

Swanmead Community School



Self Evaluation – October 2021

School Context

Swanmead is a smaller than average Middle School. The population of the school is 94.5% white British and nominally Christian background. Currently the school has 308 pupils on role.

Pupils in Year 6, 7 and 8 are currently taught in 9 classes (Yr 6 = 4, Yr 7 = 2, Yr 8 = 3) sometimes these are based on English & Maths ability/sometimes mixed ability. In Year 5 children are placed in three mixed ability classes where they have a more primary school system being taught by one teacher for approximately 60% of the time. The school runs a tutor group system. All children have a tutor who is their first point of pastoral support, the tutors in each year group work closely together. Children are split into three houses; Herne, Isle and Minster

Over the past four years on entry to the school, approximately 60% have been at national age expected levels for Reading and between 50%-60% at aged expected for Writing and Maths. However, progress from the beginning of Year 5 through to the end of Year 8 is good.

The high quality of the school's commitment to inclusion is recognised and acknowledged by the local authority and external agencies (no permanent exclusions in the last 16 years, during 2019/2020, 5 days were lost through fixed term exclusions, 3 days were lost in 2020/2021).

Broadly, 40% of pupils enter the school at Year 5 below expected levels in core subjects. Because the national achievement data only covers two years of our school, and therefore is not definitive, we base analyses of progress on baseline data derived from comprehensive and robust assessment on intake in Year 5 and on exit in Year 8.

Self-evaluated judgement = THE SCHOOL REMAINS "GOOD"

Swanmead Community School is good because a high percentage of children in our care make good progress in learning and behaviour as they move through our school. Our pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare are good because of the quality of opportunities in the curriculum and through positive interactions with teachers and other adults.

The progress our children make in Reading, Writing and Maths is consistently good over the four years the children spend in our care. The school is generally around national figures for the percentage of pupils who achieve Reading, Writing and Maths by the end of KS2 in their SATS.

Teaching and learning remains good across the school and the development of an improving group of Middle Leaders is the driving force behind the self-regulating developments of this aspect.

Disadvantaged learners do not attain as highly as their more advantaged peers by the end of KS2, however, as they move through the school they consistently progress at the same rate as all pupils with many often making more progress.

Like most Middle Schools, Swanmead is proud to offer a wide and inspiring curriculum for pupils with children in all year groups experiencing weekly Art, Science, DT, Drama, Music, P.E and French. For our children in Years 5 and 6 this is a considerable wider diet of subject than they would expect to experience if attending a Primary School.

Response since the last inspection

Areas to improve (February 2018):

Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that leaders continue to tackle any remaining weak teaching.

- Individual support plans for teachers created
- Increase of professional development opportunities to aid the tackling of weaker teaching
- Emphasis of teaching is on 'improving not proving' via the development of a programme called 'Growing Great Teachers'.

Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that all teachers set high expectations of what pupils, particularly boys, understand and can do.

- Whole school boys project during 2018 -2020
- All boys in Years 7 and 8 identified as not making 'expected progress or better' have data shot on six occasions during the year.
- Individual programmes in place for all boys not making 'expected progress or better' that includes in school mentoring
- Whole school scrutiny of boys performance across the school including; Teachers, SMT, Governors, Parents
- Increased sharing of best practice for the teaching of boys including development of a new reward system

Improve communication with parents and carers to inform them of their child's progress and how they can support their child to improve.

- Addition of new progress measure to report on progress - L (Less than Expected, E (Expected) and M (More than Expected) from July 2018
- Development of new 'Parent App' in order to more readily allow parents to review their child's progress
- Review of school's reward system and the launch of epraise. This allows a clearer and more committed reward system across the school with online parental access.

