

Inspection of a good school: Swingate Primary School

Sultan Road, Lordswood, Chatham, Kent ME5 8TJ

Inspection dates:

1 and 2 May 2024

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might be outstanding if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils' experiences at Swingate Primary School are encapsulated by the school's mission: 'Academic, Emotional and Physical Success'. Pupils know that expectations are high for every aspect of school life. They also know that staff will support them in reaching these aspirations. They are inspired and motivated by the exciting possibilities for learning and achievement that abound.

Pupils want to do well. They behave impeccably and are eager to learn. In lessons they work productively both together and individually. They listen to their teachers. Around the school pupils are polite and happy. Pupils feel safe, confident they will be listened to if they have any concerns. They know staff will help them resolve any worries.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities for personal development. Their talents and interests are exceptionally well developed. There is something for everyone in the many interesting and engaging clubs on offer, from weaving and clay, to Zumba and tri-golf.

Parents are very positive about the school. They say that, 'the school's mission is shown everyday with pupils'. Parents appreciate the way their children are, challenged, supported and encouraged. One parent summed up the views of many in saying: 'Fantastic school, I feel like my child matters'.

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

Pupils attain very well here because of the impressive and well-considered curriculum they learn. Their strong skills and confidence in English and mathematics help pupils to engage knowledgeably with the wider curriculum and express their ideas. A sharp emphasis on developing vocabulary starts in nursery and continues throughout the school and across

subjects. Pupils with special educational needs and /or disabilities (SEND) do well. Their needs are identified accurately to create a full picture of what they need to be successful. These are then addressed through carefully matched learning activities and well-chosen support to help these pupils achieve highly.

The curriculum is highly ambitious across subjects and for all pupils. It has been carefully devised to build pupil's knowledge effectively. Staff regularly revisit key concepts and ideas. This helps pupils to remember facts and connect their learning. Subject leaders regularly check to make sure that the curriculum is engaging, meaningful and knowledge rich for pupils. They provide well-chosen training for staff which underpins consistent approaches to teaching and strong staff subject knowledge.

Pupils learn to read quickly and well. Published outcomes are strong and reflect the high ambition and priority given to reading. Children start to learn about rhymes and sound patterns as soon as they join the school. In Reception children learn phonics regularly and systematically. Careful checks mean any pupils who start to fall behind are swiftly identified and given the help they need to catch up. The books pupils use to learn to read are carefully matched to what they know and can do. This helps all pupils to experience and build on success to become eager and confident readers. The well organised library is a reading hub. Supporting this are the many inviting spaces and enticing book collections around the school. Pupils like talking about and sharing books. They take joy in the characters and plots in the stories read to them at the end of the day.

The school's ever-present values of 'empathy, resilience, responsibility and bravery' are fully understood. They are motivating for pupils. They help them to work towards the positive behaviours the school promotes. Pupils are proud of the stickers they earn for demonstrating the values or taking part in creating the large models of the characters they have designed to represent them.

The school understands and promotes the importance of regular school attendance. Pupils attend school well. Any pupils who need additional support to attend regularly are quickly identified through regular checks. Swift and appropriate support is put in place to ensure pupil's learning is not interrupted.

The personal development curriculum has been considered exceptionally well. Equality and respect are interwoven within a focus on understanding self, belief and cultures. Pupils have positive views of difference. They display tolerance and understanding of each other. There are many ways in which pupils can take on additional responsibilities and contribute to the wider life of the school. Pupils proudly explain how they deliver assemblies on issues that are important to them such as disability or check that lights are turned off as part of eco squad. They perform their roles diligently and understand the importance of their contributions in keeping with the school's values.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They feel included and supported. Everyone is united in a clear drive to secure the very best education for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or with SEND. As a result, pupils thrive at Swingate Primary School. They are very well prepared for the next stages of their education and beyond.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2014.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	118509
Local authority	Medway
Inspection number	10321850
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	656
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Terry Smith
Headteacher	Steve Geary (Executive headteacher) Matt Wignell (Headteacher)
Website	www.swingate.medway.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	8 November 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher took up the post in January 2021.
- The school is part of the Bluebell Federation which was formed in 2022. The schools in the federation share a governing body and an executive headteacher.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in the evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the lead inspector met with school leaders. The lead inspector also met with the representatives of the governing body and held a separate meeting with a representative from the local authority.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and computing. For each deep dive, the inspectors 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. The lead inspector listened to pupils read.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspectors reviewed responses to Ofsted's parent, pupil and staff surveys.
- The inspectors talked to staff to gather their views about the school, including their workload and well-being. The inspectors met with several groups of pupils, as well as speaking to pupils during lessons and playtime.

Inspection team

Deborah Gordon, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Martin Hacker

Ofsted Inspector

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