

# Four Swannes Primary School

King Edward Road, Waltham Cross, Hertfordshire EN8 7HH

## Inspection dates

18–19 January 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	<b>Good</b>

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders' monitoring of teaching and learning has not been rigorous enough in identifying the key areas for improvement. Leaders do not place enough emphasis on aspects of teaching that will swiftly improve pupils' progress.
- Systems to track pupils' progress are not fully embedded. Leaders are not able to evaluate the progress of different groups of pupils from their individual starting points.
- Teaching over time has not led to consistently good outcomes for some groups of pupils. On too many occasions pupils are not sufficiently challenged as all pupils complete the same work. Frequent staff changes have led to inconsistency in teaching and this has affected pupils' progress.
- Pupils do not make good progress across a range of subjects. In 2016, pupils made less progress than other pupils nationally.
- The most able pupils are not reaching the higher levels of achievement as work is often not hard enough and teachers do not move them on quickly to more demanding work.
- Pupils are not given the opportunity to develop their reading, writing and mathematical skills across a range of subjects.
- The quality of pupils' handwriting and presentation varies across classes and subjects. Not all teachers insist that pupils write in their best handwriting.
- The school's website does not fully meet the government's statutory requirements. The required information about governors has not been published.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher and governors have ensured that this is an inclusive school. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds are welcomed and provided with the support they need in order to access school life fully.
- Procedures to keep pupils safe are effective.
- The early years provision is good. As a result of good teaching, children make good progress.
- Behaviour in and around school is good. Pupils enjoy their learning and are proud of their school.
- Attendance is improving.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it matches the best practice within the school by ensuring that teachers:
  - have the same high expectations of pupils' handwriting across all subjects
  - match learning activities more closely to the ability of the pupils
  - provide opportunities for pupils to use and develop their reading, writing and mathematics skills in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Accelerate the progress, and raise the attainment, of the most able pupils in subjects other than mathematics and English by providing more demanding work and moving pupils on in their learning swiftly.
- Increase the impact of leadership and management in improving outcomes by ensuring that:
  - systems to monitor teaching and learning are rigorous so that leaders' evaluation of their quality is accurate, reliable and consistent
  - approaches to measuring pupils' progress are understood fully and used confidently throughout the school
  - suitable systems are in place to measure the progress of all groups of pupils from their individual starting points accurately.
- Ensure that the information on the website is up to date and fully complies with statutory requirements.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Leaders are not monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in sufficient detail. Learning observations and book monitoring are not recorded in enough depth and plans to improve teaching are not focused on the actions that will best bring about rapid improvements to pupils' learning. The impact of leaders' actions has therefore not ensured consistently good teaching.
- A new system for tracking pupils' progress has been introduced in the last year. This tracks the progress of pupils with additional needs and disadvantaged pupils effectively. It is not yet fully developed as it does not enable leaders to monitor the progress of all groups of pupils, for example the most able, from their starting points effectively.
- Since the last inspection the headteacher has appointed new subject leaders. Inspectors found that leaders have identified areas for improvement correctly. They have introduced strategies to improve outcomes for pupils but these have not been in place long enough to show meaningful improvements to pupils' outcomes.
- The headteacher understands the strengths and weaknesses of the school. She has used the support provided by the local authority to evaluate the performance of the school, validate the senior leaders' judgements and to support newly appointed leaders. Evidence of the impact of this support can be seen in the early years and improvements in mathematics teaching.
- Leaders and governors ensure that the school is fully inclusive. The headteacher is passionate about ensuring that all pupils, whatever their background, race or ability are supported so they are able to participate in all aspects of the school. She wants all pupils 'to leave school as confident individuals that respect others and to have made good progress'.
- The school is using the pupil premium funding effectively to support disadvantaged pupils. Accurate tracking of this group of pupils has enabled leaders to provide support tailored to meet the needs of individuals. Two extra teachers have been employed to work with targeted pupils on specific areas of learning. Current school progress information and work in pupils' books indicate that disadvantaged pupils are making at least as good progress as their peers in most year groups. The funding also ensures that disadvantaged pupils have access to the full range of school trips and visits.
- The primary physical education and sports premium is used to provide pupils with the opportunity to learn a range of different sports. Participation rates are high and pupils enjoy their lessons. Leaders have also been able to fund a range of after-school sporting clubs at no cost to parents. Pupils participate in a number of sporting competitions against other schools.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced as it offers languages, humanities, arts, sports and technological subjects alongside English, mathematics and science. This curriculum makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are given the opportunity to take part in a range of interesting visits and events to enrich their learning. For example, the choir sings at a local shopping centre and at

the O2 Arena, and there are visits to the school by theatre groups.

