

Four Swannes Primary School

King Edward Road, Waltham Cross, EN8 7HH

Inspection dates 12–13 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The school provides well for its pupils and as a result their achievement is good.
- Many children start with skills which are below expectations for their age. By the end of Year 6 their progress in English and mathematics is above average.
- Teaching and learning are good in all year groups and subjects. Some teaching is outstanding.
- Teachers' careful planning ensures that all pupils are able to do their best in lessons.
- Pupils show interest in their lessons and join in with a good range of interesting activities.
- Teaching assistants and support workers contribute well in lessons and ensure that all pupils are able to understand their tasks.
- Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Pupils show respect for each other, adults and the school's equipment. They feel safe and know the school's rules and routines well.
- The headteacher and senior staff lead the school well. They check teaching carefully and ensure that the standard of pupils' learning remains high.
- They have high expectations of pupils' learning and ensure that the same ambition is maintained for pupils' safety and well-being.
- The governing body knows the school well and plays an important role in making it successful. They know the areas where improvement is needed and challenge the headteacher to ensure that these are addressed.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although leadership is good overall, the management of subjects is not yet strong enough to support the school's further improvement.
- There is a very good marking scheme which is well used to support pupils' learning in English. However, this is not used as effectively in other subjects.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons, of which three were paired observations with the headteacher. In addition there were several short visits to other lessons and activities. Inspectors also listened to pupils read.
- They held discussions with pupils, parents and carers, teaching and support staff and representatives of the governing body and local authority.
- They checked pupils' books as well as a range of documents including the school's self-evaluation, information about pupils' progress, lesson planning and the records of lesson observations. Inspectors also looked at documents relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- They considered the results of the six parents' and carers' entries on the Parent View website and 11 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Keith Thomas, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Victoria Turner

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Four Swannes is a primary school of below-average size.
- All pupils are taught in their year groups.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well above average. The largest groups are from Turkey and Eastern Europe.
- The proportion of pupils whose first language is not English is well above average.
- Some pupils join temporarily while awaiting school places closer to home in adjacent authorities. A higher than normal proportion of the pupils change from one school year to the next.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for specific pupils, including those known to be eligible for free school meals) is well above average.
- None of the school's pupils are in alternative provision (none are taught elsewhere).
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the leadership of English, mathematics and other subjects by:
 - More frequent checking of the quality of teaching
 - Regular reporting on the progress of all pupils in the school.
- Improve the marking of pupils' work by:
 - extending the good practice of the marking of English in pupils' books to all other subjects
 - ensuring that pupils are always clear about what they need to do to improve.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Attainment has improved steadily since the previous inspection. It is improving in all areas at a faster rate than nationally. Comprehensive progress checks throughout this year show that this upward trend is on course to be maintained.
- Most children enter the school with skills in communication, language, literacy and personal and social development which are below expectation for their age.
- Reception teachers pay close attention to areas which require improvement. They are taught well and make good progress.
- At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils, having made good progress from their starting points, are still working at below-average standards. This is reflected in the 2012 phonics screening check which showed a below-average proportion of pupils had the understanding of letters and the sounds they make.
- Rapidly rising progress throughout the school has led to rising attainment levels at the end of Key Stage 2. The present Year 6 pupils are expected to reach levels which are above the national average.
- A broad range of activities ensures that pupils develop skills in many areas. Lesson observation and scrutiny of pupils' work show that is true in a wide range of subjects.
- Pupils say that work is challenging and helps them to 'do their best'.
- They also say that reading is very important. They read often and careful checking by staff shows that their progress is good. One pupil said, 'my reading has improved, at my previous school I couldn't take books home'.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs do as well as their classmates because staff understand their needs and plan work very carefully.
- Pupils who are only in school for a short time make good progress whilst they are in school but their attainment levels often vary from others because of their previous education background.
- Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, including those who speak English as an additional language, make similar progress to that of others due to additional support within the classroom.
- The pupil premium is used well. It ensures that eligible pupils are given effective support through small group teaching and extra activities. As a result, pupils eligible for free school meals did better than the other pupils in the school in the 2012 Year 6 reading test. Their points score was also higher than the national average. All pupils selected for an extra small group tuition session reached national expectation in Year 6 tests.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good throughout the school and some is outstanding. English and mathematics and a range of other subjects are effectively taught and, as result, pupils do well.
- In Reception, teachers use an imaginative range of resources and activities and engage children. Teachers have good technical skills to ensure that pupils extend their range of language. They use clever role play such as speaking on the telephone to encourage fluent speaking and real life tasks such as making shopping lists to develop literacy skills.
- In Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils are encouraged to become more independent in their learning. For example, in an English lesson, pupils joined in a discussion about whether graffiti is a good or bad thing. Their comments were informed by their own previous research and they were then encouraged to add to this by using dictionaries and the internet. In another lesson pupils were able to mark their partner's work correctly suggesting how it could be improved. In both lessons, teachers had made good plans to ensure that pupils could develop their writing skills.
- Useful techniques are used in lessons to help pupils' understanding. 'Steps to success' is used frequently, pupils say that this helps them to complete work of a higher standard and to know if they are completing their tasks properly.
- Teachers have high expectations of their pupils. As a result pupils know they are expected to work hard in lessons and complete all of their tasks. They are set challenging targets and scrutiny of pupils' books shows that these are achieved or that good progress towards them is being made.
- Work is assessed frequently and accurately and ensures that pupils, teachers and senior leaders have a clear view of progress. Pupils' work is marked promptly and regularly. In English, teachers' marking gives a very clear picture of how well pupils have done and how they can improve. However, in other subjects teachers' comments are not as detailed and do not point clearly enough to next steps in pupils' learning.
- Relationships in lessons are good and there is clearly a positive learning attitude. As a result pupils get on well independently and in groups. Teamwork between teachers and assistants is a strong feature ensuring they are able to give further work to pupils who are ready to move on and support pupils who do not fully understand their task.

