

# Swaffham Prior CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110794
<b>Local Authority</b>	CAMBRIDGESHIRE
<b>Inspection number</b>	288778
<b>Inspection date</b>	24 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Helen Ranger

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	106
<b>School</b>	
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Roz Chalmers
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Emma Vincent
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 February 2003
<b>School address</b>	Station Road Swaffham Prior Cambridgeshire CB25 0LG
<b>Telephone number</b>	01638 741529
<b>Fax number</b>	01638 741529

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This smaller than average school draws about half its pupils from the immediate locality. The remainder come from further afield through parental choice. A significant proportion of pupils join the school part way through their education. About three quarters of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The rest are drawn from a wide range of minority ethnic groups. A few are from Traveller communities. When pupils enter Reception, their attainment ranges widely but, overall, is below what is normally expected. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is above average and very large in some year groups; five pupils have statements of special educational need, a high figure for a school of its size. The headteacher has been in post for three weeks, following two terms as the acting headteacher.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school with some outstanding features and few significant areas for improvement. There is a strong spirit of teamwork among the staff who are led well by the new headteacher. She has continued to build on the school's past achievements and has a clear vision for how it can develop further. Parents' views of the school and their willingness to work in partnership with the teachers are excellent. Their opinions are typified by one who wrote, 'A lovely family school. Aren't we lucky!' Pupils also like the fact that they attend a small school with one stating that, 'In our school you can become good friends with everyone'.

Pupils make good progress. From starting points in the Foundation Stage that are often quite low, they achieve well. In spite of the high proportion who have learning difficulties or disabilities, overall standards are average by Year 6. Pupils' English skills develop well, although their writing ability often lags too far behind their reading. This is an area for further improvement. Pupils' personal development is a significant strength of the school. They enjoy school enormously, behave well and are learning to adopt safe and healthy lifestyles extremely effectively. Their involvement in how their school runs and in the wider community is excellent. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education and their future lives. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, but they show a rather limited awareness of the diversity of modern British culture.

Pupils achieve well because teaching and learning are good in all age groups and are based on an interesting and varied curriculum. A parent summed this up by saying the staff 'give the children a very rounded 'life and learning' experience'. Care, guidance and support for pupils are outstanding. Every pupil is known well as an individual and given high quality academic and personal guidance. Pupils feel very well cared for. They are developing a clear knowledge of how they are doing in their work and how they can improve. Very good support for those with learning difficulties, including strong links with external specialists, ensures they do well.

Leadership and management at all levels are good. The governors are led effectively by a very experienced chairperson and know the school extremely well. All the teachers share subject leadership roles well. School self-evaluation is accurate and is used well to identify strengths and weaknesses. Since its last inspection, the school has continued to offer a good standard of education and provides good value for money. Its track record of recent years and its current team of staff and governors make it well placed to continue to improve.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing so that they are closer to the levels pupils reach in reading.
- Develop pupils' awareness of the cultural diversity of modern Britain.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

The youngest pupils make good progress in their first year. The current Reception group is on course to reach above expected levels in personal development by the end of the year. They are likely to achieve average levels in aspects of language and mathematics but are still below expectations in several other areas of their learning. Attainment in the Year 2 national assessments has been broadly average for the past few years, and a little better in 2005 and 2006 than previously. Pupils currently in Year 2 are reaching expected levels in writing and

mathematics. Their attainment in reading, especially in the proportion reaching Level 3, is much improved this year. However, this improvement has further highlighted a growing gap between reading and writing standards in this key stage.