- Pupils are given good opportunities to learn about fundamental British values. For example, they learn about democracy through the election of school council representatives. They show respect for the beliefs and lifestyles of all members of the school community and acceptance for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors understand the strengths of the school and the areas for improvement. This is because they challenge school leaders, as shown by the searching questions they ask about pupils' achievement and attendance. Governors know how the funding is spent to support the learning of disadvantaged pupils and the impact it has on pupils' outcomes.
- Governors have been proactive in supporting the school's leaders to improve attendance, for example by talking to parents about the importance of attendance when they drop off and collect their children.
- Alongside the reports they receive, governors visit the school to find out things for themselves. They ask leaders searching questions about what they have seen. They understand their role is strategic rather than operational.
- Governors ensure that their statutory duties relating to safeguarding are carried out. They have attended regular training to ensure that they understand the latest guidance and requirements.
- Governors have not ensured that the school website meets the government's statutory requirements fully. The section on governance does not give all of the required information.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The identity of all visitors is carefully checked before they are allowed to enter the school building. Any visitors who have not been appropriately checked are accompanied at all times.
- All the necessary checks are carried out on staff prior to employment. New staff are provided with safeguarding training within the first few days of taking up post. All staff are regularly trained to ensure that they are aware of the latest safeguarding guidance. They know how to identify indicators that a child may be at risk, including the identification of radicalisation, child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation.
- Procedures for referring child protection concerns are robust. Leaders keep meticulous records of concerns and any contact with parents and other agencies. The school works closely and effectively with other agencies to support pupils and their families.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Requires improvement**

- The quality of teaching is inconsistent across the school. As a result, the proportion of pupils making good or better progress varies. Teachers frequently set the same work for all pupils. As a result, some groups of pupils, especially the most able, are not suitably challenged. Some classes have had several changes of teacher during the academic year. This has been disruptive and has led to pupils making inconsistent progress in the classes affected.
- The most able pupils often spend too much time completing similar activities to their peers and this slows their progress. Teachers do not move them on to the more demanding work quickly enough.
- Not all teachers have high expectations of the quality of pupils' handwriting. The quality of writing in pupils' handwriting practice books is neat and carefully presented, showing correct letter formation and good hand control. However, when looking at writing in other subjects, the writing for a large proportion of pupils is not of the same high standard.
- Pupils enjoy learning and relationships within the classroom are positive as staff know the pupils well. Teachers use this knowledge to plan topics which interest the pupils. All adults use praise and encouragement to motivate pupils and as a result pupils are confident to tackle unfamiliar work.
- Teachers follow the school's marking and assessment policy and provide pupils with feedback about their work that helps them to improve further. Most pupils make the necessary changes to their work.
- Pupils' progress is more rapid in lessons where teachers have high expectations, use their subject knowledge to plan activities that make pupils think and use questioning to deepen pupils' understanding and knowledge.
- Teaching assistants are used effectively in classrooms, especially when supporting pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They know the needs of the pupils they support and are therefore able to meet those needs. Teaching assistants not assigned to a particular pupil are skilled at knowing when to provide support and when to allow pupils to try work for themselves.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school provides a safe environment for pupils. Pupils told inspectors that bullying is rare and the school's record of incidents confirms this. Pupils know about the different types of bullying and the difference between bullying and falling out. Pupils feel listened to and have confidence in staff dealing with any concerns they may have. This is summed up by the pupils who told inspectors 'this school is safe' and 'most people are kind – especially the teachers'.
- The inclusion officer is highly effective. He supports pupils and families to break down

any barriers to learning. Pupils who enter the school mid-year are well supported to ensure that they settle in quickly.

- The curriculum teaches pupils about staying safe in a variety of situations. Pupils are knowledgeable about e-safety and the risks of social media. Leaders run annual e-safety workshops for parents.
- Pupils with emotional and behavioural needs and those who are most vulnerable receive well-targeted support. For example, staff work closely with a charitable organisation that runs programmes to provide pupils with the ability to learn new skills, work in groups and as part of the community. Staff have noticed the difference that participation in this programme has made to pupils' behaviour, confidence and self-esteem.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- During break and lunchtimes pupils play well together, taking turns and sharing equipment. The dining room is a calm and orderly environment as there are well established routines and expectations followed by all pupils. Pupils demonstrate good table manners.
- Pupils respond quickly to staff requests. For example, they line up quickly and quietly at the end of playtime.
- Pupils' attitudes towards learning are positive. Inspectors saw many examples of pupils working cooperatively together and of individuals concentrating on their work. Where there was off-task behaviour it was because pupils had completed their work or the work was too easy. Pupils respond quickly to staff requests whether they are in the classroom or playground.
- School behaviour records confirm that disruption to lessons is rare. There are a small number of pupils who find it difficult to control their behaviour without support. These pupils receive high-quality support which is helping them to manage their behaviour both in class and in the playground.
- Published attendance figures suggest that attendance is well below average and that persistent absence is above the national average. Attendance figures are affected by issues such as the number of pupils who leave mid-way through the school year. These pupils cannot be taken off the school's register until the school knows the destination of the pupils.
- The attendance liaison officer works very closely with families and pupils who find it difficult to attend school regularly. As a result of her actions, the number of pupils persistently absent from school has decreased. School attendance is now average.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

### **Requires improvement**

- Pupils' progress and attainment in the new, more challenging, key stage 2 national tests were well below average in 2016. The published results were affected by a number of pupils who entered the school during Year 6 unable to speak English or at a very early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language. However, the

progress of pupils who attended the school throughout Years 5 and 6 was below average in writing and mathematics. The progress of pupils currently in Year 6 is variable. It is stronger in mathematics than in other subjects.

