

# Swillington Primary School

Church Lane, Swillington, Leeds, LS26 8DX

**Inspection dates** 11–12 November 2015

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The determined and focused headteacher and her equally determined senior leadership team have secured improvements in teaching and the curriculum so that more pupils are now achieving the standards they are capable of, including those pupils eligible for the pupil premium.
- Over time, senior leaders have developed middle leaders so that they contribute effectively to these improvements.
- Provision for children in the early years is good. As a result, they make good progress from their starting points and increasingly, more of them are better prepared for Year 1.
- Teaching is good. It is well matched to pupils' needs, particularly the least-able and those with special needs, who make good progress, sometimes even better.
- Governors know the school well. They provide challenge and support in equal measure which have contributed to the school's improving effectiveness.
- Behaviour in lessons and at other times is good. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They respond well to the responsibilities they are given and value the opportunity to contribute to the life and work of the school.
- Pupil's personal development and welfare are outstanding. An exceptionally strong culture of safeguarding and care for pupils ensures they feel safe, attend regularly and achieve well.
- The school provides an excellent range of activities beyond the school day that widen pupil experiences and develop their skills, particularly in sport and music.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The proportion of more able pupils making accelerated progress and achieving the highest levels is not in line with that seen nationally, particularly in mathematics and writing.
- Teachers are grappling with the changes to the school's mathematics curriculum. This means they do not always provide enough challenge and depth in mathematics lessons for pupils to make consistently good progress.
- Not all teachers ensure pupils form letters accurately, write neatly and present their work to a high standard.

## Full report

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

- Improve standards in mathematics by ensuring that all teachers have the knowledge, skills and subject expertise to teach the new curriculum effectively so that:
  - pupils have the opportunities they need to deepen their understanding of mathematical concepts and are able to apply these confidently in a variety of mathematical areas of learning and in the curriculum
  - more pupils make better than expected progress, particularly the most-able, to ensure they are ready for their next stage of learning.
  
- Ensure all teachers help and encourage pupils to form letters correctly, write neatly and take pride in the presentation of their work.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher's steely determination and focused leadership have brought about tangible improvements in leadership and teaching and secured the school's capacity to improve further. The school values of resilience, diversity, cooperation and aspiration permeate the ethos and work of the school. As a result, standards have risen and continue to rise.
- The headteacher has built around her a highly effective senior leadership team whose members have, in turn, developed an increasingly effective team of middle leaders. Together, these leaders have made some significant improvements to the curriculum, teaching and pupils' personal development and welfare. This has ensured that more pupils are achieving the standards they are capable of.
- Leaders are tenacious in their approach to improving teaching. Support and challenge are provided in equal measure through the robust systems and procedures for checking the quality of teaching and improving it. The carefully planned training and professional development of staff are ensuring that they have the skills and knowledge to do their jobs well, particularly in English, and the headteacher holds them to account for the quality and impact of their teaching through rigorous performance management procedures. This is having a direct impact on pupils' progress and has gone a long way towards addressing the levels of underachievement seen at the last inspection.
- The leadership of the provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is good. Improvements in classroom teaching, combined with well-targeted interventions and effective support, mean these pupils make good progress and sometimes even better.
- The curriculum is well planned to meet the needs and interests of all pupils. There are abundant opportunities to enhance their experiences and learning through visits and visitors and the extended curriculum. For example, during the inspection, pupils in Years 5 and 6 worked with an actor to develop their knowledge and understanding of the ancient civilisation of the Mayans. Inspectors were able to see first-hand how this was used immerse pupils in story-telling while considering the moral dilemma the story posed. This approach has had a marked impact on pupils' behaviour and engagement in learning, particularly boys. It has extended to pupils willingly undertaking research in their own time at home.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a notable strength of the school and runs like a golden thread through all of the school's work. It is underpinned by the school's values. Leaders prioritise and keep a close check on this aspect of the school's work because they know and understand the significance of it in ensuring pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Safeguarding is highly effective. The way the school supports and cares for its pupils, and ensures they keep safe, is a real strength. Staff leave no stone unturned in seeking to ensure that pupils are safe, happy and well cared for. All staff understand the importance of safeguarding and are clear about their roles and responsibilities because of the training and support they receive.
- The school uses pupil premium funding well to provide effective support for disadvantaged pupils. The school's holistic approach supports these pupils to attend school more regularly and do well in their learning. Consequently, there is an improving picture in the progress these pupils make over time.
- The physical education (PE) and sports premium is used effectively to promote healthy lifestyles and improve the standard of teaching and learning in physical education. Governors secure effective value for money by funding collaborative work with other schools in the trust. This has ensured that a very high proportion of pupils takes part in some form of sport or exercise outside the school day, including competitive sport. Pupils value this opportunity and understand the importance of exercise in keeping themselves healthy.
- The school works hard to engage parents and keep them informed. There is a proactive parents' association that contributes to this. The headteacher and senior leaders each take personal responsibility for engaging with parents and ensure they are around each morning to meet and greet pupils and parents as they enter school. This not only means any concerns are dealt with quickly and effectively, but parents also get to hear about how well their children are doing. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the leadership and work of the school.