The behaviour and safety of pupils is good

- Pupils' behaviour is good. There are clear routines which the pupils understand well and are consistently followed by adults.
- As a result pupils behave well and in lessons and in other activities during the school day. During the inspection pupils were observed coming into school, arriving at lessons and on the school yard. At all times their behaviour remained as good as in lessons.
- Co-operation among pupils is good. They are polite to staff and visitors. They show interest in each other's efforts in class and get on well together at break and lunch times.
- Pupils are aware of different types of danger and how to stay safe when using the internet. They

say that bullying of any type is rare and if it happens they know what they should do and who to talk to if they experience any problems.

- They have opportunities to reflect on life issues and how to prepare for their lives as they become older. In assembly Year 6 pupils were asked to consider how the skills they are learning will help them in secondary school. In a Year 2 PSHE lesson about personal skills pupils suggest what they might like to do when they are older and what might help them to achieve their goals.
- The atmosphere is calm and orderly and pupils say they enjoy school. As a result they are punctual at the start of the day and for lessons. Attendance has been a priority for senior staff and governors and is improving steadily.

The leadership and management is good

- The ambition and determination of the headteacher and senior leaders to do well is evident in all of the school's work. Self-evaluation is accurate. Leaders know what needs to be done to improve further and have been successful in addressing the areas for improvement from the previous inspection.
- A comprehensive programme of lesson observation and appropriate training where necessary is a strong feature of senior leaders' activity. As a result, teaching has improved. Senior leaders are clear that they need to maintain this activity so that the amount of outstanding teaching increases.
- Teachers with subject responsibilities take their duties very seriously and work hard to ensure that they support the school's development. However, some staff are new to these posts and lack confidence in completing some important tasks such as monitoring the quality of teaching.
- Senior leaders ensure that a good range of subjects and activities supports pupils' development. These include a range of after-school clubs which are popular with pupils. There are also many other activities to support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Effective work with the local authority and a local 'partner' school has helped the headteacher and senior staff maintain a rigorous focus on improving pupils' achievement.
- This school has pupils with a wide range of abilities and needs. There is a strong commitment to equality of opportunity and determination that all pupils do well. Pupils say that, 'the school helps us to do the best we can'. Pupils who move between schools are well-supported in their move whether arriving at, or leaving the school.
- Careful attention is paid to safeguarding and child protection and statutory requirements are met. These aspects are kept under close scrutiny to ensure that high standards are maintained.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body provides good support to the school and challenges the headteacher to ensure that areas for improvement are addressed. There is a carefully planned programme of visits to ensure that aspects of the school's work are kept under scrutiny. This helps to inform the appropriate committees which are carefully set up to address the most important issues, for instance, to address the areas for improvement from the previous inspection. Members are trained well and are properly prepared to work with the school in important areas such as safeguarding and child protection. Governors have a good understanding of the school's

appraisal system. They know that teachers' objectives are clearly linked to improved pupil outcomes and that pay progression is dependent on these. Finances are properly used and pupil premium funding is clearly linked to improved outcomes for pupils supported by the funds.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	117092
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	405684

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	179
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Vicky Pottinger
Headteacher	Jill Jones
Date of previous school inspection	25 November 2010
Telephone number	01992 763939
Fax number	01992 714420
Email address	admin@fourswannes.herts.sch.uk

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