

Spreyton School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Unique reference number | 113124 |
| Local authority | Devon |
| Inspection number | 378646 |
| Inspection dates | 19–20 January 2012 |
| Lead inspector | Stephen Lake |

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

| | |
|--|---|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 31 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Liz Orme |
| Headteacher | Anne Billington (Acting head) |
| Date of previous school inspection | 27 November 2008 |
| School address | Spreyton Crediton Devon EX17 5AJ |
| Telephone number | 01647 231321 |
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Introduction

Inspection team

Stephen Lake

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed teaching and learning in six lessons or parts of lessons; half of these in partnership with the acting headteacher. A further three short visits were made to lessons to look at particular groups of pupils. In total, two teachers were observed. The inspector heard pupils read and spoke with them about their reading. Meetings were held with pupils, staff and a representative of the governing body. In partnership with the headteacher, the inspector analysed planning documents and pupils' work. A group of parents and carers were spoken to before school. The inspector took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at: documents concerning safeguarding and child protection; the most recent school improvement plan; records of teaching observations; and the reports written by the School Improvement Partner. Questionnaires completed by staff, pupils and 14 parents and carers were analysed.

Information about the school

This is a much smaller than average school serving the village of Spreyton, although a large proportion of pupils come from surrounding villages. It has two classes. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught alongside pupils from Years 1 and 2. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are taught in a separate class. The school does not have enough space for physical education so makes use of the nearby village hall and sports fields. The large majority of pupils are White British with an average percentage from other ethnic groups. No pupil speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The percentage of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is average; the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is well below average. More pupils than average enter or leave the school other than at the usual time, with a significant minority of pupils leaving the school during Years 4 to 6. The school is currently led by an acting headteacher while the governors consider whether or not to federate with another local school or small group of schools under an executive headteacher. The school has been awarded Healthy School Plus status. The current government floor standard was met in 2011.

Inspection judgements

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | 3 |
| Achievement of pupils | 3 |
| Quality of teaching | 3 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | 1 |
| Leadership and management | 3 |

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. Pupils achieve satisfactorily and attain broadly average standards at the end of Year 6. The school is very good at teaching pupils to read. Achievement in reading is good at the end of Year 6; achievement in writing and mathematics is satisfactory.
- Behaviour is outstanding; pupils are kept safe and feel very safe in the school. Provision for pupils' social and moral development is excellent. Consequently, the school is a harmonious community and pupils clearly know right from wrong.
- The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. It is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 where pupils make good progress. In Years 3 to 6, there are inconsistencies in the use of assessment information to plan lessons matched closely enough to the needs of all pupils, especially in mathematics. Marking in Years 3 to 6 is inconsistent and does not always make it clear enough to pupils what they need to do to improve their work.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory and improving rapidly. The acting headteacher is providing strong and effective leadership that has already brought about improvement. Strong links with the local learning community support improvement by providing good opportunities for professional development. Nevertheless, it too early to see the full impact on achievement at the end of Year 6. Overall effectiveness is satisfactory.
- The governing body is proactive, providing strong support to drive improvement. School self-evaluation is accurate and the information gained is used effectively in the revised school improvement plan.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced with many opportunities to make learning interesting and enjoyable. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their mathematical skills across the curriculum.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement in writing across the school by September 2012 to match that in reading through:
 - ensuring that learning objectives are more precise, with clear short-term

- success criteria, and are shared consistently with pupils
- providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length across the curriculum.
- Raise achievement in mathematics in Years 3 to 6 to match that in reading by September 2012 by:
 - ensuring that information on pupils' progress is used more consistently to plan lessons that are closely matched to the individual needs of pupils
 - providing more opportunities for mathematics to be used in other subjects across the curriculum.
- By September 2012, improve the quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 to match that in Years 1 and 2 by ensuring that:
 - all lessons move at a brisk pace and challenge all pupils
 - marking consistently gives pupils information on how they can improve their work.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The very small cohorts mean that attainment on entry varies considerably from year to year but typically, children's skills are broadly those expected for their age. Children make good progress and start Year 1 well prepared for learning and with above-average skills. The shared class enables children who are achieving well to join in with Year 1 work when they are ready. Pupils build well on this good start in Years 1 and 2. The strong and consistent attention given to developing pupils' understanding of letters and sounds is enabling pupils to make good progress in their reading, and attainment in reading has improved greatly over the last few years. It is now above average by the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6. Although reading has improved considerably, achievement in writing remains satisfactory; attainment is average overall.