The overall school performance data for Year 6 pupils have to be treated with caution, as many pupils with learning difficulties join the school part way through Key Stage 2. Pupils from Traveller communities spend large amounts of time out of school. These groups of pupils make good progress, because teaching is matched well to their needs. Nevertheless, they often do not reach expected levels. Most other pupils, by Year 6, reach at least average standards and last year were above average. The teachers have identified and addressed areas of weakness in science and mathematics in the past few years. Half of the present Year 6 have learning difficulties but the group is achieving average standards overall and is on track to meet the school's targets. However, as in Key Stage 1, pupils' writing in Key Stage 2 is not as proficient as their reading.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' good attitudes to school, great enjoyment of activities and the good support they get from home are obvious in their enthusiasm for learning and their very good relationships. Attendance is good. Bullying is rare and pupils do much in their roles as school councillors or 'playground buddies' to stamp out any inappropriate behaviour. They are embracing healthy lifestyles extremely well, evident in their involvement in 'Sport Week' activities during the inspection and, for instance, in the healthy snacks they bring for breaktime and the very good response to 'Walk to School Week'. They are involved in many village activities, such as regular contacts with a local day care centre for the elderly. Pupils talk with interest about their links with a Kenyan school and are involved in a local arts project on the theme of 'If the world were a village', which has a strong multicultural dimension. Such activities contribute much to pupils' good knowledge of other cultures and religions across the world. However, they are not so aware that diverse cultures, faiths and languages are an important feature of contemporary Britain.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teachers plan lessons well to cater for the wide range of ages and ability in each class and these promote good achievement. They provide interesting and challenging activities and pupils testify to how their enjoyment of such tasks helps them to learn. Key skills in literacy, numeracy, science and information and communication technology (ICT) are mostly taught well, although writing activities have not enabled all pupils to reach levels of which they are capable. Pupils have regular useful opportunities to share and extend ideas in conversation with their 'talk partners'. Teachers work closely with the team of teaching assistants who are particularly effective in supporting pupils who need extra help. Teachers use good assessment systems to check and track pupils' achievements. As a result of recent work to develop the effectiveness of their assessments, they increasingly modify their lesson planning in the light of what they know about how well pupils are learning. Pupils are also starting to assess their own and others' work and find this helpful in knowing how well they are getting on.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

All the required subjects are covered by careful planning, which has improved significantly since the last inspection and ensures that knowledge, understanding and skills are built up systematically. Outdoor provision for pupils in Reception has also been developed and is now good. Staff are forging effective links between subjects to make learning more interesting, and this work is continuing. Good planning extends activities successfully for pupils who have particular gifts or talents. Pupils say how much they enjoy the practical nature of many activities, especially in mathematics, science and physical education. For its size the school offers a wide range of clubs and extra activities, including sport and music, and has its own swimming pool. Its grounds have been developed well to enable pupils to enjoy pleasant and purposeful recreational activities during breaktimes.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Both pastoral care and academic guidance are of high quality. Close contacts with pupils' families mean that individuals are known well and their needs catered for. The school does all in its power to safeguard pupils and to check the suitability of adults who work or help in the school. Of particular note is the care offered to pupils with learning difficulties, to pupils who join the school later than the usual Reception starting point, and to the pupils from Traveller families. Academic support and guidance are very strong. Pupils are clear about what they are expected to learn in lessons and about their learning targets in English, mathematics or personal development. They get regular, good quality feedback from adults through discussions and well focused marking. They are involved very well in reviewing and improving their own work.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The school's continuing success is rooted in effective leadership and management, which have a clear focus on ensuring pupils do well. The headteacher and governors have ensured that staffing changes this year have involved minimal disruption to pupils. Teaching, learning and the curriculum are monitored well to check that the high priority given to staff development is effective. Governors are very skilled in carrying out their duties of supporting and challenging the school. Subject leaders are increasingly involved in checking standards and provision and in joining the headteacher and governors in establishing the school's direction. This is an inclusive school that welcomes and caters for pupils from all backgrounds who have a very wide range of abilities. It serves its community well.



## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

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



## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

25 May 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Swaffham Prior Church of England Primary School, Swaffham Prior, CB25 0LG

This letter is to thank you for your friendly welcome and your help during my recent visit to your school. You and your parents told me how much you like your school. Those of your parents who wrote to me are really pleased with how you are getting on and how the school looks after you. I agree with them and with you that your school is good. The teachers help you to do well and the children get on very well together.

I enjoyed seeing part of your Sport Week. Your school offers you lots of ways like that to keep fit and healthy. You also say you feel safe and well looked after in school and that children are almost always friendly to each other. You help your school in lots of ways, such as through the school council and by being buddies in the playground. I was interested to hear about how you learn about people who live in other countries, such as through your Kenyan pen friends. I think you could also learn more about how people live in other parts of Britain and I have asked your teachers to look at how they can do this with you.

All the staff and the governors work together well to make sure you make good progress with your school work. You told me how much you like the practical activities in subjects like science and mathematics. You do well with your reading. I have asked the school to keep trying to make sure that your writing is as good as your reading. You can help your teachers with this by listening carefully to the advice they give you. I know that you are already good at remembering your literacy targets. You are also getting good at checking your own work and the work of some of your classmates. All these things will help you improve your own writing if you keep trying hard with them.

I hope you enjoy the rest of the term and have a really good summer.

Best wishes

Helen Ranger

Inspector