

Swimbridge Church of England Primary School

Barnstaple Hill, Swimbridge, Barnstaple, EX32 0PJ

Inspection dates 13–14 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Swimbridge is an exceptional school where the pupils’ very high performance in assessments at the end of Year 6 continues to place the school well within the top 5% of schools nationally.
- The school has continued a strong commitment to improvement since the previous inspection that has enabled it to extend the breadth of pupils’ outstanding achievements.
- Pupils achieve exceptionally well in English and mathematics, including the most able. Most pupils also show high levels of skill across the range of subjects including, science, swimming and music.
- Teaching is outstanding and is typified throughout the school by the diligence and great skill of staff in questioning pupils to draw out and develop their ideas.
- Staff also excel in promoting the pupils’ wholehearted and earnest commitment to learning that underpins their excellent progress and great enjoyment of school.
- The school’s continuing success stems from inspirational and high quality leadership by the very well-respected headteacher.
- The headteacher’s infectious enthusiasm and encouraging commitment to team leadership nurtures excellent support from all staff and members of the governing body.
- Together they have successfully established a community of learning in which all those associated with the school, especially the pupils themselves, are proud to be fully involved.
- Parents are particularly appreciative; one typical comment being: ‘The staff are doing remarkably well to meet each child’s uniquely different and particular needs with equal success. I couldn’t be happier with the school.’
- In response to the staff’s excellent care and safeguarding of pupils’ welfare, pupils show genuine kindness and consideration towards each other, and their behaviour is exemplary.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited 12 lessons and was accompanied by the headteacher during several of these observations.
- The inspector observed morning playtime and lunchtime and also attended an assembly.
- Meetings were held with members of the school council, and many other pupils were spoken to during lessons and breaktimes. The inspector met with governors, and had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector held meetings with school staff, including senior leaders.
- The inspector also took account of 12 parents' responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning and undertaking the inspection, and also received 14 staff questionnaires. The inspector also spoke informally with a number of parents as they brought their children to school.
- The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' progress, lesson planning, leaders' checks on the quality of teaching, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Alex Baxter, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is below average in size.
- Almost all pupils attending the school are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported through school action is above the national average.
- The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals) is below average.
- The school does not use any alternative educational provision.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is comprised of one mixed-aged Reception and Year 1 class. Most other pupils are taught in mixed-age classes.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Provide even more opportunities for pupils to set up and follow their own investigations, and find things out for themselves, as they move up from class to class through the school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Children's skills on entry usually match those expected for their age, but vary from year to year due to the very small year groups.
- From the moment they arrive in Reception, through all of their subsequent years, all pupils benefit from high quality teaching. As a result, they constantly make excellent progress in their learning. All pupils are also extremely well supported on an individual basis by skilled and devoted adults. Their determined commitment to equal opportunity ensures that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs also achieve exceedingly well.
- Pupils aided by pupil premium funding receive additional adult guidance in literacy and numeracy, for example to build confidence and reading skills. As a result, their attainment, as measured by their average points scores at the end of Key Stage 2, matches the average points scores of pupils in the school who are not known to be eligible for free school meals, and also compares very favourably with all pupils nationally.
- Pupils' attainment in English and mathematics is well above the national average at the end of Years 2 and 6 and this trend has been maintained over several years. Currently, especially at the end of Year 6, pupils are on target to at least match, and more likely exceed, last year's standards, which had again placed the school in the top group of schools nationally.
- The high quality of pupils' skills was clearly evident in Years 5 and 6 as pupils perceptively discussed and readily provided accurate examples of how similes, metaphors and personification can be used to improve their expressive writing. Pupils also confidently squared numbers and calculated numbers to the power of five during daily mental mathematics sessions.
- Other year groups through the school are also doing exceedingly well, including in reading, where pupils are deriving great benefit from high quality teaching of phonics (sounds of letters.)
- Additionally, pupils respond extremely well to very frequent individual assistance with reading at home and at school. Pupils also read widely and with great enjoyment to support their learning across other subjects, about Ancient Greece, for example, and receive regular support in groups to extend their comprehension skills.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- All the adults who work in this small school use questioning in an exemplary way to get to know the pupils, check their level of understanding and take it to the next level. As a result, staff are highly skilled at tailoring their support and guidance to meet each individual pupil's personal and academic needs, so that pupils know what they have to do and why.
- This involvement, which begins from the moment children first enter the school, acts as a spur to new learning and underpins the pupils' exemplary commitment to their work. In Reception, for example, when questioned by the teacher, children eagerly shared ideas as they role-played the Billy Goats Gruff story.
- All teachers have high expectations, excellent management skills, and teach at a lively pace. They, and their very skilled assistants, also react very quickly to pupils' responses, using them to quicken the pace of learning. Consequently, pupils find school exciting, are enthused, and encouraged to give of their best. As a result, learning is rapid, as for example, in a Years 1 and 2 lesson where the teacher successfully developed the pupils' understanding of Venn diagrams.
- Teachers show very good knowledge of their subjects and often use inspirational and lively techniques to enthuse pupils. For example, in Years 5 and 6 the teacher extended pupils' understanding of number by using their knowledge of the nearby A361 road as a key to remembering that the square root of 361 is 19.
- Other strengths in teaching include the high level of planning and organisation given to the stimulating range of subjects and activities provided for the pupils, including instrumental tuition

and regular French lessons.