General Information

Strengths	Areas for Development/Challenges																								
<p>Small school – all pupils known well.</p> <p>Close links to the community.</p> <p>Increase in pupils over recent years.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="96 379 795 545"> <tr> <td>Sept 2019</td> <td>287</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sept 2020</td> <td>300</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sept 2021</td> <td>310</td> </tr> </table> <p>Good links and working relationships with local schools. Crewkerne and Ilminster Schools Partnership, Greenfyde (main feeder school), Somerset Middle Schools, National Middle Schools</p> <p>The school has seen many colleagues develop from teachers into successful leaders.</p> <p>Safeguarding procedures and the school’s ability to keep children safe is very good.</p> <p>The children get a full, broad and balanced curriculum which allows them (from Year 5) to access a full range of subjects.</p> <p>The school offers a good range of facilities and resources to all children. ICT Suite, Performance Arts Room, DT Food Room, DT Workshop, Library, Science Labs, Gym</p> <p>Parents like the school their children attend and feel it is well led and managed.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="96 962 922 1118"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="3">Parent Questionnaire</th> </tr> <tr> <th colspan="3">The School is Well Led and Managed – Agree or Strongly Agree</th> </tr> <tr> <th>2017</th> <th>2018</th> <th>2019</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>98%</td> <td>94%</td> <td>97%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Governing Body agendas focus on strategic aspects such as standards in English and Maths, Safeguarding and Finance at every meeting.</p> <p>The school uses a well-established appraisal system to monitor teaching impact and this links well with pay progression.</p>	Sept 2019	287	Sept 2020	300	Sept 2021	310	Parent Questionnaire			The School is Well Led and Managed – Agree or Strongly Agree			2017	2018	2019	98%	94%	97%	<p>The Headteacher is the only school leader.</p> <p>Deficit budget set over the last two years.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1120 328 2047 430"> <tr> <th>2017/2018</th> <th>2018/2019</th> <th>2019/2020</th> </tr> <tr> <td>-85K</td> <td>-56K</td> <td>-60K</td> </tr> </table> <p>Little school development work has been done on school buildings for three years due to lack of finance.</p> <p>Capacity to build substantial improvements continues to be a challenge.</p> <p>The school needs further work on giving Middle Leaders the time and capacity to improve their subjects. Generally there is only one teacher per subject.</p> <p>Governors need to get to know the workings of the school better in addition to just attending meetings.</p> <p>Disadvantaged children generally do not attain as highly as their advantaged peers (although they do make the same rate of progress).</p> <p>Girls attain and make better progress than boys.</p>	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	-85K	-56K	-60K
Sept 2019	287																								
Sept 2020	300																								
Sept 2021	310																								
Parent Questionnaire																									
The School is Well Led and Managed – Agree or Strongly Agree																									
2017	2018	2019																							
98%	94%	97%																							
2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020																							
-85K	-56K	-60K																							

The Quality of Leadership and Management

Self-evaluated judgement = GOOD

The leaders of the school have an unrelenting focus on pupil progress with this measure consistently above expected in Reading, Writing and Maths over four years. Pupil progress is monitored termly by class teachers, curriculum leaders, senior teachers, the Headteacher and by the school Governing Body. The end of year data related to the progress pupils are expected to make is on average above this level. Leaders have focused more recently upon ensuring that improvements are made in the % of pupils that attain an expected standard by the end of Year 6. Leadership impacted rapid improvements in 2017 and, due to developing a successful impact on the curriculum delivered to the children, continued signs show that this be at a sustainable high rate over future years.

Senior Leadership Team

The leadership of teaching and learning via the SMT possesses a clear direction with high expectations consistently communicated to staff concerning securing improvements. Monitoring activity is built into the school calendar and, whilst we do have a differentiated approach, there are termly pupil progress meetings for all staff; lesson observations; book scrutinies; drop in sessions and discussions with pupils. All of these sources of evidence are used to support our rigorous appraisal system.

The School Development Plan is clear and every staff member is aware of how their role contributes to it. The SMT have a genuine commitment to training staff and in addition to courses, group training and individual support, there is a shared delivery on the school meeting cycle allowing all staff to consider strategic issues and accountability. In addition to the success of impacting KS2 outcomes, the impact of the SMT displayed a significant increase in the % of pupils attaining an expected standard by the effective use of Year 7 catch up funding.

