

Springwell Park Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134343
Local Authority	Sefton
Inspection number	360615
Inspection dates	18–19 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Julie Price Grimshaw

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	311
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Daren Veidman
Headteacher	Mr Desmond Stubbs
Date of previous school inspection	25 April 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 13 lessons taught by nine teachers and held meetings with staff, groups of pupils, governors and the School Improvement Partner. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at improvement planning, policy documents, national published assessment data, the school's own data and pupils' work. Evidence on the quality of the registered childcare provision was gained through observations and discussions with staff. Inspectors also analysed 28 questionnaires from parents and carers, as well as those from a sample of pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at three key areas.

- The sustainability of the upward trend in pupils' achievement, suggested by data.
- The effectiveness of the school's cycle of monitoring, evaluation and action planning.
- The school's systems for behaviour management and the extent to which pupils' behaviour makes a positive contribution to their learning.

Information about the school

This is a larger-than-average school compared to others of the same type. The great majority of pupils are of White British heritage with a small number from minority ethnic backgrounds who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. Since the last inspection there has been significant disruption to staffing, particularly at senior management level. Following the departure of the headteacher and deputy headteacher, an executive headteacher was appointed in September 2010. At the time of inspection, two members of the senior management team were on maternity leave. In addition to the registered day-care provision for children from birth to three years, run by the governing body, the school houses a children's centre which was inspected at the same time as the school and is subject to a separate report.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This good school is at the heart of the local community. Every effort is made to engage with parents and carers, with exceptionally high quality support provided to families in the locality. Parents and carers are extremely supportive of the school, with comments such as 'The school has been fantastic to myself and to my child' being typical of many.

When children join the Early Years Foundation Stage their skill levels are generally well-below typical expectations for their age. Good quality provision ensures that the children rapidly develop knowledge and skills in all areas of learning. Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 make good progress overall, as a result of excellent guidance and support combined with a lively, stimulating curriculum and their own enthusiasm for learning and positive attitudes to work. By the end of Year 6, their attainment is broadly average.

Pupils say they feel extremely safe in school and have a well-developed understanding of unsafe situations. One pupil, expressing a typical view, said 'I feel very safe here because all the staff look after us and care for us.' Safeguarding procedures are exemplary and highly effective. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. The cultural elements are least secure, and pupils' awareness of a range of faiths and cultures, particularly in the United Kingdom, is limited.

The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory, although a minority is consistently good. In all lessons, relationships are very strong and teachers manage pupils' behaviour well, using the school's effective strategies. However, in too many lessons teachers do not capitalise on pupils' willingness to learn and provide enough opportunities for them to be actively involved in their learning. The very good practice in assessment demonstrated by staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not sufficiently widespread. Elsewhere in the school, assessment information is not consistently used to inform planning. Lesson plans do not always reflect consideration of pupils' different abilities, and so the work set is occasionally not matched closely enough to pupils' individual needs.

Secure self-evaluation and high quality improvement planning mean that the school's capacity for sustained improvement is good. Over the past year the school has started to recover from instability caused by significant disruption to staffing. School managers have worked effectively with the governing body to bring about improvements to key aspects of the school's work, such as care, guidance and support. Systems for managing the quality of teaching and learning are increasingly effective and these have resulted in recent improvements to teaching. Attendance has improved considerably and is now average.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the proportion of good or better teaching by ensuring that:

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- pupils are given opportunities to take a more active role in their learning
- work planned is consistently matched to pupils' ability levels.
- Develop the use of assessment to support learning by:
 - ensuring that all teachers use assessment information effectively to guide them when they are planning lessons
 - ensuring that written feedback always helps pupils become aware of what they need to do in order to improve their work.
- Raise pupils' awareness of a range of cultures and faith communities, particularly within the United Kingdom.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils have good attitudes to learning and this, together with their good behaviour, makes a strong contribution to their learning and progress. They thoroughly enjoy discussing their work and respond very well to praise and encouragement. This was evident in one lesson where pupils were practising writing poetry; they gave much thought to their writing and were brimming with enthusiasm when asked to read out their work to each other.

Pupils work well in teams and often support each other in lessons by offering help and advice. Although there is no discernable difference between the achievement of different groups, pupils' progress is not consistent across the school. In lessons that are satisfactory rather than good, the pace of their learning slows. Nevertheless, pupils' achievement over time is good and data from recent years show that attainment has risen, especially in English. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make at least good progress as a result of the high quality, targeted support provided for them.

The school provides a calm environment and pupils act with care and consideration, very aware of how to keep themselves safe. They have a good understanding of health-related issues and are aware that although diet and exercise are important, getting enough rest is also vital. This is reflected in the comment, from one of the younger pupils that 'You need to get a good night's sleep so you are fit and ready for the next day!' Pupils take pride in the contribution they make to the school community, willingly taking on responsibilities. They are adequately prepared for the next stage in their education.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

In the majority of lessons, teachers use praise and encouragement well to build their pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to enhance the quality of learning, with teachers making particularly good use of the school's excellent resources. In the best lessons, teachers give careful consideration to pupils' individual needs and the pace of learning is brisk. However, a significant proportion of lessons is too heavily teacher-directed, which results in pupils being passive and this slows the pace of learning. Teachers do not always use assessment information effectively to plan work that matches pupils' needs and ability levels. Occasionally, all pupils in a class are given very similar work, regardless of their ability. While there is some good practice in giving written feedback, marking does not always make pupils aware of what they need to do to improve their work.