## ■ The governance of the school

- Since the last inspection, the governing body has taken decisive action to increase its effectiveness by reconstituting, reorganising the structure of meetings and addressing governors’ training needs.
- Governors have provided support and challenge in equal measure for what was initially an inexperienced and developing senior leadership team. They provide a good level of challenge in meetings and, through the work of individual governors, undertake close checks on the school’s progress and the impact of leaders’ actions. This means they have an accurate view of the school’s strengths and areas for development and have been an integral part of its journey to good.
- Governors manage the performance of the headteacher well and have a good knowledge and understanding of the procedures that are used to appraise the performance of all other staff.
- They are well informed about how pupil premium and sport funding are spent and understand fully how this supports the personal development and achievement of disadvantaged pupils.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- There are many strengths evident in teaching that are securing rapidly improving outcomes for pupils. This is because leaders work tirelessly to improve teaching and all staff take responsibility to improve.
- There is an effective balance of inclusive, class-based teaching and targeted individual and group support from well-qualified and skilled teaching assistants. This ensures that disadvantaged pupils, the least-able and those with special educational needs make good and even better progress to catch up with their peers.
- Teachers plan and resource their lessons carefully, taking into account pupils’ starting points and interests, not only in English and mathematics, but across all subjects. This ensures good engagement in learning, particularly for boys, and provides teachers with opportunities to check pupils’ work in lessons so they can support and challenge pupils to improve.
- Increasingly, teachers use questioning effectively to challenge pupils’ thinking. This is contributing to the improvements seen, not only in English and mathematics, but in other areas of the curriculum.
- In mathematics, teachers work hard to ensure they support and challenge pupils. Some teachers are more adept at deepening pupils’ knowledge and understanding of mathematical concepts than others. Where this is strongest, teachers give pupils well-crafted opportunities to explore and investigate mathematical concepts. However, this is not yet consistent across the school and some teachers are still grappling with the demands and expectations of the new curriculum and new ways of teaching and assessing in mathematics. They are working effectively with leaders and other teachers to improve their practice but, over time, this has hampered the progress of some pupils, in particular the most-able.
- Improvements in the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) and basic skills in literacy have enabled more pupils to make good progress, often from low starting points. They use and apply these skills effectively in their reading and writing. There is a good balance between the teaching of phonics and developing pupils’ understanding of what they read. Even the youngest pupils enjoy talking about what they read and show good levels of understanding. For example, least-able pupils in Key Stage 1 are able to infer how a character feels by what he says and does and by using picture cues.
- Marking and feedback contribute effectively to pupils’ learning. Although more careful checks are made on pupils’ use of grammar, spelling and punctuation, not all teachers ensure that pupils form letters accurately or that their handwriting is neat enough. This affects the standard of presentation in some classes.
- An innovative approach to homework means pupils, together with their parents, engage in learning beyond the school day. Pupils have homework where they can practise basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics, but they also have an opportunity to use and apply these in home-based projects. Pupils say they ‘love’ doing this work and inspectors saw some high-quality examples of pupils’ homework.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

is good

### Personal development and welfare

- The school’s work to promote pupils’ personal development and welfare is outstanding.