Safeguarding

Impact via leadership has ensured that standards of safeguarding remain good and we believe we are a model of good practice in this area. This includes staff and governor training on safeguarding, whistleblowing, radicalisation and extremism.

There is a detailed system of risk assessment for the school site, contractors and school events which are adapted for specific occasions as needed. In addition trips must have a pre visit, full risk assessment per class and must be 'signed off' by the EVC prior to the trip taking place. During trips or events such as school fairs, every adult assisting in any capacity is given access to the risk assessments and expected to read it in advance, coming to the morning briefing with any questions or concerns. During lessons children are made aware of safety issues and this is an area that the visiting members of the Governing Body report upon. Staff also make children aware of safety issues during assemblies.

We have worked hard to ensure that our recruitment practices are good from both a child protection perspective and in a drive to appoint staff that will have maximum impact on pupil progress. Shortlisted staff, for any position, have references fully checked and an offer is only made once the referees have been spoken to directly via telephone. All interview questions are bespoke for the post and agreed with the interview panel.

All staff at Swanmead, through the continued focus on accountability, have a good understanding of safeguarding in its widest context. As a result, staff feel able to raise issues regarding a wide range of issues and clearly know it is everyone's responsibility to ensure maximum safety for staff and pupils. All staff know that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Detailed records are kept, and if any staff member or parent raises a concern they fill in a form and a

folder is immediately opened on that child, even if no further concerns are ever raised. Numbers of children falling into Child Protection Register, LAC, Child in Need and Cause for Concern are regularly reported to the Governing Body.

Governance

Despite much change of personnel, the Governing Body has continued to make some improvements since the time of the last inspection. The GB has changed the ways and methods of how it functions and now meets as a whole body on nine occasions through the course of the school year. This has enabled the abolition of committees and allows all members of the governing body to have an appropriate and full overview of all aspects of school business. The minutes of the Governing Body show evidence of greater challenge and how members have radically developed their ability to hold the school to account.

The Governing Body provide astute challenge and directed support which in turn has a highly positive impact on tackling weaknesses decisively. Governors play a very active role in school; key areas of the school have named Governors linked to them and aspects of the School Success Plan are monitored by a member of the Governing Body ensuring a sense of shared leadership and accountability. Particular subject areas of the schools are closely monitored by a link governor who always feeds back information at the beginning of each governing body meeting.

The level of commitment from members of the governing body has been inconsistent since the time of the last inspection. This, coupled with 50% of the body made up of new members (joined over the last two years), has meant a varying level of understanding and dedication towards fully appreciating the challenges and areas for development in the school. The school has ensured that governors have attended a range of training events and make proactive use of the link governor system in order to bridge this gap quicker. The school has worked hard to keep on top of difficult budgeting decisions that have subsequently left the school running a deficit budget over the last two years.

The Governing Body has been quick to tackle any issues related to personnel. Together with the Headteacher, the Governing Body has issued the standards they expect from teachers and have acted, when necessary, to address situations that allow the best possible provision for the young people at Swanmead. This has included working with staff members in monitoring the standards of teaching and when addressing low and intermittent attendance to work.

Middle Leadership

This area is an identified strategic item that the school needs to further develop. The school has started to develop its capacity to allow Middle Leaders to essentially guide the school's success on a day to day, term to term, year on year basis. Similarly to the organisation of a Primary School, almost every member of staff has some form of responsibility to managing a subject area.

Parents

The school produces a monthly newsletter, detailed assessment reports each year and has a helpful website to ensure parents have a good understanding of the curriculum, school events and the progress their child is making. We have a large number of "hard to reach parents" but use every means possible (our HUB Team, phone calls and texting) to ensure this does not disadvantage their children. The school produces an annual questionnaire for parents and these suggest improving levels of parental engagement and support. The results of the questionnaire consistently point to the fact that parents believe the school is well led and managed.

