

Springfield Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	132140
Local Authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	360377
Inspection dates	5–6 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Tim Bristow HMI

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	432
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	James Williams
Headteacher	Susan Powis
Date of previous school inspection	7 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 15 teachers and visited 27 lessons. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school development plan, assessment information, lesson plans, school policies and questionnaires from 96 parents and carers, 95 pupils and 43 staff.

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

- Whether the rate of progress made by groups of pupils is satisfactory or good.
- The improvements in teaching and the curriculum since the previous inspection.
- Whether the school's 'good' evaluation for the effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement is accurate.
- Is the school taking sufficient steps to improve the attendance rate?

Information about the school

The school is larger than the average sized primary school. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and from homes where English is not the first language is below average. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities or who have a statement of special needs is average. The school has a unit providing specialist provision for 10 pupils on the autistic spectrum. The Early Years Foundation Stage has a Nursery as well as Reception classes. The pupils benefit from a breakfast club and an after school club managed by the school. The school has achieved National Healthy Schools status and the Leading Parent Partnership award.

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

The school provides pupils with a good education. Many improvements to provision since the previous inspection have resulted in the good achievement of nearly all groups of pupils. The school is well respected in the community because of the success of school leaders in strengthening parents and carers' engagement, partnerships and community cohesion. Consequently, these aspects are now good. The care, guidance and support that pupils benefit from are good overall. However, there are some important aspects of it that are outstanding, such as the extremely caring attitude of staff evident throughout the school. As one parent reported, representing the views of others, 'The many adults within the school work well as a team to make sure my child achieves his best. It is a very caring school that looks at the individual needs of the children.'

Nearly all groups of pupils make good progress in school. The large majority enter Nursery with skill development that is well below national expectations. In most years the attainment of pupils at the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics is average. In 2010, externally moderated school assessment results show that the attainment of pupils in English has risen and is above average.

Teaching and the use of assessment are good overall. However, there is a growing proportion of outstanding teaching, for example, in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Consistently strong features include well constructed lesson plans, very productive relationships between adults and pupils, and high quality support from well trained teaching assistants. There is a small minority of lessons, particularly in Key Stage 1, where teaching is satisfactory. In these lessons the learning intentions for pupils are not sharp enough. A few pupils receive work that is not pitched sufficiently accurately to meet their needs. Consequently, the progress they make is slower than in other lessons.

A very enriching curriculum is ensuring that nearly all aspects of pupils' personal development and well-being are good. For example, pupils' understanding and appreciation of different cultures within British society and the contribution they make to the community have improved since the previous inspection and are now good. The quality of education for pupils on the autistic spectrum is very good because of the high quality of provision, leadership and expertise of the team. The preparation for pupils' future economic well-being is good because the outcomes for the very large majority of pupils are good. However, the overall attendance rate is below average as a result of the persistent absence of a few pupils. Recently, satisfactory procedures have been established that have rapidly raised the level of attendance, but the school has yet to demonstrate a sustained improvement over time.

Strong leadership at all levels, including the governing body, has resulted in the good overall effectiveness of the school. Effective procedures established by leaders for evaluating the work of the school have driven improvements such as the good progress