- There are highly effective safeguarding systems and procedures in place to ensure pupils are safe and that all staff are clear about how to keep children safe from harm. No stone is left unturned when it comes to children's safety. Pupils' understanding of how to keep safe is well honed because of the strong culture of safeguarding and opportunities in the curriculum to learn about safety.
- Parents say their children are safe and happy in school and that the school deals effectively with any concerns that arise. Pupils have a good understanding of bullying in all its forms and there is evidence in the school's work that it actively challenges stereotyping.
- The school's values of resilience, aspiration, diversity and cooperation are key drivers in promoting pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. The curriculum provides many opportunities for pupils to be reflective and think deeply about life and what they are learning. The opportunity to study philosophy is helping them to develop these skills very effectively. Pupils explore their own heritage to instil pride in their community and to better understand their place in society. They are taught about, and have first-hand opportunities to explore, other faiths and cultures which is preparing them extremely well for life in an evolving, diverse society.
- The high uptake of out-of-school sports activities ensures pupils make informed choices about their fitness and healthy lifestyles.
- Pupils have the opportunity to attend a breakfast club and tea-time club. The school actively targets those pupils who would benefit from this.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- There are clear and effective systems for managing pupils' behaviour and the school seeks to promote and reinforce good behaviours. Adults provide good role models and there are many opportunities to celebrate and share what is good, including a weekly phone call home to parents of pupils who have demonstrated good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. The well-thought-out procedures for dealing with any rare incidents of inappropriate behaviour allow pupils to reflect on their actions and put things right, and they do.
- Pupils are welcoming, sociable and courteous at all times and are keen to talk about their school and the work they do. Older pupils take their responsibilities as play leaders, office support, and more recently peer mentoring, very seriously. Their work and the strong teamwork of leaders and staff have created a very calm and harmonious school community, which supports effectively the increasing number of pupils entering with social and emotional challenges.
- A range of activities and good adult supervision and interaction ensure breaks and lunchtimes are a positive experience for all.
- Pupils show good levels of cooperation when asked to work with each other on tasks. They say lessons are sometimes hard but that 'they never give up'. In some classes, pupils do not take as much pride in their work as they should. This is because when teachers check pupils' work, some do not insist on high standards of handwriting and presentation. In some instances, the format and structure of worksheets do not support pupils to write neatly, particularly in Key Stage 1 and in the foundation subjects.
- Since the last inspection, there has been a marked improvement in the attendance of pupils so that attendance in 2015 was in line with that seen nationally and currently is looking equally strong. The school's work to reduce persistent absence and improve the attendance of some key groups of pupils, such as disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs, has been highly effective. This has supported improvements in outcomes for these pupils.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

**are good**

- School assessment information shows that current pupils make expected progress and more are making better than expected progress, particularly in reading and writing. Changes to the way the school assesses and records assessment information have brought the school's systems in line with the raised expectations of the new national curriculum. On paper, it appears that some pupils are not exceeding expected rates of progress. Nevertheless, close scrutiny of pupils' work and observations of teaching indicate that pupils continue to make good progress, but more work needs to be done to ensure that the most-able pupils make better than expected progress, particularly in mathematics.
- Assessment information for subjects other than mathematics and English is less well developed, but pupils exhibit good levels of knowledge and their work shows they are working well towards meeting the

standards expected of their age group. The strengthening application of literacy skills across the curriculum and opportunities to extend their learning in homework are clear indicators that pupils are making good progress.

- There is a strong improving trend in the proportion of pupils making expected progress, and in 2015 the proportion of pupils who made expected progress was above that seen nationally. Many exceeded expected progress in reading, but not in mathematics and writing, especially the most-able. Leaders are aware of this and are taking action to target this group of pupils given that historically, very few or no pupils achieved the highest level at Key Stage 1.
- Overtime, standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have risen faster than those seen nationally so that in reading and writing, pupils did as well as their peers nationally and are gaining ground in mathematics. The proportion of pupils achieving the highest level in reading has risen to just below that seen nationally, and inspectors found evidence to support the school's view that more pupils were working at a higher level in writing than seen previously. Given their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics, pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress. Leaders are taking decisive action to secure better progress for the most-able to ensure that more of these pupils reach the highest standard at the end of Key Stage 1.
- Year-on-year improvement in the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check means that in 2015, this was just below that seen nationally. Gaps closed for boys and disadvantaged pupils. Actions taken by leaders to ensure standards continue to rise more rapidly have been swift and effective. Inspectors saw even the youngest pupils tackle new letters and words with confidence. The needs of the most-able are being provided for so they can achieve their potential in reading.
- In 2015, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs made good progress to attain levels that are similar to or sometimes above those seen nationally in reading, writing and grammar, punctuation and spelling. This group continues to make good progress.
- Across the school, gaps in attainment continue to close between disadvantaged pupils and their peers. In 2015, for Year 6 pupils, there was a dip because other pupils did better and not enough of the most-able pupils in this group made more than expected progress in mathematics. Nevertheless, the progress of these pupils compared favourably with the progress other pupils make nationally.
- Good-quality teaching of reading is ensuring pupils make rapid progress and gaps are closing. Pupils have ample opportunities to read widely and often through both their reading at home and in school and from the research they undertake in the curriculum. Key Stage 2 pupils are enthused by the opportunity to read the news and learn about and discuss current affairs.

