

Swanwick Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112500
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	337948
Inspection dates	9–10 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Lois Furness

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	362
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brian Irvine
Headteacher	Ian Hamilton
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The vast majority of time was spent looking at learning: 16 lessons or parts of lessons were observed; 13 teachers seen; and meetings were held with parents, groups of pupils, governors and staff. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the teachers' planning, pupils' books, the school improvement plan, assessment records, individual education plans, minutes of meetings, safeguarding information and the annual report of the School Improvement Partner. The responses from the pupils' and staff questionnaires were analysed, as were the responses from the 160 parents' and carers' questionnaires received during the inspection.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the success of strategies to raise attainment in writing especially of more-able pupils
- the effectiveness of governors in improving their role of challenge
- how well the school fulfils its statutory duties with regard to promoting community cohesion
- the accuracy of assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

In this much larger-than-average primary school, the vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. There are a very few pupils at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average. Children join the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage in either September or January, and provision is provided in three mixed age Reception and Year 1 classes. The school holds a number of awards including the Eco Schools Award, Artsmark and Basic Skills Quality Mark. On-site there is a breakfast club which is not managed by the governing body and so it is inspected separately.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Pupils are enthusiastic about their school, making it a cheerful, welcoming place. They are confident in the good quality care and support they will receive from staff, and know that they will be listened to. Parents and carers also appreciate the school's work. 'The staff do everything in their power to make our children happy,' is typical of the many positive comments made in the questionnaires returned during the inspection. Parents think their children are safe in school, and pupils' understanding of how to keep safe is outstanding.

Children enter school with the skills and knowledge that are expected for their age. By the time they leave in Year 6, attainment is broadly average in English, mathematics and science. Progress is satisfactory and improving. Pupils' good behaviour and their good attitudes towards work strongly support their learning in class. As a result of strategies implemented, attainment is rising in mathematics and in science. Pupils do not attain as highly in writing as they do in reading, and this negatively affects overall attainment in English. Too few pupils attain the higher level, Level 5, in this subject. Inspectors found some good teaching, which in turn leads to better progress, but this is not yet consistent across the school. In too many lessons, assessment information is not used rigorously enough. This is particularly the case in writing. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, often with supportive comments, but they do not provide enough tightly-focused guidance about the steps pupils should take to improve their writing. Leaders have implemented a range of strategies in order to raise attainment in this subject, including focused group work, but these strategies are not applied consistently. In some classes, there is an overuse of worksheets which do not enable pupils to develop their writing skills.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle quickly in school and good relationships ensure that children enjoy their lessons. Teachers carefully plan interesting activities, but these are often more appropriate for the Year 1 pupils in these mixed-age Reception and Year 1 classes. Staff interact well with children during focused teaching activities, but interventions during independent work are not as effective resulting in missed learning opportunities. Also the opportunities for outdoor learning are insufficient, due to a lack of direct access from the classrooms.

The leadership of the school has identified correctly the strengths and weaknesses in provision, but the systems for checking the school's work are not sufficiently rooted in practice. The scrutiny of pupils' work and meetings about pupils' progress are not sufficiently frequent to enable staff to rectify emerging underachievement quickly, especially in writing, by providing support to those who need it. As yet staff are not held fully accountable for their pupils' progress. Those with leadership responsibility do not

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always have the time to carry out monitoring and evaluation activities, and the governors' role of challenge although improving is not yet having a full impact on attainment and progress. Even so, improvements since the previous inspection especially in mathematics attainment, indicates the school has satisfactory capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in writing throughout the school especially of more able pupils by:
 - using assessment information rigorously to inform the planning of activities and limit the use of worksheets in some classes
 - providing at least weekly guided writing sessions for all ability groups within each class
 - ensuring that marking consistently informs pupils why work is good, how they might improve and, give them the time to respond to marking comments
 - providing time for the subject leader to monitor regularly the impact of strategies to raise pupils' attainment.
- Improve provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage children by:
 - ensuring planning is adapted to meet the needs of Early Years Foundation Stage children
 - ensuring adults maximise opportunities to question children during child-initiated activities
 - planning regular opportunities for children to learn in all six areas of learning in both the indoor and outdoor environments.
- Sharpen monitoring and evaluation procedures by:
 - setting challenging termly targets for pupils in reading, writing and mathematics, and holding half-termly meetings about pupils' progress whereby underachievement is quickly identified and actions can be taken
 - scrutinising pupils' work and checking the impact of teaching on pupils' progress
 - ensuring governors hold the leadership to account for pupils' attainment and progress.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils love coming to school and this is confirmed by their well above average attendance. They say there is nothing they would change and speak enthusiastically about their kind teachers, good friends and interesting work. In lessons, pupils behave

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well showing their eagerness to learn. Questions are answered enthusiastically. They particularly enjoy opportunities for active learning as was seen in a lively Years 1 and 2 mathematics lesson, when pupils practised their skills of subtraction. They have an excellent understanding of keeping safe. They are very aware of how to avoid unsafe situations, such as those that could arise when using new technologies. They have a firm understanding of right and wrong, and this contributes to their good behaviour. The importance of regular exercise and of eating sensibly is grasped well and many pupils take part in a wide variety of sporting activities. Pupils welcome opportunities to support the school community, as they take part in decision-making through the school council. A small minority of pupils do not feel their views are listened to by adults. Involvement in communities beyond school, especially those within the United Kingdom is not well developed.