- The teaching of reading, writing, communication and mathematics is highly effective and is further extended across the subjects. For example, in science, teachers encourage pupils to make predictions and draw their own conclusions about which fruit and vegetables would be damaged most by freezing temperatures.
- Teachers also provide a variety of extension tasks so that pupils can continue to learn for themselves, including those with more ability. By these means teachers also ensure that disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, and those for whom the pupil premium provides support make equally rapid and sustained progress.
- Teachers are currently encouraging pupils to consider: 'What I know, What I wonder and What I have learned', so that they become even more accomplished at learning for themselves as they move through the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The way that pupils sustain great effort and enthusiasm in lessons continues to be a strength of the school. Pupils are keen to please staff, and by confidently expressing their views and raising their own questions make excellent contributions to their learning.
- Visitors report that, 'Staff, assistants and pupils all seem to genuinely enjoy being at this school.' The pupils' consistently high rate of attendance also reflects their confidence and joy in coming to school and the benefits of the school's close links with parents.
- In response to the staff's promotion of helpful considerate relationships, all pupils relate very warmly and supportively towards each other. Older pupils, and those with responsibilities, for example, on the school council and as Play Leaders, diligently support younger children.
- Pupils of all ages show a deep understanding of the needs of others when they meet in their family groups, for example, to discuss how to make playtimes even more enjoyable.
- Pupils behave extremely well, creating a genuine sense of harmony throughout their day-to-day activities and learning.
- Pupils have a secure understanding of how to stay safe, know about bullying and the forms that it can take, for example cyber-bullying, and confidently state that, 'We have no bullies here.'
- Pupils also say that they feel very safe because, 'We look after each other, and adults are our friends and are special too.'

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The very experienced and capable headteacher represents the corner stone that underpins the school's very friendly, family atmosphere. His unwavering drive to ensure that every pupil develops with equal success both personally and academically is fully supported by all staff, governors and parents.
- Leadership roles are shared very effectively, everyone shares a real sense of belonging, and all the staff are committed to sustaining equality of opportunity for all pupils across all aspects of the school's work.
- As a team, staff meet frequently to check that pupils' differing needs are being met and to ensure that areas identified for improvement are efficiently and effectively identified. For example, systems for identifying and supporting pupils' special educational needs have recently been strengthened.
- Secure financial management ensures that funding is directed at ensuring that additional adult support is used efficiently to help disabled pupils, those with special educational needs, and pupils supported by the pupil premium to succeed as well as their peers.
- Activities to further extend pupils' ability to learn even more effectively for themselves continue to be developed across the school, which, together with the school's impressive track-record of sustaining pupils' high achievement, shows a strong capacity to improve even further.

- All staff ensure the highest quality of safety and care for the pupils, and all adults who work in the school are subject to rigorous security checks.
- The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strongly promoted across a rich and stimulating range of subjects and practical learning activities. Their understanding of the local and wider community is also greatly enhanced through church events, residential visits, creative activities and links with other schools.
- The local authority continues to make available effective light-touch support in response to any requests that this highly successful school chooses to make.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors fully share and contribute to the strong sense of direction, being very well organised, highly supportive, and taking a lively interest in all aspects of school life. They engage fully in training, and visit the school regularly to check safeguarding procedures and to see teaching and learning at first hand. As a result, governors have a very secure understanding of the quality of provision, especially teaching, and how it impacts on pupils' progress. They hold the headteacher to account, by, for example, checking that staff pay is linked to performance and brings improvement. Governors also receive and discuss extremely detailed and clearly evaluated reports from the headteacher about the use of additional funds and pupils' achievement. As a result, they know that pupils in receipt of the pupil premium benefit well from additional adult support, and are very clear about the school's continuing and very favourable comparative performance with similar schools.

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	113455
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	403209

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	107
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andy Comerford
Headteacher	Garry Reed
Date of previous school inspection	29 th January 2008
Telephone number	01271 830437
Fax number	01271 830437
Email address	admin@swimbridge-primary.devon.sch.uk

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