

Four Swannes Primary School

King Edward Road, Waltham Cross, Hertfordshire EN8 7HH

Inspection dates

11–12 June 2019

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 headteacher, leaders, and governors have improved the quality of education since the previous inspection. The school's provision is now good.
- Teaching learning and assessment have improved. Teachers now typically closely match the work they set to pupils' starting points and create a supportive environment in which to learn.
- Pupils access an interesting, relevant and rich education. They are enthused by the curricular and extra-curricular opportunities available to them.
- Governors are highly effective in their roles. They have high aspirations for pupils and provide effective challenge and support to the headteacher.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils are polite and respectful to each other. Relationships between pupils and adults are positive and make a significant contribution to the school's welcoming atmosphere.
- Children get off to a good start in the well-managed early years provision. Adults work skilfully and sensitively with children and parents, including those children who need support to catch up with their peers.
- Leaders' actions have ensured that attendance has improved for all groups of pupils.
- While additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is used effectively, the impact of this spending is not measured in a way that informs future planning.
- Leaders at all levels are increasingly effective in their work. However, some subject leaders do not use their evaluation of the quality of provision well to improve teaching, learning and assessment in their areas of responsibility.
- The school gives some opportunities for parents to be involved in pupils' learning. However, parents are not clear about how subjects are taught or about how they can help their child to learn at home.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that the teaching, learning and assessment of all aspects of the curriculum is equally strong by:
 - ensuring that all subject leaders accurately monitor the quality of provision on pupils' achievement
 - providing training which helps staff to improve their practice.
- Measure the impact of pupil premium spending on disadvantaged pupils in a way that informs future planning.
- Advise parents about how subjects are taught and support them in helping their children to learn at home.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Senior leaders have responded to the findings of the previous inspection report and have ensured that the quality of education at the school is now good.
- Senior leaders manage staff performance well. All teachers are accountable for the progress their pupils make. Senior leaders set improvement targets and check that they have been achieved. As a result, rates of progress for most pupils are improving.
- Leaders have taken action to make sure that teachers' assessment of English and mathematics is accurate. This assessment has been externally verified. Teachers and leaders have an accurate picture of how well pupils are achieving in these subjects. As a result, they provide pupils with well-judged additional support and pupils' progress has improved.
- Staff are proud to work at the school and believe that they are well supported. All staff who responded to Ofsted's survey agree that the school has improved since the previous inspection.
- Staff appreciate the quality of training that they receive. It has been effective in, for example, the teaching of early reading and phonics.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils have access to an interesting and relevant curriculum, including working with sports coaches. This is underpinned by effective extra-curricular provision, such as trips to the Lee Valley White Water Centre and a residential trip.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain and have a good understanding of British values. For instance, there are opportunities for pupils to build positive relationships with local police officers and to develop their understanding of democracy through the election process for members of the school council.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is developed well. The school's caring and inclusive ethos ensures that pupils learn respect for one another. Assemblies and other activities are opportunities for pupils to celebrate the diverse cultures within the school. For example, on the annual World Market Day, pupils learn about other cultures as well as developing their understanding of how to organise a business.
- The primary physical education (PE) and sport funding has been used effectively. There has been a focus on providing new experiences for pupils to improve their progress and well-being. Pupils enthusiastically engage with a broad range of clubs and competitive sports. The school was one of the top performing schools in the Herts Sports Partnership.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is well led. Additional funding for these pupils is spent effectively on support staff and intervention programmes. Adults have high expectations of pupils with SEND. They know and understand the needs of the pupils in their care and engage with outside agencies to support them.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for

improvement. They have made good use of external support to assist with the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. This is seen particularly in English and mathematics. Teachers are given clear feedback on how to improve in these subjects. This monitoring and planning continues to support the effectiveness of the school's work.

- Homework supports pupils by building on their learning in school and provides an opportunity for them to develop their key skills in reading, spelling and mathematics. There are regular opportunities for parents to find out how well their child is doing through termly parent consultations and detailed end-of-year reports. However, there are very few opportunities for parents to learn how subjects are taught and how to support their children at home.
- Because of the curriculum provision, pupils make clear progress through a range of different subject areas. However, leaders' monitoring of pupils' progress and the quality of teaching in these areas is not as strong as in English and mathematics.
- Although disadvantaged pupils make good progress, leaders' evaluations of their use of pupil premium funding is not as precise as it should be. This means that leaders are not sure of which strategies are having the greatest impact.

