

Inspection of Swanage Primary School

Mount Scar, Swanage, Dorset BH19 2EY

Inspection dates: 13–14 November 2019

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a school nestled within the coastal town of Swanage and very much in the heart of its community. Leaders are proud of the inclusive approach, summarised in their vision, 'enjoying learning together'.

Following a period of change, including changes to leadership and an increase in age range, the school is now more settled. Pupils say that they really enjoy school. Most parents who gave a view agree that their children are safe and that they thrive at school. Pupils agree with a summary provided by a pupil who said that he had attended many schools but 'this one feels like home!'.

Expectations continue to rise under the leadership of the headteacher who is ambitious for every pupil. This helps pupils to achieve well. Pupils told us that behaviour is generally good and we agree. Teachers say that the new approach helps to improve pupils' behaviour. Support staff help pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to manage any worries.

Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong. They told us that they do not experience bullying in school. They explained that the posters around the school remind them that bullying is not acceptable and that the school takes it seriously.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The headteacher and deputy headteacher work with integrity and determination. They are reflective and honest about what the school does well and what it should work on next. Governors know the school well. They are currently developing their skills to challenge leaders more effectively.

Expectations are rising. Curriculum leaders are developing their roles. For example, to improve outcomes in mathematics, there is now a comprehensive plan to ensure that pupils apply new mathematical skills.

Leaders continue to refine their curriculum plans so that all subjects have a clear sequence. For example, pupils experience a rich diet of art experiences, making good use of local artists. There are lovely examples of pupils' work around the school. Pupils use different artistic techniques, such as collage and sketching. Leaders are now working to ensure that pupils develop their knowledge of key artists. Leaders are also refining some other subjects, such as computing. Subjects such as history and geography are already planned to help children to build effectively on prior learning.

The curriculum in the Reception class is clearly planned and adapted to meet the needs of children. For example, children talk to each other on the telephone in the 'airport'. This builds their speaking and listening skills. The classrooms, both inside and outside, ooze with interesting resources. This makes learning fun and

irresistible. The experienced staff form strong, caring relationships. As a result, children settle quickly, learn well and are happy.

Reading is at the heart of providing the good quality of education at the school. Books are everywhere! Pupils enjoy using the accessible library and all classrooms have high-quality books in inviting areas.

A top priority on the school's development plan this year is to improve phonics. This follows a drop in the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the phonics screening check in Year 1. The teaching of phonics is now organised and assessed so that leaders can assure themselves that they identify and help pupils who fall behind. Pupils in Year 2 are now catching up with their peers.

Pupils with SEND have work adapted to their needs which ensures that they are included and can achieve well. Parents spoke positively about the care that staff take to adapt work and provide effective support for pupils with SEND.

Leaders have a clear aim for the curriculum which is to broaden pupils' horizons and aspirations. There are a variety of clubs and activities, such as woodland warriors, choir, ukulele, football, dodge ball and book clubs. Staff aim to help pupils to find things to do that they enjoy and can be proud of. The emphasis is very much on having a go and taking part. These activities contribute to pupils' enjoyment of school and wider learning.

Pupils' attendance is steadily improving, but it is still too low for some pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils.

Pupils show strong attitudes towards their learning and most try their best during lessons. The school's personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) curriculum contributes to pupils' empathy with and respect for others. We saw Year 6 pupils discussing and sensibly debating the question, 'What is normal?'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding at the school. The designated safeguarding lead has a solid grasp of the responsibilities of the role. She ensures that staff have relevant safeguarding training. Staff are confident they know the signs of abuse. They are well informed about their responsibilities to report concerns. Weekly meetings for staff include discussions about safeguarding. Leaders ensure that any updates or lessons learned are shared. Recruitment processes are secure.

Staff, pupils, governors and parents were recently made aware of local risks involving gangs. Pupils talked to us about this training. They say that they have learned a lot. This involvement of pupils in raising awareness of risks contributes well to keeping them safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders are developing the curriculum to ensure that it is coherent and ambitious in all subjects. Curriculum leaders now need to check that the curriculum is taught well so that pupils remember what they have learned.
- The focus on improving attendance, particularly for disadvantaged pupils, needs to continue so that more pupils attend regularly.
- Leaders have responded to the lower phonics outcomes in Year 1 and pupils are catching up as a result. Leaders need to assure themselves that all pupils who fall behind in reading receive the support, resources and extra reading they need.
- To support governors to challenge leaders more effectively, leaders should ensure that the development plan is more precise, with clearer timescales for improvement.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	113677
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	10086902
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	191
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Vicki Church
Headteacher	Martin Godfrey
Website	www.swanageprimary.dorset.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4–5 July 2007

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection there has been a local reorganisation of schools. As a result, Swanage First school increased the age range it provides for. It now includes a Year 5 and a Year 6 class. The school has therefore changed from being a first school to a primary school and is renamed, Swanage Primary School.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

- We had several meetings with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. We also met with the mathematics, reading, phonics, writing and PSHE curriculum leaders. We met with the special educational needs coordinator and visited lessons together to see how pupils with SEND are supported.
- To inspect safeguarding, we met with the designated safeguarding lead and spoke to staff and pupils. We also scrutinised documents relating to safeguarding and attendance.

- We gathered views from parents at the start of each day and took the views on Parent View and the four letters sent in during the inspection into account. We also met with a wide group of staff to hear their views.
- We met with the school's improvement partner and spoke with a representative from the local authority on the telephone. We met with four governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- We did deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, PSHE, reading, writing and art. We talked to leaders, pupils and teachers, visited lessons and looked at pupils' work and sketch books. We observed several pupils reading and talked to a group of pupils about their reading books.

Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector

Adam Matthews

Ofsted Inspector

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