



Swanton Morley Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 121083
Local Authority NORFOLK
Inspection number 291999
Inspection dates 18–19 September 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs. Kathleen Yates

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Manns Lane
School category	Voluntary controlled		Swanton Morley, Swanton Morley
Age range of pupils	4–11		Dereham, Norfolk NR20 4PX
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01362 637219
Number on roll (school)	195	Fax number	01362 637219
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs. Helen Smith
		Headteacher	Mr. Gareth Flemington
Date of previous school inspection	15 November 1999		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4–11	18–19 September 2006	291999

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is of average size and includes a few children from traveller communities and others who are looked after by the local authority. Almost half of the pupils come from families at the nearby military base and the number arriving and leaving during the year is high. Nearly all pupils are from White British background and have English as a first language. When pupils start school their skills and knowledge are broadly average. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is lower than average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory standard of education and gives satisfactory value for money. In most respects this judgement matches the school's view of its effectiveness. While the school judges it has good capacity to improve inspection findings are that it is satisfactory. Pupils are growing up to be confident young people who make the right choices about living healthy and active lives. Most say that they enjoy school especially the sporting activities. There are good links with other organisations to promote the well-being of learners. Teaching, learning and achievement are satisfactory in the Foundation Stage where standards are close to those expected. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1 to 6, but lessons are often uninspiring. Pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, children from traveller communities and those from minority ethnic groups, make satisfactory progress. Standards by Year 6 in 2006 were in line with national averages although writing has been identified as an area where there is some underachievement across the school. Results were an improvement since 2005, when standards in Year 6 were significantly below average and pupils' progress in that year was inadequate. The poor behaviour of a significant number of pupils and prolonged absences of others contributed to the low results. Procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' progress have recently been improved so that there is now a clearer idea of how well pupils are doing. Teachers do not always make the best use of assessment information to provide pupils with sufficiently demanding tasks. Pupils' attitudes and personal development are good and this leads to the school's friendly ethos. Their self-confidence and independence are boosted by many links with the local and wider communities, through visits, fund-raising and sponsored events. These foster community awareness, teamwork, communication and problem solving skills that help pupils to be well prepared for their next schools. Parents are pleased with the education their children receive and pupils are happy. Pupils' behaviour is now good. Some parental concern about bullying has been fully investigated and there are good procedures for dealing with this which include the parents themselves, for example, through the 'Parent Council'. The curriculum is satisfactory and extra activities enhance pupils' learning well. Care, guidance and support given to all pupils for their personal development are good. However, the recommendation of the last report that pupils should be set targets in English and mathematics is not consistently applied. As a result, not all pupils understand how to improve their work. While leadership, management and governance are satisfactory, the deputy headteacher and subject leaders do not play a sufficiently active role in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning. Improvements since the last inspection have been satisfactory. The recently appointed headteacher is quickly bringing about improvements and it is because of his vision and commitment that the school has satisfactory capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing throughout the school.
- Establish a consistent approach to the setting of targets so that all pupils know what they have to do to improve.
- Raise expectations of pupils' achievements by making better use of assessment

information. - Involve subject leaders in more rigorous monitoring and evaluation to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