The quality of leadership and management is not yet Outstanding because;

- There are gaps in achievement between some different groups of learners that need to be closed.
- Middle Leaders need to better be able to impact and articulate the strengths and areas for development within their curriculums

The Quality of Education
Self-evaluated judgement = GOOD

Progress Data

Children consistently make good progress from starting point across the school in Reading, Writing and Maths. High percentages of pupils make expected or more than expected progress through each year.

% Expected Progress or More than Expected Progress				
	July 2018	July 2019	July 2020	July 2021
READING	95%	97%	Covid-19	97.40
WRITING	94%	97%	Covid-19	96.34
MATHS	94%	96%	Covid-19	96.97

Girls consistently make better progress than boys in all three areas but the work that the school undertook in 2018/2019 has enabled to gap to have narrow compared to previous years and there are even occasions where boys are outperforming girls with regard to progress.

	All					Year 5			Year 6			Year 7			Year 8		
	Whole School	Pupil Premium	SEN	Boys	Girls	All	Boys	Girls	All	Boys	Girls	All	Boys	Girls	All	Boys	Girls
READING	98.25	98.67	97.78	98.56	97.96	98.68	97.30	100	98.72	100	97.5	96.97	96.30	97.44	98.48	100	96.55
WRITING	96.85	96.00	93.33	98.56	95.24	98.68	97.30	100	98.72	100	97.5	98.48	100	97.44	90.91	97.30	82.76
MATHS	97.55	98.67	100	97.12	97.96	100	100	100	97.44	97.37	97.5	96.97	96.30	97.44	95.45	94.59	96.55

KS2 Attainment and Progress – Current and Historical Attainment

The outcomes for pupils are good because children, at the end of KS2, are around national figures for Reading, Writing and Maths. Rapid improvements have occurred since 2016 and the sign show that outcomes will continue to be high for future years. Pupils join our school in Year 5 and leave in Year 8.

Broadly, 40 - 60% of pupils enter the school at Year 5 below expected levels in Reading, Writing and Maths.

Due to COVID-19, the results for both 2020 and 2021 have been predicted.

	July 2018		July 2019		July 2020 (Predicted)		July 2021 (Predicted)	
	% EXP+	% HS+	% EXP+	% HS+	% EXP+	% HS+	% EXP+	% HS+
READING	73%	27%	71%	20%	77%	22%	70%	16%
WRITING	71%	6%	80%	14%	73%	6%	71%	4%
MATHS	66%	18%	70%	15%	81%	19%	72%	12%
GAPS	59%	4%	59%	14%	67%	7%	66%	4%

KS2 Attainment – July 2021 - Combined – Reading, Writing and Maths (Predicted)

% at Expected Standard				% at Higher Standard			
2018	2019	2020	2021	2018	2019	2020	2021
58%	55%	64%	57%	7%	5%	6%	3%

SATS projections – July 2022

	% at Expected Standard	% at Higher Standard
READING	68%	14%
WRITING	70%	10%
MATHS	68%	14%

Reading, Writing and Maths – % Achieving Expected Standard in all three	
% at Expected Standard	% at Higher Standard
61%	5%

Curriculum

We believe our curriculum is broad and that important to it is allowing children to understand how they learn best. From Year 5, school children are timetabled with a weekly diet of Science, Design Technology, Performing Arts, ICT, P.E, Art and French lessons in addition to English and Maths lessons.

We recognise that the outside learning environment is key and staff use outside spaces for nature study, science, drama, creative writing and various other opportunities. We also encourage the use of the environment beyond the school and there are a rich variety of school trips in every year group. Each year group also has opportunity to take place in visiting theatre workshops and drama/musical groups.

Children are further developed through economic awareness projects such as focus weeks/days for KS3 and Year 5s involvement in the organisation of the Summer Parents' Barbeque. Community links remain important and there have been an increase in opportunities for the children to contribute to the wider community via organising charity events, visiting the elderly, taking part in church events and projects.