Pupils' good personal skills, such as their ability to work effectively together, have a positive impact on learning. Achievement is satisfactory although progress is good in some year groups and in some subjects. For example, attainment in mathematics is rising, and last year, pupils in Year 6 made good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress which improves to good when they receive specific targeted support. All pupils are steadily gaining the personal skills they will need as they get older, but their academic skills are not as secure. As a result, pupils are satisfactorily prepared for the future.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Staff know pupils well and are keen to provide any additional help that is required. Pupils agree that teachers will always help them. When teaching is good, learning is well planned, with interesting and challenging tasks that engage pupils who, consequently, work at a brisk pace and make good progress. This is better in mathematics than in writing. On occasions, teaching is less effective because assessment has not been used well enough to ensure that teaching meets the different needs of all pupils, especially the more able, and the intended learning of the lesson is not clear. In some classes teachers' marking gives clear guidance on how pupils can improve their work. In others it has little impact on helping pupils to learn, especially in writing. Teaching assistants generally provide good quality support for small groups of pupils who find learning harder.

The school is adapting the curriculum so it brings learning to life and helps pupils to use their skills creatively across a range of areas. In this it has been successful in increasing enjoyment of learning. Opportunities to use literacy and numeracy skills within the curriculum are growing, although the impact of this on attainment, particularly in writing is at an early stage. The curriculum is suitably balanced, and includes the teaching of modern foreign languages. In some subjects however, there is an over-reliance on inappropriate worksheets. Music, physical education and the promotion of pupils' personal, health and emotional development, are areas of strength. A range of visits and partnerships, such as the visit to the Children's Holocaust Centre, enhance the quality of pupils' learning.

Pupils' comments such as: 'I like this school because all the teachers are kind to me,' succinctly sum up the essence of its success. Staff supervise pupils well to ensure their safety. Well-judged provision for those who are learning to speak English ensures that they make similar progress to their peers and achieve satisfactorily. Sound partnerships with outside agencies, such as speech and language therapists, enable pupils to develop the necessary skills to support their learning.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

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How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders are realistic about current effectiveness, and the steps needed to bring about improvement. However they know there is still more to do to accelerate progress and secure consistently good quality teaching. Self-evaluation is accurate and weaknesses in writing are known. Actions have been implemented but the impact of these on pupils' progress is not evaluated rigorously enough to ensure these are the right actions, and attainment is improving. Governors are committed to the school and provide good support. They know their role of challenge needs developing further, and have set up a new committee structure in order to make this more manageable.

Staff and governors show considerable commitment to the school and put much effort into ensuring the good pastoral care of pupils. While this work has done a great deal to ensure equal opportunities for those with specific needs, it has been less successful in providing consistently good progress for all. The steps taken to ensure the safeguarding of pupils are good with all statutory requirements securely in place. This means that pupils feel safe, and almost all parents and carers agree their child is kept safe in school. An action plan is in place for the promotion of community cohesion and satisfactory work is being carried out within school and the local area. However it is less effective in relation to the wider national and global communities.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Reception and Year 1 classes provide a safe, welcoming and purposeful

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atmosphere, where routines are well known to children and they are happy and settled. In all classes, there are considerable levels of cooperation among children who willingly share resources. Behaviour is good and instructions are followed willingly. This was seen as children eagerly tidied away resources at the end of the lesson. There is an appropriate balance between activities which are led by adults and those that children choose for themselves. Progress is satisfactory and by the time children enter Year 1 attainment is broadly average. Although attainment appeared to decline last year, this was mainly due to over rigorous assessment. The leader of this key stage is working hard to develop accuracy of assessment between the three classes through regular moderation meetings. She knows that provision needs improvement especially in terms of opportunities to increase children's access to the outdoor environment.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are generally positive about the school, and many made positive comments about the quality of education provided for their children. A few parents expressed concerns about their child's progress and inspectors agree that, although progress is satisfactory and improving, this should be better especially in writing. There were a few other issues identified, but the inspection found no evidence to support these concerns.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Swanwick Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 160 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 362 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	86	54	69	43	5	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	85	53	73	46	2	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	56	35	93	58	11	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	66	41	78	49	13	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	71	44	78	49	4	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	67	42	82	51	8	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	64	40	88	55	8	5	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	48	30	88	55	4	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	58	36	89	56	4	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	53	33	88	55	12	8	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	45	28	93	58	12	8	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	85	53	66	41	5	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	80	50	77	48	3	2	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



11 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Swanwick Primary School, Derbyshire, DE55 1BZ

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we came to visit your school. You clearly enjoy school and we were very impressed with your good behaviour and friendliness towards each other. You are very polite and your parents and carers must be very proud of your very good manners. Thank you to those of you who took the time to talk to us about your school and tell us about all about the things you do. We think your school is satisfactory which means some things are done well and others could be better. Here are some are of the good things we found out.

You have an excellent understanding of how to keep safe and you also feel safe in school, saying your teachers will always help you if you have a problem.

Your understanding of leading a healthy lifestyle is good and you know the importance of regular exercise.

Relationships are good and everyone is willing to help each other.

Your attendance is well above that found in most primary schools. Well done and keep this up!

Your school's leaders want you to achieve well and do your very best. They know what needs to be done next and, from our findings, we have asked them to do some things to make your learning even better. These are the things we have asked them to do.

Although your attainment is improving, the school needs to help you more to improve your writing skills

The school must make sure that those of you in the Early Years Foundation Stage have lots of activities which match your learning needs, and you get time to work in the classroom and outside.

Those who lead the school need to check regularly that you are all learning as fast as you can.

You can all help by continuing to work hard and by asking for lots of advice about how to improve your writing skills. We wish you all the best for the future and thank you again for your help.

Yours sincerely

Lois Furness

Lead inspector

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