

Inspection of Swalwell Primary School

South View Terrace, Swalwell, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear NE16 3HZ

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 May 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at Swalwell Primary School. Every decision that is made in the school is underpinned by the school's values, specifically that pupils have 'the right to learn, to be safe, to be heard, to be happy, and to be me'. Staff are relentless in their work to ensure that these values apply equally to all pupils, irrespective of the barriers they may face in life.

Leaders have carefully identified what pupils need to learn. Teachers help pupils to learn effectively. Teaching assistants support pupils well. As a result, pupils are developing knowledge, skills and understanding across a wide range of subjects, and they are well prepared for the next stage of their education and life.

All pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are included in learning or in the many enrichment activities on offer. This is an inclusive school. Staff and leaders extend their support to families and the wider community.

Pupils get along well with each other. Where pupils need additional support to do well, their friends and classmates step forward to provide it. As one pupil noted, 'By working together, we can all succeed.' Poor behaviour in both lessons and around school is rare.

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

Governors' expectation is that all pupils, irrespective of the barriers many face, should fully benefit from a high-quality education. Leaders in school are determined in their work to ensure that this is the case. Staff, including the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator (SENDCo), identify barriers to precise learning. Staff leave no stone unturned to find ways to remove these barriers. For example, in science, communication pads are pre-programmed for each unit of study, allowing non-verbal pupils to successfully communicate their learning and understanding.

Governors carefully check the effectiveness of leaders' steps to establish an inclusive and successful school. They know that no two cohorts of pupils have the same additional needs. Governors look 'beyond the data' to ensure that all pupils are learning well based on their unique starting points.

Leaders have prioritised the development of subject leaders. Subject leaders have received training in how to lead their subjects well. They have also been supported to deepen their understanding of the subjects they lead. Subject leadership is a strength of the school.

Recently rewritten curriculums identify what pupils need to learn and resources that teachers can use. What pupils learn in Year 1 builds on what they have learned in

Reception. Leaders ensure that these changes are implemented in a manageable way. In most subjects, teachers and teaching assistants receive subject-specific professional development from subject leaders. This helps all adults to support pupils' learning effectively.

In the small number of subjects where curriculums have not been redeveloped, pupils learning is less secure, as the guidance for teachers about what to teach, including effective approaches to use, is less detailed.

Many of the curriculums provide guidance on how pupils can be supported to remember important knowledge, with 'quick quizzes' on prior learning at the start of lessons, for example. These approaches, however, are not yet consistently used, and teachers sometimes have to 're-teach' things that pupils have studied previously before they can start new teaching.

Year 6 pupils did not achieve highly in their key stage 2 national curriculum tests in 2022. Pupils were disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Current pupils are learning well across a wide range of subjects.

Leaders have selected a phonics programme and have made appropriate adaptations to meet the needs of the pupils in school. Pupils who need additional support to keep up with the programme receive it. Leaders are aware that, for some pupils, reading with expression can be difficult. These pupils receive carefully crafted support. Staff ensure that older pupils are reading frequently to adults, at home and in school.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. From the very start, children are taught the routines and behaviours they need to be successful. Those pupils who find it difficult to behave receive high-quality support to help them develop their self-control. Because this early support is effective, these pupils need less support in their later years in school.

Pupils' personal development is a strength. What pupils need to learn and how they can best be supported are carefully considered. Pupils' knowledge about matters such as equality and the features of unhealthy relationships is exceptional. Pupils who need extra support benefit greatly from a well-designed 'life skills' programme, which focuses on developing the knowledge and skills that pupils need to be successful in the next stage of their education and life.

Leaders have thought carefully about the role models that pupils experience through the curriculum and visitors to school. They ensure that they are relatable to pupils' lives. In art, pupils study the work of artists with SEND. Careers events are structured with the deliberate aim of enhancing the range of jobs that pupils are aware of and can aspire toward. Leaders ensure that people invited to talk about their careers include those with visible and invisible disabilities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders know the risks that pupils may face. They ensure that all adults in school, including volunteers, know the signs that a pupil may be at risk and how to report their concerns. The designated safeguarding lead and the school's family support worker link very effectively with families to secure the support they need, which helps to keep pupils safe.

Pupils are taught about the risks they may face growing up and what to do if they are worried about something. Teachers ensure that pupils with SEND receive the individual support they need to help them learn this crucial information.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum in a small number of subjects has not been redeveloped. As a result, pupils' learning in these subjects is not as strong as the subjects where development work has taken place. Leaders should ensure that the curriculums in the remaining subjects are developed to the same high standard as those already completed.
- Teachers do not consistently consider how to support pupils to remember learning in the longer term. As a result, pupils sometimes have gaps in prior knowledge, which makes new learning more difficult. Leaders should ensure that teachers support pupils to remember, in the longer term, the important knowledge and skills that pupils need to be successful in their later learning.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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.

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	108342
Local authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	10268273
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	144
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lucy Gray
Headteacher	Rachel Hocking
Website	www.swalwellprimary.org/
Date of previous inspection	12 May 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is well above the national average.
- The school provides additionally resourced mainstream provision for 10 pupils with physical difficulties.
- The school provides additionally resourced mainstream provision for eight pupils with autism spectrum disorders.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the third routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the SENDCo, the leader in charge of personal, social and health education, the family support worker, and the member of staff responsible for overseeing extra-curricular provision.
- The lead inspector met with a group of governors and with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of a wide range of documentary information, including school policies, school self-evaluation documents, notes of local authority visits, records of behaviour and attendance, minutes from governing body meetings and information regarding safeguarding processes.
- Inspectors met the early years leader, visited the Nursey provision and Reception, and spoke with children.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and science. For each deep dive, inspectors reviewed curriculum documentation, discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. An inspector listened to pupils reading.
- An inspector met with the subject leader for art to discuss the curriculum, staff training and review samples of pupil work.
- Inspectors observed pupils at breaktimes, lunchtime and when moving around school.
- An inspector observed a range of interventions taking place to support pupils with specific learning needs.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of staff, including a group of teaching assistants, over the course of the inspection and considered responses to the staff survey.
- An inspector spoke to parents at the start of the school day and reviewed the responses to Ofsted's Parent View survey.
- Inspectors met formally with groups of pupils, reviewed responses to the pupil survey and spoke to others informally throughout the inspection.

Inspection team

Steve Wren, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jen Sloan

His Majesty's Inspector

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