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made by nearly all groups of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, higher standards across the school in writing and the larger proportions of pupils achieving the higher levels in English and mathematics. Consequently, the school demonstrates good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Reduce the proportion of satisfactory lessons, particularly in Key Stage 1, to accelerate pupil progress further by:
 - sharing the good practice that exists within the school more effectively
 - sharpening up the objectives for learning and success criteria in lessons so that work can be pitched accurately to meet the needs of all pupils
 - ensuring that school leaders focus their monitoring and evaluation activities on improving the teaching and learning in these lessons.
- Ensure that the recently introduced procedures to reduce the rate of absence lead to a sustained improvement in the attendance of pupils.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupil, parent and carer questionnaires demonstrate that almost all pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school. Their behaviour is nearly always good and sometimes, such as in assembly, it is outstanding. Inspectors were very impressed by the very polite welcome they received from pupils when they arrived at the school. In the large majority of lessons pupils demonstrate good levels of independence and cooperation which has a very positive influence on the good quality of their learning. For example, in a Year 6 English lesson pupils demonstrated a good understanding of sophisticated sentence structures when writing a biography. They then worked extremely cooperatively with a partner to refine their writing. Concerted effort by the school to increase the proportion of pupils achieving the higher level 5 has borne fruit. This year the proportions attaining level 5 in English and mathematics are average. School assessment information shows that the attainment of pupils at Key Stage 2 continues to rise. While the very large majority of pupils are well prepared for the future, school assessment information shows that the few pupils whose attendance is low make less progress than their peers. Pupils on the autistic spectrum make good progress resulting from very good integrated provision where they benefit from a combination of expert individual support and inclusion within the classroom. Additional activities for pupils who need extra help with their reading enables them to make outstanding progress.

Many pupils relish the opportunity to take responsibility in school. For example, they make a strong contribution to the welfare of their peers through their 'buddy' activities. Pupils report that if they needed help they would go to a 'buddy'. Activities such as the International week have been instrumental in developing pupils' appreciation of the need for cultural awareness. As one pupil reported, 'If you come face to face with someone from another culture you can understand the culture.' Pupil, parent and carer questionnaires show that almost all think that they are safe in school. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. For example, Year 2 pupils discussed knowledgeably the benefits of eating fruit at break time.

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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	2
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	2
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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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?

Lessons are interesting and stimulating, as they successfully engage and motivate nearly all pupils to work hard. Teachers use assessment information well to identify accurately individual targets for improvement for pupils, particularly in English and mathematics. In the good lessons teachers tailor work that challenges and stimulates pupils. Pupils report that they know what the targets are and the next steps they need to take to improve their work. For example, they appreciated the regular opportunities they have to evaluate their own work and also the work of their friends. Occasionally, where lessons are satisfactory, pupils spend too long sitting on the carpet listening to the teacher. When this happens a few become bored and distracted.

The pupils benefit from a greatly enriched curriculum such as the annual residential visits for pupils in Years 2, 4 and 6 that have been instrumental in developing their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their good adoption of a safe and healthy lifestyle. Pupils demonstrate high standards in their work in some foundation subjects. For example, there are many lovely examples of art work of a high standard displayed throughout the school. The provision for dance is another strong feature of the curriculum as the school has been identified locally as a hub school for dance. Where lessons are satisfactory, the curriculum does not meet the needs of some pupils as well as it could.

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The school provides a secure, nurturing environment through activities such as the breakfast club where dedicated staff demonstrate a passion for the well-being of the pupils in their care. This has been particularly beneficial for some vulnerable pupils who look forward to this good start to the day. The support and care for pupils with special educational needs and/or difficulties is extremely good. Leaders and staff are particularly effective at tailoring provision that meets the needs of individuals. As one parent reported, 'I find this school a godsend, they fully support both my children and myself in every aspect. If I have any questions no matter how trivial they always help me. It is such a comfort to feel that your children are safe and encouraged in every way.' Procedures to encourage good attendance are satisfactory.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Information from the staff questionnaires shows that there is a very strong team spirit. They are very well led by the headteacher who has successfully equipped senior and middle leaders to drive forward school improvements. The school development plan is a useful instrument for coordinating these improvements. A sensible and realistic set of priorities, linked to effective performance management and monitoring and evaluation procedures, has resulted in the improvements in provision and outcomes for pupils that are now good. However, a few of the objectives in the plan are not sharply focused enough on outcomes for pupils and not closely linked enough to lesson observations so that they could have even more impact on improvements. The governing body demonstrates that it is very knowledgeable about the work of the school and regularly holds the headteacher and others to account for its work. It oversees the school's strategic development well. However, visits to observe the school's work are not sufficiently systematic and focused on the priorities for improvement.

