



Swaffham Bulbeck CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 110797
Local Authority CAMBRIDGESHIRE
Inspection number 288780
Inspection dates 10–11 January 2007
Reporting inspector Colin Henderson

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	84 High Street
School category	Voluntary controlled		Swaffham Bulbeck, Swaffham Bulbeck
Age range of pupils	4–11		Cambridge, Cambridgeshire CB25 0LX
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01223 811595
Number on roll (school)	88	Fax number	01223 811595
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Geoffrey Datson
		Headteacher	Mrs Donna Cornwell
Date of previous school inspection	24 June 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Children come from the local village and other villages in the area and are from a wide range of social backgrounds. All speak English as their first language. There are more pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities than in many other schools of this size. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above the county average. Most but not all children start in the Reception class with lower than average skills, particularly in literacy.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school that serves its community very well and gives excellent value for money. It is valued highly by pupils and parents alike, as reflected in many parents' comments such as 'this is a wonderful school and we felt drawn to it the moment we stepped through the door'. The outstanding leadership of the headteacher has been hugely influential in improving the school. Excellent self-evaluation procedures help the school to know how well it is doing and plan for its further development. The headteacher has created a highly effective and supportive staff team. This has enabled new staff to settle quickly and confidently and contribute effectively to continual school improvement. Teaching has improved to a consistently high standard, with many examples of outstanding practice, particularly in the Foundation Stage.

Children settle quickly and happily into the Reception class as a result of excellent individual care and support, effective arrangements to introduce them to school life and an interesting, well-organised range of learning activities. Outstanding teaching in this class helps children to achieve exceptionally well and most exceed the standards expected of them by the time they enter Year 1. Pupils make excellent progress and their achievement is outstanding throughout the school. This is mainly as a result of exceedingly good teaching, an excellent and enjoyable curriculum that is matched to their differing needs and a very supportive partnership with parents. Standards are above average overall and are often well above average, although there is some yearly variation due to the small number of pupils in each year. Improved resources for information and communication technology (ICT) have resulted in confident and engaging teaching and more opportunities for pupils to improve their skills. As a result, standards in ICT have risen to meet nationally expected levels.

The school is very successful in living up to its mission statement 'to provide a caring and supportive Christian ethos'. This ensures that all children are valued and respected. Their behaviour is outstanding. As a result, pupils thoroughly enjoy school, attend regularly and work hard to succeed. They talk enthusiastically about the excellent range of learning activities, and have benefited greatly from the recent improvements in accommodation. Pupils have an excellent understanding of healthy and safe lifestyles, largely as result of the school's involvement in such initiatives as 'Safer routes to school'. The school has extremely strong links with the local community and with other local schools and these enrich its programme significantly.

Staff know their pupils very well and provide outstanding personal care and support. The academic guidance is good. It is supported by increasingly effective use of individual pupil targets, good marking and self-assessments to help pupils know how they can improve their work, although these are not all established fully as yet. The leadership and management are outstanding. This is particularly evident in the way the headteacher leads by example and encourages and enables other key staff to provide effective leadership. The school benefits from a highly supportive and influential governing body. Given the outstanding leadership, a very strong staff team and the good improvement since the last inspection, it is exceptionally well placed to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend the use of procedures to help pupils know and understand what they have learnt and what they need to do next to improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Children in the Reception class make exceptional progress and their achievement is outstanding in all areas of learning. Most exceed the nationally expected targets by the end of Reception year.

Pupils in Years 1 to 6 continue to achieve outstandingly well because teachers inspire pupils with an extremely strong desire to learn and give them effective support and guidance. Standards are above average overall and often very high, as evident in the results of national tests in Years 2 and 6. Standards have improved so strongly that the school has been recognised recently as one of the top 20 improved schools in the country over the last four years. The school exceeded its challenging target in 2006 for the proportion of Year 6 pupils attaining Level 4 or above in English and mathematics and 100% achieved it in science. This illustrates the school's success as a larger number of pupils than usual in that group had learning difficulties or disabilities.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The high priority given to individual pupils' personal development helps them to thoroughly enjoy school, get on very well with each other and contribute highly effectively to the school and wider communities. Their attendance is good and has improved as a result of a stronger focus on limiting term-time holidays. Behaviour is excellent and pupils are eager to learn. Their knowledge of how to keep safe and healthy is excellent, for example, running their own healthy eating tuck shop. Pupils' economic well-being is promoted strongly, for example through the growing and selling their own fruit and vegetables and organising and running stalls at the Christmas Fair. School councillors take pride in improving the school, for example, by providing play resources for lunchtimes. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and supported very successfully by the local community and by Circle Links, in which local schools work together to organise events such as an African Day.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are outstanding in the Foundation Stage. This is because of the teacher's excellent knowledge of the pupils' needs and how to provide activities that

interest and stimulate children's imaginations. An excellent range of activities is provided which are set in a well-organised and stimulating environment.

