning. Attendance is good. Most are very attentive in lessons and hang on their teacher's every word. Pupils behave well both in lessons and at playtimes. They are aware of the need to stay healthy and safe. They enjoy their fruit snacks and participate enthusiastically in opportunities to take part in physical exercise both in lessons and out-of-school clubs.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

The overall quality of teaching is inadequate because of weaknesses in pupils' learning in Years 3 to 6. In these years, there are too many occasions when work is not challenging enough and the pace of learning is too slow. This is because teachers make insufficient use of information about how well pupils are doing to ensure that work is pitched at the right level and builds on what pupils already know and can do.

Nonetheless, there are some elements of good teaching across the school. Teachers manage behaviour well and have good relationships with pupils. When teachers plan interesting work that engages pupils, they enjoy learning and want to do their best. Good use is made of interactive whiteboards in many lessons to explain new concepts and to bring activities alive. The best teaching is in the Reception classes and in Years 1 and 2. Teachers have good expectations of what pupils should achieve and they successfully make learning fun. There is a good pace to learning, with teachers taking good account of what pupils already know to ensure that work is matched closely to pupils' needs.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum planned for pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, is satisfactory. There are clear strengths in the work planned in the Reception classes, where children are engaged in imaginative learning tasks. The newly developed outside area has already made a significant difference to this provision. In Years 1 to 6, there is a broad curriculum, with good provision for physical education. In some year groups, the timetable arrangements for science mean that pupils' skills are not built regularly and consistently throughout the year. There is some interesting work planned in information and communication technology (ICT), but pupils do not always have enough opportunities to use their ICT skills to help them with work in other subjects. Timetables show that some lessons are overlong. There is a sound personal, social and health education programme which underpins pupils' capacity to stay healthy and safe. There is a good range of interesting lunchtime and after-school clubs which pupils of all ages enjoy.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The care, guidance and support given to pupils are satisfactory. There are clear strengths in the good relationships between staff and pupils. Staff know the pupils well and give them good pastoral support. This helps pupils to develop their personal skills in a positive and happy environment. Children in the Reception classes are well cared for and settle quickly into school routines. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported in classrooms and in small groups. Arrangements for

safeguarding pupils are in place, although new staff have not yet had training in child protection this year. Arrangements for checking that the building and trips out of school are free from danger are secure. The school encourages pupils to adopt healthy lifestyles by eating sensibly and taking plenty of exercise. Systems for tracking pupils' academic progress are not sufficiently well established. Although the school has introduced sound procedures to check how well pupils are doing, it has yet to use the information effectively to ensure that all pupils make good enough progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Since his appointment, the headteacher has carefully maintained the school's positive atmosphere and has the continued support of parents who are loyal to the school. He has strengthened the role of the senior management team in analysing the school's strengths and weaknesses and together they have identified the most important areas for improvement. Improved performance management systems are helping staff to better understand their roles and responsibilities to raise standards. Through a structured programme, senior managers and subject leaders are developing their skills in monitoring and evaluation to analyse standards in subjects and to identify gaps in pupils' learning. Nevertheless, the impact of these improvements is not yet evident in the progress being made by pupils. The expertise of leaders and managers in using data to more accurately identify underachievement and improve pupils' progress still requires further development.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors know the school's strengths and understand the need to support the headteacher and staff in their work to improve the school. Although the school's view of its current effectiveness is overoptimistic, satisfactory self-evaluation processes have enabled the school to identify key priorities in its improvement plan which are clearly aimed at raising standards. The developments already made in building a team of leaders and managers who have a growing understanding of what needs to be done to improve indicate that the school has the capacity to improve further.

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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?	4	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	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	2	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?	4	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?	3	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	4	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	4	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 making us welcome when we came to visit your school this week to see how you are doing. We are writing to tell you what we found out about your school and what we think needs to be improved.

These are the good things we found in school:

You clearly enjoy coming to school. You all behave well and are keen to learn and to take part in all the clubs and after-school activities.

You know that it is important to keep safe and be healthy. We noticed that so many of you enjoy taking part in sport.

Your Pupil Council works hard for you and makes sensible decisions on your behalf, such as asking the school to improve your toilets.

Children in the Reception classes and in Years 1 and 2 make a good start to school life and learn well.

Your headteacher and the other teachers care about you and are working hard to make sure that you all do as well as you can.

However, we think that there are some things that the school could do to improve. These are:

Make sure that those of you in Years 3 to 6 are always given work that is hard enough so that you do as well as you can.

Check how well you are working and set you targets so that you know how to make your work even better.

Keep checking how well the school is doing and make sure that improvements are introduced quickly.

We know that you will help your teachers and will work hard to do your very best.