Governance of the school

- Governors understand the school's strengths and weaknesses and the progress that has been achieved since the previous inspection. They are committed to their roles and are ambitious for the school.
- Governors hold senior leaders to account for all aspects of school performance. Inspection evidence endorses the view of one governor who said, 'We never shy away from challenging senior leaders.' Governors receive good-quality information from senior leaders about how well the school is doing. Minutes of meetings show that governors routinely ask probing questions about finance, staffing, the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Governors place a high priority on the safety and welfare of pupils. They are rightfully proud of the welcoming, inclusive culture of the school and know that all staff operate as a team, with the best interests of each child at heart. All governors have received safeguarding training and make it their business to check that procedures are effective when they visit the school.
- Governors are aware of how the additional funding the school receives, such as the pupil premium, is used. However, they do not check how the school has measured the impact of this funding on improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. There is a clear culture of vigilance in the school. Staff receive good-quality training in the many different aspects of safeguarding, including in areas of recent national concern, such as radicalisation and county lines. Consequently, adults know what to do if they have a

concern about the well-being of a pupil. When pupils need support, the school works well with families and external agencies to ensure as prompt a resolution of problems as possible.

- All statutory requirements are met and records are well kept. Appropriate checks are made on all adults who work in the school, including volunteers. The school's record of these checks meets all statutory requirements.
- Pupils say that they feel safe. They know who to talk to if they have a concern and are confident that action will be taken. Pupils told inspectors that they know how to stay safe when using the internet and that they trust staff to keep them safe in school.
- The majority of parents were very positive about the school and praised the open, inclusive, welcoming atmosphere created by all staff. Parents recognise and appreciate that the school places a high priority on maintaining pupils' safety and care.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders have made improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment their top priority and have been successful in bringing about improvements.
- Teachers create an environment that supports pupils' learning and social and emotional needs well. They promote good relationships and make learning interesting. This contributes to pupils' positive attitudes to learning and the progress that they make.
- Teachers match work to pupils' abilities and accurately monitor pupils' progress over time. Most teachers use incisive questioning techniques to promote pupils' understanding. Typically, they ask pupils to explain or develop their answers, both verbally and in their written work. This encourages pupils to think through their responses and explain their answers in detail. Teachers routinely adapt their lessons to meet the emerging needs of pupils as lessons progress.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. Teachers use their ongoing assessment of pupils' knowledge and skills to identify and support those who need additional help to catch up. Almost all pupils now reach the expected standard in the phonics screening check by the end of key stage 1. In reading, pupils sound out unfamiliar words independently so that they can read a range of books and texts.
- In English, pupils are encouraged to edit and improve their work. Pupils' writing is often linked to what they are reading in class. There are good opportunities for pupils to write across the broader curriculum, including in history, geography and art.
- The teaching of mathematics is effective. Teachers assess what pupils know and can do, and ensure that activities build progressively on pupils' knowledge and basic calculation skills. There are developing cross-curricular links between mathematics and other areas of the curriculum. For example, during the inspection, pupils in Year 2 used a Venn diagram to show their answer to the question, 'What is different and what is the same about Christopher Columbus and Neil Armstrong?' In Year 4, pupils had been learning about symmetry and then designed and made their own symmetrical Anglo-Saxon brooch.
- Pupils who spoke with inspectors said that they enjoy the different levels of challenges teachers provide because it makes them think. Teachers have created a culture where

pupils are confident to take risks and to learn from their mistakes.

- In classes and in small-group intervention work, teaching assistants provide appropriate support to those pupils who require additional help with their learning. They understand pupils' needs and how best to help them make progress.
- Teachers' assessments of pupils' work are accurate and inform the next steps pupils need to make in order to progress. Work in most pupils' books shows that they are challenged well and are accessing a curriculum which is helping them to build on their prior knowledge throughout each year group. As a result, the proportion of current pupils working at age-related expectations across the school is improving.
- Pupils enjoy the topic approach to learning. However, at times, teachers focus too much on developing pupils' writing skills and not enough on developing pupils' subject specific skills. As a result, some pupils lack clarity on some aspects of the different subjects they study.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The quality of relationships between staff and pupils is strong. Pupils are confident that if they have a concern an adult will listen and do something about it. Pastoral leaders keep a watchful eye on the pupils in their care, supporting pupils and families who require additional help.
- Adults encourage a strong caring ethos across the school. Pupils look after one another. They are taught to appreciate the importance of equality and to value different cultures and beliefs. They say it is easy to make friends, and that pupils are kind to one another.
- Pupils are punctual to their lessons and are well prepared to begin their learning.
- The school supports pupils in understanding how to be safe when using the internet. Pupils have created their own posters to remind others how to keep safe and can explain what they would do if they feel unsafe or concerned.
- Pupils understand how to keep themselves healthy through PE and personal, social and health education lessons. They talk enthusiastically about how they complete the 'daily mile' to keep fit. There is a wide range of extra-curricular clubs, which pupils enjoy.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are confident in the fairness of the behaviour systems. They feel that poor behaviour is rare and dealt with well by adults. One pupil summed up the sentiment of others when saying, 'We don't have any bullying because we are all part of a kind community.' Consequently, there are very few incidents of serious misbehaviour or bullying.
- Pupils are polite, well-mannered and welcoming. They are courteous to each other and

to visitors. They enjoy the opportunity to talk about their learning.