- The most able pupils are not making the rapid progress they should. Pupils leave Year 6 with levels of attainment expected for their age but too few attain the higher levels.
- Progress in subjects other than English and mathematics varies. It is better in some subjects and in some classes than in others. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to apply and develop their reading, writing and mathematics skills in these subjects.
- As a result of well targeted support, most disadvantaged pupils are working at the appropriate standard for their age. Work in these pupils' books indicates good progress over time. Like their peers, the most able disadvantaged pupils make expected rather than rapid progress.
- Pupils' attainment in phonics is improving. In 2016, a very large majority of pupils had met the phonics screening threshold by the end of Year 2. Inspectors saw good examples of pupils in the early years and key stage 1 using their phonics skills to help them read and spell.
- Less-able pupils who read to the inspectors successfully used their phonics skills to read unfamiliar words. They told inspectors that they enjoy reading, and their reading records indicate that they read often. However, some pupils spend too long reading books at the same level when they are ready to progress to the next level.
- The most able pupils read with a high degree of fluency, intonation and feeling. Pupils read a wide range of age-appropriate books. They told inspectors that they enjoy reading and regularly visit the local library.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points. Suitable support is in place to meet their individual needs.
- Pupils who join the school unable to speak English or at a very early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language receive good one-to-one support. As a result they quickly learn English. In lessons, staff make sure that pupils receive targeted support and use a range of resources to help them with their learning. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress over time.
- Outcomes in mathematics are improving across the school. Evidence in pupils' books shows that they are given opportunities to develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills. Pupils enjoy their mathematics lessons.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- Children enter Nursery and Reception with skills and abilities that are below those typical for their age, especially in speech and language. As a result of good teaching, they make good progress and the proportion of children reaching a good level of development has increased over the last two years. In 2016 it was in line with the national average.
- Teaching in the early years is good because all adults have high expectations of what children can achieve. Teachers plan interesting activities that are closely matched to children's needs.

- Adults support children’s language development effectively. They model standard English and encourage children to develop their vocabulary through stories, books and conversations. Children who speak English as an additional language receive specialist support.
- Teachers use questions to gauge children’s level of understanding and to develop their thinking and problem-solving skills. Assessments are accurate and used to plan the next stage in children’s learning.
- Children’s behaviour is good. As a result of well-established classroom routines, children develop good learning behaviours. Children work and play cooperatively, sharing and taking turns. Children listen attentively to adults and show high levels of concentration. They are well prepared for key stage 1.
- The outdoor area provides a range of opportunities for children to explore and develop their physical skills.
- The early years is well led and managed. Since her appointment, the early years leader has made a number of improvements to the learning environment. She has a good knowledge of the children and relationships with parents are positive. Parents have the opportunity to talk to teachers at the start and end of each day.
- Transition arrangements from pre-school are robust and involve parents and other agencies. Home visits and play and stay sessions are part of the arrangements. Parents have the opportunity to be involved in their child’s learning by making contributions to their learning journals.

## School details

Unique reference number	117092
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10023423

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	196
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jean Bailey
Headteacher	Jill Jones
Telephone number	01992 763939
Website	<a href="http://www.fourswannes.herts.sch.uk">www.fourswannes.herts.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:head@fourswannes.herts.sch.uk">head@fourswannes.herts.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	12–13 January 2013

## Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of specified information about governors on its website.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium grant is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language is well above average. The largest groups of pupils are of Turkish and Eastern European origin.
- An above average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities or have an education, health and care plan or statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils who join the school or leave the school at times other than the

start of the year is higher than the national average.

- The early years provision comprises a part-time Nursery class and a full-time Reception class.
- An outside provider runs a range of after-school clubs between 3.30 and 4.30pm.
- The school met the most recent floor standards. These are the minimum expectations, set by the government, for pupils' attainment and progress.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors gathered a range of evidence in order to judge the quality of teaching and learning over time. Inspectors observed parts of 15 lessons, some jointly with senior and middle leaders. Inspectors, accompanied by school leaders, looked at the work in pupils' exercise books and spoke to them about their work.
- Inspectors listened to two groups of pupils read and attended an assembly.
- Meetings were held with the school's leaders, two governors, a representative of the local authority and a group of key stage 2 pupils. The lead inspector also spoke with the vice-chair of the governing body on the telephone.
- There were insufficient responses from the parent online survey for these to be taken into account, although parents' written comments and the views of those spoken to at the start of the school day were considered. There were no responses from the staff or pupil surveys.

## Inspection team

Caroline Pardy, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Sandra Jones	Ofsted Inspector
Sharon Wilson	Ofsted Inspector

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