Teaching is also outstanding in Years 1 to 6. Teachers use interactive whiteboards extremely effectively to capture pupils' interest and promote an enjoyment of learning. Assessments are used very well to plan lessons; this is the reason why the school is able to meet the needs of different groups of pupils so well. Key literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are taught highly successfully and teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to extend these skills in other subjects. Teachers manage their classes very well to ensure that pupils sustain their concentration.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding for the Foundation Stage and Years 1 to 6. It is planned very well to support the achievement of pupils of different abilities, particularly those with learning difficulties or disabilities. Pupils are very enthusiastic about special events such as Rainbow Day and Science Week and clearly enjoy the good range of day and residential trips, for example to the Mepal Centre, that enrich their learning. Many pupils participate in a very good range of extra-curricular clubs led by staff and community organisations, for example, local sports coaches. The curriculum has improved since the last inspection as better ICT resources and detailed planning enable pupils to use their skills extremely well to support their learning effectively in a good range of subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Teachers and support staff know the pupils very well indeed. They provide outstanding personal care and support that are valued highly by parents and pupils. There are very secure systems for ensuring pupils' safety and protection; the vetting of all adults who work in the school meets government requirements. Pupils say that they feel extremely safe and happy in school and that there are very few incidents of bullying or harassment. Teaching and support staff work very successfully together to ensure that pupils receive the support that they need, particularly those who find learning hard. Guidance to help pupils improve their work is good, although positive developments in helping pupils know better how they are doing, for example, through personal targets, are not established fully as yet.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The outstanding leadership and management are key factors in raising standards and providing a high quality education. The headteacher has established a very effective partnership with a strong staff team and an active and influential governing body. She provides outstanding leadership and a consistent focus on continual improvement.

Her leadership is valued highly by staff, parents and pupils. She provides excellent support and guidance to her staff that have encouraged and enabled them to make excellent contributions to the team.

The school has rigorous systems for checking how well it is doing, including seeking and acting upon the views of parents and pupils. Because this is a small school, each member of staff has a number of subject responsibilities. However, they provide outstanding leadership, especially in core subjects as well as for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. A clearly defined evaluation plan ensures that areas for improvement are identified quickly, discussed fully and addressed rigorously. Funds are used very efficiently to improve resources and raise standards, for example, in ICT. The school has improved its site and accommodation, contributing considerably to pupils' enjoyment of school and to their learning.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
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	1

The quality of provision

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

¹ 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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

12 January 2007

Dear Children

Swaffham Bulbeck CofE Primary School, 84 High Street, Swaffham Bulbeck, Cambridge CB25 0LX

Thank you for being so friendly and making me feel welcome when I visited your school recently. I enjoyed talking to you, looking at your work and watching you learn. You and your parents think it is an excellent school, and I agree. What I liked most about your school was:

- You learn exceptionally well and so standards keep on rising.
- Your teachers and other adults care about you as individuals, make sure that you are safe and listen to your opinions about school.
- You get on very well together and are kind to each other.
- You behave exceptionally well and clearly enjoy school; this means that teachers can get on with the job of helping you learn.
- Teachers make your lessons interesting and all the adults put a lot of effort into helping you do well; you enjoy your work and try hard to do what your teachers ask.
- The school puts on special days and extra activities to help you have fun, such as clubs and trips out of school; I know you enjoy these very much.
- Mrs Cornwell, the staff and governors are working hard to make your school even better.

I think your school could be even better if you help your teachers know what you have understood and what you still find difficult. They can then guide you on the next steps to take to improve your work. It is pleasing to see that work on all of this has already started.

I hope that you continue to be happy at school and carry on working hard.

Colin Henderson

Lead Inspector