## Early years provision

**is good**

- The leadership of the early years is good. The leader, ably supported by the Reception Year teacher, strives to ensure that children make good progress from their low starting points, particularly in communication and language and personal, social and emotional development. They achieve well and increasingly, more of them leave the Reception Year better prepared for the next stage of their learning. The proportion of children reaching a good level is catching up with that seen nationally.
- Children have a good start to their time at the school and parents are fully involved in their child's transition into Nursery and Reception. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the support and guidance they receive and they value the positive relationships they have with staff. They say their children are happy, safe and well looked after.
- Consistently good teaching, tailored to the children's needs and interests, ensures that they make good progress. In addition, focused teaching helps children to develop and apply skills in reading, writing and mathematics and there is a concerted effort to target the most-able children to improve their outcomes from the outset. This is having a tangible impact on children's progress as seen in the teaching of phonics and its application in their writing. Parents value the support they receive to help their children to sound out letters correctly. They say they can see a difference in a short space of time.
- Adults' understanding of the characteristics of effective learning reinforces the school's values and ensures children's curiosity is aroused and they remain focused and engaged. Adults look carefully for these learning behaviours when observing children to provide them with the opportunities they need to develop these further.
- Adults' regular and accurate use of assessment supports effective learning and ensures that teaching is adapted to meet the needs of children. This has been particularly successful in engaging boys and improving their communication skills and writing. For example, the push to develop boys' and the

youngest pupils' fine motor skills is giving them the confidence to have a go at writing. Inspectors saw boys actively engaged in writing notes from a crime scene and completing a fireman's log after rescuing a trapped puppy. Scrutiny of children's learning journals show this is a feature of the setting's work. Teachers are not always vigilant about the pencil hold, even when writing in a focused session, as some children are developing bad habits.

- Adults were observed using skilful questioning techniques to help children think more deeply and to develop their language skills and confidence to speak. They model good responses and ensure children listen carefully and speak as clearly and as well as they can.
- Good leadership ensures welfare requirements are met.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	107843
<b>Local authority</b>	Leeds
<b>Inspection number</b>	10002099

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	202
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Phil Cook
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sallie Elliott
<b>Telephone number</b>	0113 286 3220
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.swillington.leeds.sch.uk">www.swillington.leeds.sch.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:elliots04@brigshawtrust.com">elliots04@brigshawtrust.com</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	27 November 2013

## Information about this school

- Swillington is a one-form entry primary school. It is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- It is part of the Brigshaw Cooperative Trust, a trust made up of seven primary schools, a high school and two children's centres in the area.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is average.
- The school's deprivation indicator is lower than that seen nationally.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above that seen nationally.
- The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or supported with an education, health and care plan is below that seen nationally.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average and at the time of the inspection, none was at the early stages of learning English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school at times other than normal starting points is average.
- There are breakfast and tea-time clubs, which are managed by the school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons, some with the headteacher, and made short visits to classrooms.
- Inspectors also undertook a work scrutiny of English, mathematics and topic books with the assistant headteacher, who is the leader for teaching, learning and assessment.
- Inspectors heard a range of pupils reading aloud.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons, during breaks and at lunchtimes was observed.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, other senior and middle leaders, class teacher and support assistants, governors and four representatives of the governing body, including the Chair of the Governing Body.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation relating to school improvement and pupils' development and welfare.
- Inspectors took into account the views of parents in the survey the school undertook in April 2015 and Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors also spoke with parents at the start of the school day.

## Inspection team

Anne Bowyer, lead inspector  
Alan Chaffey

Her Majesty's Inspector  
Ofsted Inspector

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