Trips are varied and regularly reviewed. A residential takes place in years 5, 6 and 7 which enables children to develop team skills, social interaction and to consolidate certain aspects of the curriculum such as P.E, outdoor and adventurous education, PSHE, and the humanities.

The school is able to detail specific examples of how it caters for promoting British Values.

There are also clear provisions made for specific groups such as maths competitions and national events, extra art sessions etc... Through providing a wide variety of free clubs children can further develop their understanding of the world and the school has many clubs which are unusual such as Singing Clubs, Writing Group, Gardening Club and Fine Art Club in addition to a full range of other traditional musical, sporting and homework clubs that take place according to the season.

Every child has the chance to be in the Whole School Production (whether on stage or off it) which is held at School over three evenings due to its popularity. Music and Drama are hugely popular and regular informal concerts and shows make up the social spine of the school calendar. A high percentage of the children take advantage of studying for the Arts Award.

Learners make good progress in Reading, Writing, Maths and other subjects across the school. There are examples of outstanding practice in the school, however, the school needs to gain better consistency and thus raise the expectations of all pupils to make sustained progress and attain higher. This academic year has witnessed a significant increase in consistency seen during lesson visits and learning walks.

The Senior Management Team monitor different focuses as a team often in pairs and regularly with middle leaders across the school. Further effective monitoring has most recently also occurred via the school's allocated Somerset Education Partner and external peer reviews by other Middle School Headteachers.

The school has significantly improved the quality of its feedback. Staff meetings have been used to promote good/best practice and children are encouraged to respond to their teacher's marking and advice. The level of challenge, support and differentiation prominent in lessons has increased considerably with the majority of lessons now effectively catering for these aspects. Teachers consistently give pupils feedback in line with the school's policy; this includes what they need to do next to improve and opportunities built into lessons for children to respond to teacher marking with a purple pen. Liaison with other local middle schools has further cemented these improvements.

The school has a tireless commitment towards developing Literacy and Numeracy across the curriculum. This is reflected in most lessons across the school, in feedback policies and by additional focuses such as tutor time. As a result, recent improvements have been witnessed in the increased progress learners make in Reading and Maths through Years 5 and 6.

In order to develop further, the school needs to focus more on ensuring challenge exists for all pupils and that expectations are high for all pupils. The school is aware that, in some subjects areas, children could perform better and that all teachers need to expect highly of the children in their classrooms. Teachers also need to take more risks in lessons in order for challenge to become very much part of every lesson.

Within lessons, tutor times and assemblies, staff members frequently promote messages of high standards of citizenship, equality, kindness and fairness.

Support Staff

The support staff have developed increasingly over the past two years with many moving into different roles and specialisms. Some of which has occurred due to T.As requesting training in these specific areas at their appraisal interviews but many possessing real ambition to develop their professional capabilities and personal challenge. This includes two LSAs who now run our Nurture Base, several who are qualified to run SAIL programmes and a Learning and Progress Tutor who works with a variety of pupils across the school on English and Maths. Many of our Support Staff are putting the foundations down to go on to careers in teaching themselves.

All support team members have undergone specific training relating to their roles; this ranges from Apprentice Level 2 to a Foundation Degree. The school ensures that team members who offer 1:1 support have relevant training to meet the needs of their pupils. Three members of staff are trained to deliver 'Individualised Literacy Intervention', which is the recommended Somerset intervention programme for pupils who have difficulty in this area. Two Higher Level Teaching Assistants support the English and Maths departments in addition to the Learning and Progress Tutor. The Nurture Group facility, that was developed in 2012, is led by a trained staff member whilst the HUB (Help Understand Behaviour) offers more individual support provision in addition to providing effective liaison between home and school.

The Quality of Education is not yet Outstanding because;

- Not all teaching staff have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve, particularly SEND pupils and pupils eligible for Pupil Premium.
- The school still has work to do to ensure that the quality of both the implementation and impact of its curriculum matches the intent that is expected

Personal Development

Self-evaluated judgement = GOOD

The school's motto is '**Feeling Proud and Confident about our Learning**'. This is emphasised by the wide variety of opportunities for our young people to be rewarded for their work and to become involved in activities that sensitively bring them out of their comfort zones and test their resilience.

