

Swannington Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120162
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	327214
Inspection date	28 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Alison Cartlidge

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	78
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Karen Brightman
Headteacher	Mal Knapton
Date of previous school inspection	6 December 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Main Street Swannington Coalville LE67 8QJ
Telephone number	01530 832655

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Pupils come to this small primary school from the village of Swannington and the surrounding area. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The school has an above average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is in one Reception class. About two thirds of the pupils are of White British origin, and the other third are mostly pupils from Traveller communities. There is considerable mobility of pupils and many join the school other than in the EYFS. Three of the four classes are taught by more than one teacher and there have been recent changes to the senior management team.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school where pupils from a wide range of backgrounds are given a friendly welcome. Their good personal development and well-being help them to enjoy school and to become keen to learn. Children make a good start to their education in the EYFS. In Years 1 to 6, satisfactory teaching enables most pupils to make at least the expected progress across the school and to achieve satisfactorily. Progress is good in Years 1 and 2. Standards vary considerably by the end of Year 6, due to the varied make-up of year groups. Standards have been exceptionally low in the last two years, although the current Year 6 is on track to reach higher standards than this. In Years 3 to 6, pupils do better in reading and science than in writing and mathematics. The school has introduced new strategies to teach pupils how to spell and to improve their understanding of mathematical language and problem solving. These strategies are starting to increase pupils' progress in these subjects across the whole school. Pupils from Traveller communities learn quickly, because they are supported well by members of staff and other pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress overall, and those with considerable needs are supported well.

Pupils are friendly and helpful. They make a good contribution to the community by helping each other and their teachers. Their preparation for the next stage of education and later life is satisfactory. They make sound progress in developing basic skills and become responsible and conscientious.

Teachers have good relationships with the pupils so that even those who can behave in a challenging way are managed well. Resources are used well to make learning interesting. The satisfactory curriculum provides valuable additional activities such as clubs, visitors and visits that increase the pupils' enjoyment of school and willingness to learn. Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall. Members of staff support pupils' pastoral needs well. They have a good knowledge of the pupils' differing lifestyles and are successful in helping them to keep safe and healthy. Teachers assess pupils' progress frequently but do not always match work closely enough to their wide range of academic needs. The school sets realistic targets for pupils, but in writing and mathematics they are not always reached and, in Years 3 to 6, are not consistently challenging enough to ensure good progress.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher is well respected by parents and has ensured that the school has continued to run smoothly during the recent staffing changes. Leaders know how to improve the school and recent strategies are beginning to increase the pupils' progress and demonstrate that it has the necessary capacity to improve further. Leaders are being more rigorous in checking that progress is even across the school. However, subject leaders and governors are insufficiently involved in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school to ensure that provision is consistently good.

The school has good relationships with others to support the pupils' well-being. Most parents are very pleased with all aspects of the school. They make positive comments such as, 'I have found the school to be a very friendly place with approachable staff' and 'Staff, pupils and helpers all work very hard as a team to provide a friendly, safe environment for the children.' These comments reflect what the school already does really well.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

On entry to the EYFS, only a very few children are working at the levels typically expected for this age group. Standards are below average when children start in Year 1, although this represents good achievement from their starting points. Good provision and teaching ensure that children learn quickly, especially in improving their speaking and listening skills. Children's personal development is good. They behave well and play and work together sensibly.

Good relationships support the children well and help them to gain confidence. Assessment is used well to plan challenging activities, although some opportunities are missed to move children's learning forward even more quickly when they are working on activities they have chosen for themselves. Exciting role play activities such as 'The Travel Agency' give children many opportunities to speak together and adults make good use of questioning to help them increase their vocabulary. Good induction arrangements and close links with parents ensure that the children's welfare is supported effectively. The EYFS is led and managed well by the team of staff who work together closely to identify gaps in provision. For example, they have detailed plans to increase the use of the outdoor area when they move to a new classroom later in the year.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase progress in writing and mathematics, especially in Years 3 to 6, by setting and achieving challenging targets.
- Ensure that pupils are always given work that matches their needs.
- Involve all leaders in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning to ensure that provision is consistently good.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory from their exceptionally wide range of starting points. They make good progress in the small Reception class and satisfactory progress overall from Years 1 to 6. Progress is good in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6, there are gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills caused by the high mobility of some pupils. Standards are below average in most year groups, but in the last two years they have been exceptionally low by the end of Year 6 in mathematics and writing. The school has correctly identified particular weaknesses in pupils' spelling and their understanding of problem solving and mathematical language. In the current Year 6, more pupils are on target to meet the expected levels than in the recent past. Pupils from the Traveller community make good progress during their time at the school. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress overall.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' good behaviour contributes well towards the way pupils from different cultures work and play together in harmony. They listen well in most lessons and work together sensibly in

pairs and small groups. The below average attendance is not a true reflection of the pupils' thorough enjoyment of school.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Pupils have a good understanding of the Traveller way of life, but not all pupils have a good awareness of faiths other than their own. Pupils contribute to the community well by helping others and taking part in local events. They carry out a wide range of responsibilities conscientiously. The school council is proud that they contribute towards improving the school and older pupils enjoy supporting younger ones at playtime. Pupils show a good understanding of each other's needs and achievements.

