

# Swinford Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 120204             |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Leicestershire     |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 339632             |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 21–22 January 2010 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Lynne Blakelock    |

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 aided                        |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 4–11                                   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                                  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 84                                     |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                     |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Mrs Karen Geoghegan                    |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Mrs Cathryn Allison (Acting)           |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 0 November 2006                        |
| <b>School address</b>                      | School Lane<br>Swinford<br>Lutterworth |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01788 860404                           |
| <b>Fax number</b>                          | 01788 869141                           |
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|--------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Age group</b>         | 4–11               |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>  | 21–22 January 2010 |
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by an additional inspector who visited 8 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and pupils. The majority of time was spent looking at learning. Eight lessons were observed and all of the five teachers in school during the inspection. The inspector observed the school's work, and scrutinised documents including data about pupils' achievement, information about the curriculum, school planning and policies, and minutes of governing body meetings. The inspector analysed staff and pupil questionnaires and 44 questionnaires returned by parents.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work and looked in detail at the following:

- the capacity of the leadership and management of the school to move it forward and to sustain improvement
- the effectiveness of the school's drive to raise standards through the school, particularly in writing
- the extent to which assessment of pupils' learning is embedded as a tool for driving pupils' learning and progress
- the impact of the leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage in improving the overall quality of education.

## Information about the school

This small, popular school serves the village and several adjoining areas. It moved into new purpose-built accommodation in 2007. Almost all pupils are White British and speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average overall, but above average in Key Stage 2. The proportion of pupils with a statement outlining their individual needs is average. In some year groups there is a significant imbalance in the number of boys and girls. Teaching is in mixed aged classes. The school has been awarded the Activemark for three consecutive years and has achieved Silver Arts Mark. It was awarded the Financial Management Standard in Schools Award (FMSiS) in 2009 and is part of the Lutterworth Area Schools Association.

There has been some staff turbulence in recent months and the school was without a permanent headteacher from March 2009 until October 2009, when the acting headteacher was appointed. The school is receiving support from a leading headteacher and the local authority school improvement service.

**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

Swinford Church of England Primary School provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. It has strengths in pupils' personal development and the good quality of care, guidance and support provided. The school's Christian ethos is significant in promoting a caring environment in which pupils are secure and happy. Partnerships with other schools and links with the community extend the sound curriculum and broaden pupils' experiences. National and international links, including those with other cultures, are at earlier stages of development.

The school is going through a period of transition, due to previous staffing turbulence, which in turn contributed to a fall in standards throughout the school. Thorough monitoring by the increasingly effective acting headteacher has led to an accurate understanding of its performance and needs. Important areas for improvement are being addressed, with a satisfactory impact in a relatively short period of time. A secure foundation is being laid for sustained improvement in the rate of progress of pupils and the standards that they reach. In particular, inspection evidence shows that strategies for raising standards in writing are quickening pupils' progress. Together with the increasing drive and knowledge of the governing body, the leadership and management demonstrate a satisfactory capacity for improvement. The roles of subject leaders have been redefined and are developing, with the major focus on the provision of accurate data, monitoring of their subjects and evaluating the quality of pupils' learning.

Broadly average standards at the end of Year 6 are not higher because most teaching is satisfactory. Although there is some good teaching, there is not enough of it. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and learning, particularly when they are involved and can learn for themselves. However, tasks do not regularly enough offer them a good level of challenge because teachers' planning has not taken careful enough account of the levels at which they work. Targets are becoming much more of a focus in lessons although they are not always challenging enough, reviewed regularly or explained to pupils. While marking is sometimes good in literacy, it is inconsistent through the school in telling pupils how to move forward.

The school's nurturing and support of pupils from the Early Years Foundation Stage onwards gives them the confidence to make the most of the opportunities provided by the school and to develop an important range of inter-personal skills. They quickly take personal responsibility for their actions and show pride in their achievements.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards at the end of Year 6 to above average by June 2011, particularly in

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writing, by:

- monitoring regularly the progress that pupils make
- ensuring that targets are challenging, communicated clearly to pupils and frequently reviewed
- providing pupils with marking that regularly tells them their achievements and how to make further progress.
- Improve the quality of learning so that it is consistently good by making sure that planning of pupils' learning accurately reflects the levels at which they work, so that tasks are challenging.
- Ensure that subject leaders demonstrate improved effectiveness in leading and managing their subjects and raising standards of all pupils by:
  - communicating high expectations to the staff to secure and sustain improvement
  - making sure that plans for teaching and learning are based on accurate data and robust evidence
  - monitoring rigorously the quality of teaching, learning and pupils' outcomes, and promptly addressing shortcomings
- Plan carefully the opportunities for pupils to develop a greater knowledge and understanding of the cultural diversity of our world.
- 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**

In 2009, standards at the end of Year 6 were in line with national expectations, having fallen from above average in recent years. Cohorts are small and results represented satisfactory progress for all groups of pupils from their starting points. Writing standards through the school pulled English results down and the school is addressing this as a priority. Good tracking systems, introduced by the acting headteacher, show an improving picture of standards, including in writing and more so in Key Stage 1 where there are fewer gaps in pupils' knowledge. Inspection evidence confirms this. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language also achieve soundly, with quickening progress where teaching is good. Records of their progress and targets are now in place. As with all groups of pupils, their rate of progress has previously been hindered by the inaccuracy of assessments, which is being resolved.