Procedures to safeguard pupils are secure. For example, the procedures for supporting vulnerable pupils are good. The staff are very successful at ensuring the equality of all pupils in this very inclusive school because of the great attention they pay to the needs of each individual. Partnerships, such as those with the local secondary school, the Sure Start children's centre and local arts agencies, have been effective in improving the outcomes for pupils as well as fostering good care, guidance and support.

Community cohesion and the engagement with parents and carers is a strong feature of leadership. This has been recognised through the school's Leading Parent Partnership award. Parents are able to influence the work of the school through initiatives such as the parent council. The school has been fearless in confronting some local resistance to

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promoting cultural harmony in the community. This has resulted in pupils' much stronger appreciation of the contribution of different cultures.

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	2
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

School information shows that the majority of children enter the Nursery with skill development, particularly in communication, language and literacy, that is well below expectations. They then make good progress throughout their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that the majority enter Year 1 reaching the expected early learning goals. A number of children who have not attended the Nursery enter the Reception classes with skill development that is well below expectations. They also make good progress. Children are happy, confident and independent learners. They thoroughly enjoy taking part in the stimulating and interesting activities inside and outside the classroom. For example, in one outstanding lesson children were thoroughly engrossed in a colour mixing activity led by a local artist. Teachers and teaching assistants have good observation and assessment procedures that ensure that activities are tailored to meet the needs of individuals. Leadership is strong. Improvements in provision such as the Every Child A Talker activities, personalised learning boards and Play And Stay sessions for parents and carers, have been introduced as a result of the effective procedures employed to identify that improvements could be made to the language strategies used by teaching assistants when engaging with children, and to give parents and carers more advice on how to help their children at home.

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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 overwhelming majority of parents and carers were happy overall with their children's experience at school. Trends in the comments made by parents and carers showed that they appreciate the work of the school and the headteacher. A few rightly voiced concerns about aspects of the school's work. In nearly all concerns there was no apparent trend to indicate weaknesses in the school's procedures, nor were any witnessed by inspectors. Nevertheless, inspectors pointed out some of the issues of concern to school leaders. There was a concern about an aspect of site security from three parents. As a result, the headteacher and governors have agreed to review the risk assessment concerning this aspect to ensure that all necessary steps have been taken.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Springfield 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 96 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 432 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	65	68	30	31	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	47	49	47	49	2	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	34	35	57	59	4	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	35	36	57	59	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	39	41	53	55	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	45	47	45	47	2	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	45	47	47	49	1	1	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)	45	47	44	46	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	41	43	49	51	3	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	36	38	45	47	2	2	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	33	34	52	54	0	0	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	41	43	49	51	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	53	55	41	43	1	1	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.



7 October 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of Springfield Primary School, West Midlands, B65 8JY

If you remember, I came with my colleagues to inspect the work of the school and to check how well you were doing. I am very pleased to report that we think that you are doing well. You can be very proud of the good progress you are making. There are some other very important aspects of your development in which you are also successful. Your behaviour is good. We were particularly impressed by your politeness to us and kindness to each other. You told us that you enjoy your education and feel safe and understand how to stay healthy, and we agree with you. We were impressed by your interest in lessons and personal learning skills. You carry out your jobs in school conscientiously and show good initiative when taking the responsibility for activities such as raising money for charity. You have some exciting school clubs and fun activities that you told us that you really enjoyed. You should be very proud of your art work displayed around the school and in the playgrounds; we thought that it was lovely. We think that you are very well cared for, but were disappointed to find that some of you do not come to school as regularly as you should.

We think that the headteacher, other adults and school governors work extremely hard to provide you with a good education. They try their best to make sure that every one of you is happy.

In order to help you do even better we have asked the school to make some improvements to the teaching in a few of your lessons and to continue to work hard to make sure you come to school every day.

You all can help by making sure you come to school every day.

Yours sincerely

Tim Bristow

Her Majesty's Inspector

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