

Aston Springwood Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106901
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	377485
Inspection dates	15–16 March 2012
Lead inspector	Joan McKenna

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	168
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Barton
Headteacher	David Simpson
Date of previous school inspection	14 October 2008
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Introduction

Inspection team

Joan McKenna
Ann Taylor

Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in eight lessons taught by seven teachers, made shorter visits to classrooms, looked at pupils' work and observed other activities taking place. They observed the school's work, and scrutinised documents including policies, action plans, information about pupils' learning and progress, attendance data, information from the school's monitoring and arrangements for safeguarding. Meetings were held with staff, groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and other governors. Responses to questionnaires returned by pupils and the 30 returned by parents and carers were analysed. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average primary school. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportions of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and who have who have special educational needs are above average. The school has gained a range of awards, including Active Sports Mark, Healthy School status, the Basic Skills Quality Mark, Excellence in Enterprise and Pupil Leaders. The school met the government floor standard in 2011, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. There is child care provision based on the school site that is not managed by the governing body. This did not form part of this inspection.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It provides a caring, supportive environment and a stimulating curriculum and pupils' personal outcomes are good. However, its effectiveness is not good overall because teaching and pupils' achievement are satisfactory.
- Pupils' achievement as a whole is satisfactory. Some good progress is made, but it is inconsistent across the school. Pupils' attainment in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 is broadly in line with the national average.
- Teaching is satisfactory. Where it is better, tasks are well matched to pupils' different needs and they are given clear information on how to produce high-quality work. However, not all teaching is of this quality, and work is sometimes too easy or too hard for pupils. The quality of marking is variable. Occasionally, pupils receive clear guidance on how well they are doing and how to improve and reach their targets, but this is not always the case.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. They have positive relationships with adults and each other. They feel safe and enjoy participating in the wide range of activities provided for them.
- Leaders have been successful in ensuring that pastoral provision and outcomes are good. Actions to improve teaching and academic outcomes, and to manage performance, are having a positive impact, although shortcomings remain. A dip in achievement in 2010 was reversed in 2011. Progress in writing is improving. Senior leaders carry out a range of monitoring activities and they know the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, there is not an accurate, shared view of what constitutes good progress and the full range of available evidence is not given appropriate weighting. Consequently, judgements made about the school's effectiveness are overgenerous. Not all leaders carry out the full range of leadership activities.

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 attainment in English and mathematics and ensure that pupils make consistently good progress by:
 - ensuring greater consistency in the quality of teaching so it improves to the standard of the best
 - using accurate information about pupils' attainment and progress to match work closely to their different needs
 - ensuring that pupils receive consistently detailed and effective feedback on how well they are doing and how to improve their work and reach their targets.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that there is an accurate understanding of what constitutes good progress for pupils that is shared by all staff and governors
 - using the full range of evidence available about the school and pupils' outcomes when coming to judgements about its effectiveness
 - ensuring that leaders at all levels carry out the full range of leadership activities, including monitoring the impact of teaching and pupils' outcomes.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage follow routines and expectations when working in groups. They are enjoying the increased opportunities for them to initiate activities when playing indoors and outside. Older pupils are keen to learn and generally tackle tasks with enthusiasm and resilience. They do as they are asked and most try hard with their work when working individually and with others. They particularly enjoy practical activities. Some say that they 'like being challenged'. When work is well matched to their needs and they are given clear, explicit information about the criteria for being successful and well-judged guidance throughout the lesson, such as seen in a Year 6 'Remarkable Writing' lesson, they learn very well. However, pupils learn less well when work is too easy or too hard for them or when some aspects of teaching are not effective.

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with a range of attainment, but overall it is below expectations. Until recently, the school has not regarded assessments made in this Key Stage to be fully accurate and so data on children's attainment and progress by the time they enter Year 1 have not been reliable. Children's progress currently is accelerating in response to recent improvements made to provision. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has been broadly average in recent years, and continues to be so, and so in those early years of schooling good progress is made. Thereafter, rates of progress slow down, with

attainment continuing to be broadly average by the end of Key Stage 2. Indeed, in 2010 attainment dipped, and that group of Year 6 pupils did not make adequate progress during their time in Key Stage 2. This situation has been rectified, and in 2011 Year 6 pupils made satisfactory progress in English and mathematics. This continues to be the case for pupils across Key Stage 2 overall, although there is some inconsistency across the key Stage, with some particularly positive learning in Year 6. Attainment in reading at the end of both Years 2 and 6 is average overall, although the proportion gaining higher levels in 2011 was higher than that nationally. Action taken to improve progress in reading and writing is showing positive impact. There is some variation in the attainment of different groups of pupils, but all groups are making satisfactory progress overall, including those with special educational needs.

All parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire said that their children are making good progress. While some good progress is made, overall inspection evidence shows achievement to be satisfactory.