- Pupils who spoke with inspectors expressed highly positive attitudes to attending school. The school works hard to promote good attendance and ensure that absence is rigorously followed up. Leaders provide support to both pupils and families to build positive relationships. As a result, attendance is improving and in line with the national average, while persistent absence has reduced.
- In lessons, children are polite and interact positively with one another. They listen carefully to their teachers and get on with their work. Low-level disruption is rare.
- Relationships between pupils and teachers are positive. Teachers create an environment where pupils are comfortable to say if they are unsure about anything. Pupils recognise that making mistakes is part of learning.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In 2017 and 2018, key stage 1 results improved to be in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Lesson observations and the scrutiny of pupils' work show that standards have improved further during this academic year.
- In 2018, the progress of key stage 2 pupils was broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. Their attainment by the end of key stage 2 was below the national average for the expected and higher standards in reading and mathematics. It was also below the national average for the expected standard and greater depth in writing.
- Leaders' decisive actions to bring about improvements have been successful. Current pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics through key stage 2. Evidence from pupils' books indicates that higher proportions of pupils in the current Year 6 are working at the expected and higher standards than in the past in reading and mathematics, and at greater depth in writing.
- Leaders have addressed the weaknesses in outcomes effectively for disadvantaged pupils following the 2018 results. They identify the barriers to achievement these pupils face and put support in place. Scrutiny of pupils' work confirms that disadvantaged pupils currently in school are making good progress.
- The proportion of pupils that reach the expected standard in the phonics screening check by the end of Year 2 is above the national average.
- This year, disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, are making good or better progress due to more effective teaching and the good use of the pupil premium funding.

Early years provision

Good

- Early years provision is led and managed well. Leaders have an accurate understanding of children's starting points. The curriculum is well matched to children's needs and their level of development. This allows children, including those with SEND and those with English as an additional language, to make good progress from their varied starting points.
- In Nursery, children get off to a good start. Activities encourage fine motor skills, early

mark-making and mathematics. Children develop their independence so that they can go to the toilet, put on their coat and dress themselves without assistance.

- Parents are prepared well to support their children to make the transition into Reception, with many opportunities for them to join in learning sessions prior to their children starting the Reception year.
- The early years provision is a calm and orderly environment. Adults encourage children to follow the rules and to behave well. This helps children to settle quickly and adopt the routines that develop skills of collaboration and cooperation. Children work together safely and follow instructions from adults.
- Children enjoy a variety of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff quickly identify when children face particular challenges and they respond with tailored support. Children have time to explore and develop their interests in meaningful ways. For example, children were observed measuring the height of their sunflowers and writing about how they had grown.
- Adults typically intervene appropriately to encourage children to think for themselves and solve problems. For example, a group of boys were encouraged to write a set of instructions to share with a friend on how to play a game.
- Early years staff regularly review and record children's progress. They involve parents in their child's journey through the early years by sharing these records with them. Children also enjoy sharing their learning with their parents through tasks they complete at home which build on what they have done in school.

School details

Unique reference number	117092
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10088654

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	184
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jean Bailey
Headteacher	Jill Jones
Telephone number	01992 763 939
Website	www.fourswannes.herts.sch.uk
Email address	head@fourswannes.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18–19 January 2017

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium grant is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language is well above the national average.
- This school has 10 out of 17 possible ethnic groups. The largest ethnic group is White British.
- The proportion of pupils who receive SEND support is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who join 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.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning across the school. Some of these observations were undertaken jointly with members of the senior leadership team.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other leaders. Meetings were also held with representatives of the governing body and the local authority.
- Inspectors scrutinised work from across different key stages and subjects.
- A range of documents were scrutinised, including the school's self-evaluation, the school's development plan, minutes of meetings, safeguarding records, pupils' progress information, and school policies and procedures.
- Inspectors analysed five responses from Ofsted's online survey of parents, Parent View, including free-text commentary provided by one parent. Inspectors also spoke with some parents on the school site during the inspection.
- Inspectors analysed 14 responses to Ofsted's online survey of staff. Inspectors also spoke with staff throughout the two days of the inspection.
- There were seven responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils. Inspectors spoke informally with pupils at breaktimes, lunchtimes and in lessons. Inspectors also met formally with pupils to discuss their experiences of school.

Inspection team

Simon Eardley, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Pauline MacMillan

Ofsted Inspector

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