Pupils are knowledgeable about how to stay safe and healthy. They take part in a range of sports and are happy to follow the school's ruling on healthy snacks at playtime. Road safety officers help other pupils to develop a good understanding of how to stay safe on the busy road by the school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Members of staff form good relationships with the pupils, helping them to enjoy school. Teachers provide clear instructions at the start of lessons, although occasionally they talk for too long. Praise is used well to encourage the pupils. Teachers work together well as a team but do not always ensure that work is pitched at the right level to accommodate the wide range of abilities in each class. Teachers have high expectations for pupils' behaviour and use resources such as the interactive whiteboards to hold their attention. Skilful teaching assistants provide valuable support for groups of pupils. Pupils from the Traveller community are supported well, enabling them to learn quickly.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum provides pupils with a wide range of experiences, helping them to enjoy school. There are good opportunities for the creative arts and sport. The curriculum for writing and mathematics supports satisfactory progress in developing basic skills. The school has recently improved schemes of work in these subjects to ensure that pupils build more securely on what they already know and can do. These strategies are already starting to bear fruit across the school but have not been in place long enough to raise standards at the end of Year 6. Teachers are beginning to link topics together to make learning even more purposeful. The school works closely with the Traveller Education Service to ensure that the culture of pupils from Traveller communities is incorporated into topics and celebrated.

The school provides a very good range of clubs and other activities that support pupils' personal development well. There are good additional activities for pupils when they combine with other small schools in the area.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

There are secure systems for supporting pupils' well-being and safety and, as a result, pupils say that they feel safe in this happy and friendly school. The school works closely with parents

and external agencies to support pupils who are finding life difficult or do not always come to school regularly enough. This good pastoral care and support are a particular strength of the school.

Academic guidance is satisfactory. Assessment procedures have recently been strengthened in response to the dip in standards. They are now being used well to identify pupils at risk of falling behind in their learning. However, teachers are not always using the information on pupils' progress well enough to match tasks to pupils' differing needs. The academic guidance provided through teachers' marking varies and does not consistently show pupils how to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher, governors and subject leaders are committed to increasing pupils' progress and have a clear understanding of what they should do next. The school's systems for self-evaluation are satisfactory, although they are mostly carried out by the headteacher. Several of the subject leaders are new in their roles and have not been in post long enough to have monitored and evaluated provision and progress for themselves, and to share good practice. Strategies to raise attainment in writing and mathematics are too recent to have had a significant impact on standards. The school sets and mostly achieves realistic targets and is starting to set more challenging targets from year-to-year with the help of the new tracking and target setting system. The school's contribution towards community cohesion is satisfactory. Leaders ensure that the cultures of pupils within the school are clearly understood and celebrated well, and are increasing links with schools in other areas to improve the pupils' awareness of what life is like in multicultural Britain and globally.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors are supportive and knowledgeable about the school and are keen to become more proactive in self-evaluation and holding the school to account for its actions.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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?	3

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

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

29 January 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Swannington Church of England Primary School, Coalville, LE67 8QJ

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for sharing your work with us. Your school provides you with a satisfactory education.

- Here are some points about your school.
- You make a good start in the Reception class and make satisfactory progress during your time at the school.
- You behave well and enjoy school. We thought you were very friendly.
- You take responsibility well. The school council is doing a good job in helping to make the school even better.
- Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers work hard to help you learn interesting things.
- You study a wide range of topics, and enjoy the many interesting visits, visitors and clubs planned by teachers.
- The adults in the school care for you well and help you when you are finding life difficult.
- Your headteacher and other leaders know how to make your school better.

What we have asked your school to do now.

- Help you to do better in writing and mathematics, especially in Years 3 to 6, by setting you challenging targets and helping you to achieve them.
- Ensure that teachers always provide you with work that matches your needs.
- Involve all leaders in checking how well you are doing so that you always learn quickly.

What you can do to help your teachers.

- Try to come to school more regularly.

We thoroughly enjoyed talking with you about your work and watching you learn. We are glad that you enjoy coming to this happy school and wish you well for the future.

■ Yours faithfully

Alison Cartlidge Lead inspector