When children start school their skills and knowledge are broadly average. They make satisfactory progress through the Foundation Stage and most attain the levels expected by the end of the year. In 2005 pupils in Year 2 attained standards in line with the national average in reading writing and mathematics. They made satisfactory progress. In Year 6 standards in English, mathematics and science took a dramatic downturn from previous years and they were significantly below average. Within this cohort of pupils there was a high level of behavioural problems, exclusions and movement of pupils in and out of the school which had a detrimental effect on teaching and learning. Progress was inadequate. In both year groups boys performed better than the girls. In 2006 in Year 6 there has been a recovery and standards in all subjects are once again closer to the national average. Pupils did best in science and least well in writing. Most pupils met their targets and made satisfactory progress while a few exceeded them. There remains some underachievement in writing. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities achieve as well as their peers. Current work seen indicates pupils are on course to reach their targets. The school has enlisted the support of outside agencies and pupils are grouped according to ability in numeracy and literacy in an attempt to maintain the recovery in standards.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development is good. Behaviour and relationships are good because pupils respond well to the high expectations of staff on these issues. The school's extensive grounds and excellent sports facilities are used well. The development of a cycle track and initiatives such as the 'walk-to-school week', are examples of how the school promotes healthy lifestyles and a safe and enjoyable environment for learning. Pupils know about keeping themselves fit and healthy and are willing participants in the many well organised sporting and physical activities. They express their views well and feel teachers listen to what they have to say. As a result pupils are keen to come to school and attendance is above average. Social, moral, spiritual and cultural development are good because they are planned and promoted well in assemblies, religious education lessons and in personal, social and health education lessons. Pupils feel safe in school and do not think bullying is a problem.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Progress is best where teachers are confident, well-organised and have high expectations of pupil performance. It is less good where children follow dull, repetitive tasks to no real purpose. Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory. Teaching in literacy and numeracy follows the curriculum guidelines but often fails to capture the children's imagination. Lesson plans do not always show clearly what pupils are to learn and how their progress is to be measured, especially for writing. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported. School staff recognise that pupil target setting has suffered from the lack of a whole school approach and this is a priority for improvement. Strong efforts have been made to rectify the previous lack of emphasis of developing pupils' understanding of fair testing in science. By Year 6, pupils have ample opportunities for planning and recording their work. The use of computers in the classroom is patchy. Teachers are beginning to use the new interactive whiteboards but their potential as a teaching and learning tool is yet to be realised.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Provision is satisfactory but the curriculum often lacks excitement for the pupils. Through the school's good programme for personal, social and health education, pupils develop a good understanding of safe and healthy living. The high quality provision for physical activity such as swimming and general fitness has been recognised in the Active Mark award. Particularly good use is made of the indoor heated swimming pool. Teachers are beginning to link subjects. For example, English and geography were linked by information and communication technology (ICT) in studying places in the United Kingdom. A good range of visits and visitors is used to enhance lessons, for example, the Year 4 and 6 residential visits. A visit from the neighbouring military base's band is a regular highlight. Among many others, cycling, gardening and sports clubs are popular enrichment activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care support and guidance are good. Procedures for child protection and safeguarding pupils are thorough and effective. There is a supportive system of pastoral welfare which contributes well to pupils' enjoyment of learning and their general well-being. The needs of looked after pupils and those with learning difficulties or disabilities and minority groups are catered for well. Good support is given to pupils prior to entry to the school and for moving on to their next schools. Support is especially good for those pupils who join and leave at other times because of the excellent links with the Army Welfare Service and the long experience of school staff. Teachers monitor the

performance of pupils satisfactorily, but learning targets are not always suitably challenging. The school has good links with other professionals and services to promote the care and welfare of pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has been in post for a term during which time he has worked very hard to bring about improvements. He is building on the school's strengths and working systematically to remove the weaknesses. He is insistent on developing good teamwork and is seeking to involve senior staff and subject leaders more actively in the running of the school. Professional development events have helped some staff to become more proficient in the teaching of ICT, so that they are starting to use it more effectively in a range of subjects. However, other staff have yet to receive training so that they can use the new ICT facilities more effectively. A rigorous and consistent approach to checking and improving the quality of teaching, learning and pupils' progress has yet to be firmly established. The school has correctly identified writing as the main area for improvement. However, plans for how the changes are to be introduced and at what pace are not yet sufficiently detailed. Governors are supportive, share their expertise well and take an active role in the life of the school. They have a clear view of the school's strengths, but are not yet holding it to account sufficiently to enable the priorities for improvement to take place at a greater pace.

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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

Dear Pupils Swanton Morley Primary School, Manns Lane, Swanton Morley, Norfolk, NR20 4PX
As you know, a team of inspectors came to your school recently to carry out an inspection. This letter is to thank you for the warm welcome you gave us and for helping us with our work and to let you know what we found out about your school. This is what we liked about your school:

- you receive a warm welcome from all your teachers so that you settle quickly and are happy
- the school encourages you to be fit and healthy and you are learning how to stay safe - your new headteacher is bringing about many changes which are improving your school - you gain a lot from the many experiences provided by visits and visitors to the school and the after school clubs. We have asked the school to:

- help you to improve your writing - check more closely at the progress you are making - provide all of you with learning targets so that you know how to improve your work - provide you with more interesting lessons which make learning more exciting. With all our good wishes for your future at Swanton Morley Primary School. Mrs Yates, Mr Naylor and Mr Perkins (Inspectors)