Children tell us;

'The best thing about my school is that I know that every single adult cares about me and is there for me if I need them.' (Year 6 Pupil – November 2019)

'I know every school day is going to have moments that are hard and difficult but the teachers make me feel it's OK to not always get it right the first time as long as I have a go.' (Year 8 Pupil – November 2019)

The school HUB (Help Understand Behaviour) is a regionally acclaimed resource that employs two members of staff that work with a variety of children and families on an individual or group work basis. The school has a unique reputation of enrolling pupils from around the county who have been permanently excluded from their previous school and continuing their education successfully at Swanmead. The HUB Team use a Behaviour and Vulnerability Tool in order to profile all pupils and, through this, allows appropriate, effective provision to be provided to all children who require it.

Children have the opportunity to take on responsibility.

House Captains, Senior Pupils, Pupil Receptionist, Tutor Captains, Stage Crew, Sports Captains etc...

Children have excellent opportunities via Performing Arts and Sport.

There is much kudos and responsibility held by the school's Senior Pupils and House Captains. These positions are highly sought after by many pupils and 75% of our current Year 8 pupils applied for these positions last year. A number of other positions of responsibility, including Year 5 Monitors, Literacy leaders and Tutor Captains are also sought after. All of these positions feed into the ethos of the school with House Captains and Senior Pupils assisting in the supervision and observation of other pupils around the school during social time and key events. All Year 8s have the opportunity to assist with the running of the school each day through the daily rota of a Pupil Receptionist.

The school has an active Student Council that involves pupils from all year groups.

Pastoral support is provided in the classroom through a PSHE programme that is by all year groups via six allocated focus days. It is also supported through regular circle time and tutor times where pastoral support is directed towards children who are finding things difficult. Children show empathy and social responsibility through the Core Values which are on a rota of assembly themes and follow up work in tutor times. The recent sad deaths of two much loved members of staff and illness of another has furthermore brought the school together in moments of mutual support and reflection

Personal Development is not yet Outstanding because;

- The school needs to do more to support pupils in their ability to be more resilient and take an improved responsibility for their own learning.

Behaviour and Attitudes

Self-evaluated judgement = GOOD

Attendance is in line with national figures and improving. The results below display it to be significantly higher in comparison to secondary schools

2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022 (at present)
95.12%	95.3%	96.1%
	YEAR 5 – 96.95% YEAR 6 – 95.3% YEAR 7 – 94.7% YEAR 8 – 94.0% WHOLE SCHOOL – 95.3%	

Exclusion rates are low. Very few children need to be excluded as behaviour is good.

Exclusion Days (Fixed Term) – No PEXs since 2008		
2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021
9 Days	5 Days	3 Days

The school is well known for its ability to be inclusive; it has taken several pupils over the years that have been permanently excluded from their previous school (currently 13 since September 2011) or who have significant difficulties in accessing school...when this happens we tend to succeed and giving them that vital second chance.

The high quality of the school's commitment to inclusion is recognised and acknowledged by the Local Authority and external agencies. The school has continued to honour this vow by most recently integrating two previous school refusers into the school.

Behaviour is well managed in the school. There is a very clear ladder of consequences to ensure a consistent approach.

Incidences of bullying are very low in the school and are swiftly dealt with. The school has a very clear and strict anti-bullying policy. As behaviour in the school and in the local area is so exceptionally good, children can sometimes misunderstand what bullying actually is and through class discussion, assemblies and workshops we work hard to educate them as many use the term 'bullying' to describe mutual disputes. Children know who to contact if they need assistance in dealing with a dispute or if children have been unkind to them.

Punctuality to lessons is very good although there can occasionally be some noise disruption between lessons.

Behaviour and Attitudes is not yet Outstanding because;

- There is some low level behaviour from older pupils that occurs in lessons and occasionally is not well dealt with by teaching staff.