Achievement in mathematics in Years 1 and 2 has also improved over the last few years and pupils now attain above-average standards by the end of Year 2. Although satisfactory, achievement in mathematics by the end of Year 6 is noticeably lower than in English, especially reading. Large variations in attainment from year to year reflect the differing abilities of very small cohorts of pupils, but the significant minority who enter or leave the school other than at the start and end of the school year also creates variations in achievement. Often higher-attaining pupils leave to join independent schools between Years 4 and 6. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are identified early and good support is provided to enable them to make the same progress as other pupils.

The majority of parents and carers are happy with the progress that their children are making. A large majority feel that the school meets the needs of their children and that the school helps develop their children's communication, reading, writing and mathematics skills. A small minority expressed concern that their children do not appear to make enough progress. A few parents and carers commented that their children did not make as much progress in Years 3 to 6 as they did in Years 1 and 2

and the Early Years Foundation Stage. Inspection evidence supports these views. Progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 is good but the slower progress in Years 3 to 6 holds down progress overall to satisfactory.

Quality of teaching

The vast majority of parents and carers feel that the teaching is good. Inspection evidence endorses that teaching is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 but satisfactory overall. The acting headteacher has correctly identified that teaching is not consistent enough to accelerate progress for all pupils, especially in Years 3 to 6. Teachers know their pupils well and have a good understanding of their circumstances and needs. Teaching assistants work in close partnership with teachers and all adults manage behaviour very well. High expectations of how pupils treat each other and respect each other's views ensure friendly and orderly lessons in which all pupils work together in a cohesive manner. A wide range of strategies are used to make learning interesting and enjoyable but at times, especially in Years 3 to 6, there is inconsistency in the rigour and pace of some lessons.

Strategies to improve teaching and raise attainment include revised systems for using information on how pupils are learning in order to plan challenging lessons that focus on the next steps in learning. The impact of these strategies is becoming evident in the accelerated progress that some pupils are making this year but is not consistent, especially in Years 3 to 6. In too many lessons, work is set for just two different ability groups and tasks are not matched closely enough to the different needs of pupils, particularly, but not only, in mathematics. As a result, some, especially those who are more able, find it too easy while others find it too hard.

The broad, balanced, planned curriculum provides many opportunities to link learning across subjects. For example, the strong links developed with a school in Tanzania are giving pupils a purpose and focus for their local history and geography work. Visitors to the school and residential visits are used well by teachers to enhance learning and support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, too few opportunities are provided to use mathematics across the curriculum, limiting opportunities to enhance pupils' learning in mathematics through other subjects.

Pupils have clear guidance on what they should achieve in writing over a longer period. Nevertheless, teachers do not always make clear enough what pupils are expected to achieve by the end of a lesson and how that will be judged. In particular, teachers do not have consistently high enough expectations of how much pupils should write in a given time. Pupils appreciate the way teachers talk to them about the work they have done and how to make it better. Marking in pupils' books is inconsistent. It does not always make it clear enough to pupils what they need to do in order to improve their work. In too many lessons, further improvement to achievement is limited because lessons do not proceed at a brisk pace. Some teachers talk for too long at the beginning of lessons and do not always take into account the differing abilities of pupils.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour is a significant strength of the school. High standards have been maintained over time with no recorded incidents of racist or poor behaviour in the period since the previous inspection. Pupils have an excellent understanding of what might be seen as bullying, including cyberbullying. They say that there is virtually no bullying and any minor bullying that does occur is dealt with extremely quickly and effectively by the adults. Pupils make an exceptional contribution to the safe learning environment. They show great care and sensitivity to those whose circumstances might make them vulnerable, ensuring that they are fully involved in all activities. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are consistently positive with pupils showing a real enthusiasm for learning even when lessons are undemanding. These attitudes support the accelerating progress being made and the clear improvements in reading.