Pupils are positive about school. They like being in this small school where they know each other well and unsurprisingly their attendance is above average. In the Christian ethos which pervades daily school life and learning, pupils care for and support each other and behave well. They know the rules and sanctions, and try hard to earn the rewards for good behaviour and effort. Through daily school routines and the

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curriculum, pupils develop a good understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles and how to stay safe. Discussions with pupils indicate that a large majority are putting their knowledge into practice. Pupils relish the opportunities provided to take responsibility and members of the school council feel that they have a genuine voice in improving the school's facilities, environment and quality of school life. The village community, an extension of the school, enables pupils to develop a range of academic, social and inter-personal skills, and to take the initiative. Together with sound academic skills, pupils are prepared satisfactorily for the next stage of their education. Through fundraising locally and internationally, and working in the community, pupils develop an understanding of service to each other. While spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is overall good, pupils' cultural understanding is satisfactory.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| <b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>  | <b>3</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>   | 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        |
| <b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Pupils' behaviour</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b> | <b>3</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>   | 2        |
| <b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>  | <b>2</b> |

**How effective is the provision?**

Colourful classrooms and corridors overflowing with pupils' work provide a very positive environment for learning. Pupils are eager to learn and work hard. The large majority of teaching through the school is satisfactory and results in pupils' sound progress. In

<sup>1</sup> 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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many lessons this is because the information about the levels at which pupils work is not taken carefully enough into account. It results in inappropriate challenge and slows down pupils' progress. Teachers' expectations of pupils are not always high enough. In good lessons, though, activities are carefully chosen and pupils' progress accelerates. For example, teachers provide interesting stimuli, such as a crime scene, to stimulate pupils' interest in a numeracy lesson. Other good features, include teachers' secure knowledge of their subjects and the provision of regular paired work. Starter activities serve as helpful reminders of past learning and some good practice was seen in a plenary so that the teacher gained an accurate understanding of the quality of pupils' learning. Targets are used more frequently in lessons, with many pupils knowing their targets. The quality of marking is variable. Pupils are not consistently given the information that they need to help them to move on in their learning and grading of work is not always totally accurate. In contrast, self and peer marking is helping pupils to critically evaluate their work and that of others and guide improvement.

The curriculum provides pupils with a broad range of subjects and experiences, promoting their personal development well. A two year rolling programme ensures that all pupils have full coverage of the curriculum. The main focus of learning is literacy and numeracy in the school's drive to raise standards. A good aspect of the curriculum is the variety of partnerships which have extended the activities available to pupils. For example, the collaborative work with a local secondary school has led to specialist facilities being available as well as French, technology, information and communications technology (ICT) and science days. Pupils speak enthusiastically of the recent 'Forensic Day' which offered an exciting selection of practical tasks, bringing learning alive and adding to their scientific knowledge and understanding. Pupils enjoy learning French, which is taught through Key Stage 2, and ICT, which offers satisfactory and improving provision. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well established. That for gifted and talented pupils is at an earlier stage of development. Cross-curricular provision and creativity are developing satisfactorily, with an exciting start being made with an after school art club and ukulele lessons for Year 5 and Year 6 pupils.

All pupils are cared for and supported effectively in a Christian environment that values every pupil. Their safety is very important to the school and health and safety procedures and practices are reviewed regularly. Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. Pupils speak of their confidence in the staff to keep them safe and to help and advise them. This includes good transition arrangements which result in pupils feeling confident about moving to secondary school. Those with particular needs or concerns are supported sensitively, with outside agencies brought in where necessary to provide specialist help. Vulnerable pupils are supported and nurtured by support staff very effectively. Their guidance is backed up well by outside agencies so that they can manage their concerns and settle well to learning.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate</b><br>Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms |  |
|---|--|

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

The acting headteacher has acted decisively and appropriately to ensure that the school can move forward, a fact that has delighted parents. Through careful auditing of the school's performance, including the quality of teaching and learning, she is driving improvement. This has resulted, for example, in targets being reviewed to ensure that they offer greater challenge to pupils. The acting headteacher is embedding ambition among the staff who are benefiting, for example, from local authority training in assessment procedures and in moderating work accurately. Their more accurate knowledge of pupils' needs has resulted in increasing equality of opportunity for all pupils in their learning. Subject leaders, whose roles are developing, are very clear about their priorities. The rapidly improving governing body has a far greater understanding of its roles and responsibilities. Governors know much more about the school's performance than previously, although they are not yet able to challenge its performance fully. They oversee safeguarding procedures satisfactorily. Relationships between the staff and the school are very positive, strengthened by the school keeping parents well informed of their children's academic and personal progress. The school has a good range of partnerships that are helping to broaden the curriculum, support pupils and foster their personal development. Such links have led to community cohesion being promoted well in the local community. The governing body understands the need to extend this further, both nationally and internationally, particularly pupils' awareness of ethnicity.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| <b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b><br>Taking into account:<br>The leadership and management of teaching and learning | <b>3</b> |
|   | 3        |
| <b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>                  | <b>3</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>  | <b>3</b> |



|   |          |
|---|----------|
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| <b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>   | <b>3</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>  | <b>3</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>   | <b>3</b> |