The curriculum has developed well since the last inspection and includes a wide variety of themes and activities that pupils find interesting and relevant. This motivation is a key factor in the good quality of pupils' learning. There are numerous opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills and they enjoy the wide range of extra-curricular activities provided.

The school cares for its pupils exceptionally well. Pupils feel very confident that they can discuss any concerns they might have and they appreciate the excellent support provided by staff. Support staff make a strong contribution to the learning of many pupils, using

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initiative to respond appropriately to individual needs. The school works very effectively with a range of external agencies to ensure that every pupil receives very high quality support and guidance. Attendance has improved greatly over the past year as a result of the school's highly effective strategies, including the provision of a very popular breakfast club.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The executive headteacher, together with the recently established senior leadership team, has led and supported staff very well over the past year. Consequently, staff morale is high, as reflected in responses to the staff questionnaire, which were unanimously positive. Senior leaders communicate ambition and drive improvement well, and an effective cycle of monitoring, evaluation and action planning has now been established. Evidence shows that good systems for the management of teaching and learning have brought about improvements over the past year and there are clear strategies for ongoing development. Monitoring of pupils' achievement shows that the upward trend indicated by data is sustainable.

Governance is good. The governing body has played a key role in the school's recent development, providing both challenge and support to school managers. The governing body is clearly committed to the provision of care and education for children from birth to 11 years and fulfils all statutory requirements. Safeguarding has a particularly high profile and the school's systems and procedures for child protection are highly effective, exemplifying best practice in this area. Work within the local community is very strong. However, the school's leaders and governors are aware of the need to promote community cohesion further by raising pupils' awareness of faiths and cultures.

Engagement with parents and carers is outstanding. The school knows pupils and their families very well, providing tailored guidance and support. A wide range of opportunities are provided for parents and carers, including exercise classes and sign language training. The school promotes equality of opportunity well and pupils are fully aware that discrimination is not tolerated. The school also works very effectively in developing pupils' thinking skills to ensure that stereotypical views are challenged. Assessment information is kept on different groups of pupils, ensuring that any potential underachievement is quickly identified and as a consequence gaps in the achievement of different groups have narrowed.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage. They thoroughly enjoy their learning and are motivated by the impressive choice of activities on offer. Staff skilfully support learning and intervene sensitively as appropriate; this is particularly effective in developing children's social skills. As a result, children make especially good progress in this area, as shown, for example, by their very good behaviour at snack time.

Children in the Reception class have a well-developed awareness of safety and most children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, including those in the day-care provision, feel confident and are comfortable in their interactions with adults. Staff have high expectations of children, as seen in one lesson where the teacher used the interactive whiteboard very effectively to develop children's listening skills in identifying household sounds. The children displayed intense concentration and their behaviour was excellent.

In the day-care provision, staff plan activities well to meet the needs of individual children. The environment is calm and staff pay good attention to children's welfare. The provision complies with the requirements for registration.

Throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage, children's progress is assessed regularly and their achievements are recorded in detail. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good; there are regular meetings to plan learning for individuals and clear strategies for further development. Parents and carers are happy with the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, a typical comment being 'I feel that my child has had a fantastic start to her future education – very impressed overall.'

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The 28 parents and carers who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. A few acknowledged the school's efforts in developing links between home and school and expressed appreciation of the school's work in this area. The inspection endorses parents' and carers' views in this respect. Only a few parents and carers raised any issues; these were minor and did not indicate any particular pattern of concern.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Springwell Park Community Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 28 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 311 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	17	61	10	36	0	0	1	4
The school keeps my child safe	24	86	4	14	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	20	71	8	29	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	19	68	8	29	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	20	71	8	29	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	18	64	10	36	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	75	6	21	1	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	19	68	9	32	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	79	6	21	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	64	7	25	2	7	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	64	9	32	1	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	23	82	5	18	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	21	75	7	25	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



22 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Springwell Park Community Primary School, Bootle, L20 6PG

As you know, I visited your school recently together with another inspector so that we could find out how well you are doing. I would like to thank you for making us feel so welcome and for sharing your views with us. I would also like to share our main findings with you.

You attend a good school. You told us that the staff are very kind and caring towards you, and we agree that the quality of care is excellent. The school works hard to make sure that you feel safe and we were very impressed that you knew so much about safety. Almost all of you behave well and your attendance has improved greatly over the past year, so well done!

You make good progress during your time at Springwell. You told us that there are lots of interesting things for you to do and that this helps you to enjoy your learning. The school works very well indeed with your parents and carers and provides lots of opportunities for them to learn new skills and have fun.

The school has some excellent resources for ICT and teachers make good use of these. In the best lessons you take a very active part in your own learning and we have asked the school to make sure that this happens in more of your lessons. We have also suggested that you are always given work that is just at the right level for you, and that marking tells you exactly what you need to do to improve. Finally, we would like you to learn a little more about all the different faiths and cultures in different parts of the United Kingdom.

Your headteacher and all the staff are keen to support you in your learning. We are delighted that you are proud to be pupils at Springwell Park and wish you well in the future.

Yours sincerely

Julie Price Grimshaw

Lead inspector

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