Quality of teaching

In all lessons, adults have good relationships with pupils and create pleasant, supportive climates for learning. They explain the purpose of lessons so that pupils know what they are expected to learn. Most teachers provide a good balance between input and explanation and time for pupils to consolidate their learning through independent work. A feature of the most effective teaching is very clear explanation of what 'good' work would look like so pupils are well equipped to be successful. Pupils' understanding and progress is regularly checked throughout these lessons so the teacher knows when to give extra input to accelerate progress. In the Year 6 writing lesson which employed these strategies, pupils were extremely motivated and were pushing themselves hard. There was relaxed, but very focussed and relevant dialogue throughout the lesson, initiated by pupils as well as the teacher. However, there are times when work to meet individuals' needs is either not planned for or is not implemented effectively, with the result that work is too easy or too difficult for some pupils. This is not always noticed by teachers and so misunderstandings are not corrected or higher-attaining pupils are not pushed on fast enough. Teachers acknowledge that pupils will have different degrees of understanding in lessons and they encourage pupils to assess their own levels of confidence, but this is not a precise enough measure. Some feedback given to pupils through marking, especially in writing, is of good quality. It is sometimes less effective, especially in mathematics, where not all pupils have individual targets and they receive less guidance on how to improve. The need to improve these aspects has been recognised by the school and a focus on doing so is planned.

Positive actions to develop the curriculum are having an impact. Recent developments in provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, such as more opportunities for children to make decisions for themselves and to learn through playing outside are improving learning. The reading challenge is motivating younger pupils, including boys, to read more frequently. The introduction of 'Remarkable Writing' is popular and is improving the quality of writing, although is implemented with different levels of effectiveness. There have been fewer developments in mathematics. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted

well through activities in different subjects such as in art. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved, with a new suite of computers, which is popular and used successfully in lessons and at lunchtimes.

All parents and carers responding to the questionnaires said their children were well taught. Inspection evidence indicates that this is the case in some lessons, but that teaching is satisfactory overall.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The school promotes inclusive values, stressing the importance of respect for and responsibility towards others, as well as developing confidence and resilience. It has established effective systems for promoting good behaviour and for dealing with any that is not, and these are known, understood and followed consistently by almost all pupils. As a result, behaviour is typically good and pupils are friendly and considerate towards each other. Through a good range of opportunities to take on responsibilities, such as acting as school and enterprise councillors, pupils develop in maturity and confidence and act as positive role models for others. Year 6 pupils display enterprise skills when running the healthy tuck shop at break times. Good-quality care and support is provided, including for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Pupils feel safe in school, citing the security of the school site and access to caring adults as reasons. They say that there is very little bullying of any kind and are confident that it would be dealt with well if it occurred. The school provided evidence that it takes bullying seriously and takes rigorous action when any is reported. Attendance is in line with the national average. Persistent absence has increased in the past few years, but the school's work with the families involved is having a positive impact on reducing it in most cases. Likewise, recent action to improve punctuality, including a higher presence by staff at the school gate in the mornings, has resulted in most pupils arriving on time.

All parents and carers who returned the questionnaires indicated that their children feel safe in school. The very large majority said that behaviour is good and bullying is well dealt with, although a very small minority did not agree. Inspection evidence indicates that behaviour and safety are good and bullying is regarded very seriously with appropriate action taken.

Leadership and management

Under clear direction from the headteacher, leaders have been effective in ensuring that the school has a strong family feel and that it is inclusive. The curriculum is good because it provides a range of rich experiences that engage pupils' interest and enjoyment and it promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Leaders and governors promote equality of opportunity well and take steps to ensure that there is no discrimination. Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. The school's links with the community and partnerships with external organisations to meet pupils' needs are positive. Senior leaders monitor the school's effectiveness in suitable ways and governors provide some challenge by asking questions of them. Appropriate systems for assessing and tracking pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics have been developed, with recent improvements in the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, there remains

confusion on the part of staff and governors about what constitutes satisfactory versus good achievement. This has contributed to the school being more positive in their judgements about the school's effectiveness than the evidence merits. Not all leaders are playing a full part in monitoring the quality of provision and checking that actions are having an impact on pupils' outcomes. For example, not all subject leaders monitor the quality of teaching or pupils' attainment in their subjects and so shortcomings remain. Nevertheless, key strengths and areas for development have been identified and the latter are being acted upon, both through professional development for all and more specifically targeted action. The resulting improvements demonstrate that the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

Only a very small minority of parents and carers returned questionnaires outlining their views of the school, but the responses indicate that the school enjoys the full support of the very large majority of those who replied. The school takes a range of positive steps to engage parents and carers, including, for example, providing courses in literacy to help them to be better equipped to support their children.

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.
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.



19 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Aston Springwood Primary School, Sheffield S26 2AL

Thank you for being so friendly and welcoming when my colleague and I inspected your school, and for showing us your work. We enjoyed talking with you and hearing your views. You are very friendly, pleasant pupils, and you get on well with your teachers and each other. Almost all of you are kind to each other and work and play well together. You also work hard and behave well. Well done!

We think that there are good things about your school – besides you! You are well cared for and this helps you to feel safe and secure. You are provided with a good range of activities inside and outside the classroom and this helps you enjoy school. Overall we have judged your school to be satisfactory. This is because teaching is satisfactory. It is helping you make satisfactory progress and to reach attainment that is line with that reached nationally in English and mathematics by the time you leave school.

Your leaders want to continue to improve the school for you. There are some things we have asked them to concentrate on to help them do this. We would like them to make sure that you all make as much progress as you can in English and mathematics, by making all teaching as good as the best, and by providing tasks that are at the right level of difficulty for each of you. We would like teachers to give you all clear guidance to help you know how to improve your work and to reach your targets. We also want all leaders to know exactly how well you could be doing, and to use all the information available to check on whether you are and on how effective the school is.

You can help by continuing to work hard, coming to school regularly and on time and by being such positive pupils. I send you and your teachers my very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Joan McKenna
Lead Inspector