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle quickly into Reception, aided by the careful arrangements made for their entry. They feel secure in the daily routines and good levels of care. Most children enter Reception with average levels of knowledge and skills, although their writing and calculation skills are below average. They make satisfactory progress by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, achieving overall standards that are in line with those found nationally. Planning does not facilitate quicker progress because it does not take sufficiently into account children's individual needs in order to provide an accurate level of challenge. An imbalance of teacher directed and free choice activities means that children do not always have sufficient time to practise and develop their skills. The children have ample opportunities, both in the classroom and outside, to develop a wide range of personal qualities, including independence. They so enjoy using the interactive white board to help them improve their number work. They also enjoy having responsibilities, which encourage them to cooperate and to share. Although leadership and management is satisfactory, recording of children's progress is a good. It is undertaken on a daily basis and transferred into an informative profile of children's learning. Parents are increasingly partners in their children's education from the time that they start school, and are encouraged to contribute their comments to their children's work.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>                   | <b>3</b> |
| 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

A high proportion of parents responded to the questionnaire. They are very supportive of the school. In particular, parents praise the impact of the acting headteacher with such comments as, 'Long overdue changes have been made' and, 'She is doing an outstanding job in improving standards.' Parents also say that the school now has a very clear direction, commenting that, 'There is more consistent behaviour management and

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clearer academic targets.' Parents overwhelmingly agree that their children enjoy school and that it provides a safe learning environment. A very small minority have concerns such as the marking of homework and the need for face-to-face meetings with parents about their children's targets. These concerns were shared with the headteacher.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Swinford Church of England 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 44 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 84 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements  | Strongly Agree |    | Agree |    | Disagree |    | Strongly disagree |    |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|----|-------------------|----|
|   | Total          | %  | Total | %  | Total    | %  | Total             | %  |
| My child enjoys school  | 27             | 55 | 22    | 45 | 0        | 0  | 0                 | 0  |
| The school keeps my child safe  | 33             | 67 | 16    | 33 | 0        | 0  | 0                 | 0  |
| The school informs me about my child's progress   | 18             | 37 | 27    | 55 | 3        | 6  | 1                 | 2  |
| My child is making enough progress at this school   | 15             | 31 | 26    | 53 | 5        | 10 | 3                 | 6  |
| The teaching is good at this school   | 15             | 31 | 33    | 67 | 1        | 2  | 0                 | 0  |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning  | 18             | 37 | 28    | 57 | 2        | 4  | 1                 | 2  |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle   | 14             | 29 | 34    | 69 | 1        | 2  | 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) | 14             | 29 | 24    | 49 | 3        | 6  | 8                 | 16 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs  | 15             | 31 | 29    | 54 | 3        | 6  | 2                 | 4  |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour  | 13             | 27 | 30    | 61 | 4        | 8  | 2                 | 4  |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns   | 8              | 16 | 35    | 71 | 4        | 8  | 2                 | 4  |
| The school is led and managed effectively   | 10             | 20 | 38    | 78 | 0        | 0  | 0                 | 0  |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school   | 21             | 48 | 21    | 48 | 0        | 0  | 1                 | 2  |

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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul> |
| 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.**



25 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Swinford Church of England Primary School, Swinford, LE17 6BG

I am writing to tell you the judgements that I made about your school when I visited it recently. I enjoyed the two days that I spent with you very much. Thank you for sharing your thoughts about your school with me and for making me so welcome. I was pleased to see that you are happy at school. You told me that there are lots of opportunities for you to learn and to take on responsibilities, and that you feel safe, secure and well cared for. You understand why it is important to live healthily and try hard to do so.

Your school is a satisfactory school in which you make sound progress. This matches the quality of teaching which is mostly satisfactory, although some is good. The acting headteacher is moving the school forward in lots of ways. Already because of her actions, your writing skills, which are not high enough, are improving. You work hard, behave well and attend school very regularly. Well done! You enjoy lessons, especially when you have opportunities to learn for yourselves. That is one of the reasons why you thought the 'Forensic day' was so good. The partnerships with other schools give you great learning opportunities which you would otherwise not have. You are also an important part of the local community, with the choir one way in which you contribute a lot. The school is keen to strengthen national and international links and your knowledge and understanding of the different cultures in the world.

Your acting headteacher, the staff and governors know that there are several ways in which the school can help you to reach higher standards. I have asked them to make sure that planning of your work is carefully matched to the levels at which you are working. Your progress will be checked regularly to make sure that your targets are accurate, that you know them and how to reach them. Subject leaders will check all of this to make sure that you can do the very best work possible. I know that you will work with the staff to bring about these improvements.

Yours sincerely

Lynne Blakelock

Lead inspector

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