Pupils, parents and carers correctly agree that pupils are safe. Parents and carers speak very highly of behaviour and the friendly atmosphere that typifies the school. 'It's just like one big family,' commented one. Another commented that the school provides 'a truly supportive and caring environment'.

Leadership and management

The governing body has recognised the challenges of a small school and is reviewing the school's position with a view to possible federation in the immediate area. It has correctly identified the need for more effective use of data at strategic level to judge overall school performance. To address these needs and provide time to consider the school's position, the governing body has appointed an acting headteacher with experience of setting up data systems and analysing school performance. Her strong leadership skills and sharp, accurate understanding of the school are proving valuable. Well-targeted, high-quality professional development is a key factor moving the school forward. The acting headteacher has recognised the difficulties that subject leaders, who only work part time, have in observing lessons and supporting other staff. For this year, she is working in partnership with subject leaders and this is starting to prove effective. The curriculum has recently been revised to ensure that all subjects are taught effectively. Changes to the planning ensure that the rolling programme necessary for mixed-age classes meets the needs of all pupils and avoids repetition over a four-year cycle. The curriculum makes a very strong contribution to the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The links with Tanzania are being further extended this year with support from the British Council and this makes a strong contribution to pupils' understanding of cultural diversity. All areas identified as areas for improvement in this report are already included in the school improvement plan. Procedures for safeguarding, especially those for child protection, are very securely in place. All training for staff and governors is up to date and high quality policies are embedded into school practice.

The school works assiduously to ensure equality of opportunity and to prevent discrimination, monitoring the performance of individuals frequently. There are no underachieving groups and the school is a very harmonious community. Performance is now monitored rigorously. New and effective systems for recording and analysing data ensure that all teachers, leaders and managers, including governors, have

accurate information on the school's performance. Regular and frequent monitoring of teaching and learning is linked securely to continuous professional development and performance management, School data are showing that the strategies put in place for improving teaching are secure and effective. The progress made by pupils is accelerating and achievement improving, especially in Years 1 and 2. Strengths of the previous inspection in pupils' personal development have been maintained and improved. Outstanding behaviour and safety, together with the clear improvements in achievement, indicate that the school has a satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

| Grade | Judgement | Description |
|---------|--------------|--|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. |
| Grade 2 | Good | These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory | These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. |

Overall effectiveness of schools

| Type of school | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) | | | |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
| | Outstanding | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools | 46 | 46 | 8 | 0 |
| Primary schools | 8 | 47 | 40 | 5 |
| Secondary schools | 14 | 38 | 40 | 8 |
| Special schools | 28 | 48 | 20 | 4 |
| Pupil referral units | 15 | 50 | 29 | 5 |
| All schools | 11 | 46 | 38 | 6 |

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Achievement: | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment. |
| Attainment: | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. |
| Attendance | the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance. |
| Behaviour | how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school. |
| Capacity to improve: | the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement. |
| Leadership and management: | the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school. |
| Learning: | how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners. |
| Overall effectiveness: | inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. |
| Progress: | the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started. |
| Safety | how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons, and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning. |

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



23 January 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Spreyton School, Crediton, Devon EX17 5AJ

Thank you for making me so welcome when I came to visit your school. I enjoyed talking with you in the classrooms and on the playground.

Yours is a satisfactory school and you achieve standards similar to those in most schools. Here are a few of the things that I particularly liked about your school.

- You get a good start to school in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2, and make good progress because the teaching in this class is good. By the end of Year 2, you are attaining better than pupils in most schools.
- The school is very good at teaching you to read, and attainment in reading is above average at the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6.
- Your outstanding behaviour makes the school an enjoyable place in which to learn. It reflects your excellent moral and social development.

In order to help you learn even more effectively, I have asked the school to:

- make it clear at the beginning of each lesson, how much you are supposed to write and the key things that teachers will look for when marking this work
- use the information that they have on your progress to plan lessons in mathematics that are closely matched to your understanding; you can help here by telling your teachers when the work is too easy or too hard
- make sure that all lessons proceed at a brisk pace and that marking always makes it clear to you how you can make your work better.

Your school is already working to make these improvements and you can help by always trying your very best in all lessons. Thank you again for making me so welcome.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Lake
Lead inspector

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