

Springbank Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135868
Local Authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	364054
Inspection dates	17–18 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Andrew Stafford

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	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Claire Carroll
Headteacher	Julie Vaccari
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 18 lessons taught by 10 teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the data the school has collected on pupils' attainment and progress, the school strategic plan, lesson and curriculum planning, and procedures for keeping pupils safe. Thirty-three questionnaires from parents and carers were returned and their responses were scrutinised by the inspection team, who also spoke with a number of parents and carers.

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

- Inspectors considered whether or not progress made by pupils in Years 3 to 6 was good.
- They looked at the quality of the challenge that teachers provide to secure good progress in Years 3 to 6.
- The inspection team evaluated the effectiveness of improvement planning to accelerate progress across the school.

Information about the school

Springbank is an average-size primary school. Most of the pupils are White British. The remainder come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. A few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average. Most of these have moderate learning or speech and language difficulties. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. The school has recently gained a number of awards, including the Eco School award, and has achieved National Healthy Schools Status. The school was established by amalgamating a junior school and an infants' school in April 2010, when the current senior leadership team took up their posts.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Springbank Primary provides a satisfactory education and a safe, very caring and happy atmosphere in which pupils grow into confident and mature young people. Parents and carers are exceptionally pleased with the quality of education the school provides.

Typically, one parent wrote, reflecting on the school since amalgamation, 'I am now happy that within a short time things are so much better and my child is now starting to progress again'.

Since its amalgamation the school has improved aspects of leadership, the provision for care, the curriculum and the quality of teaching and learning. It has also established good relationships with parents and carers. The school's robust use of its tracking system to identify quickly any pupils making slow progress is helping to improve outcomes. The school has successfully tackled some underachievement in Years 3 to 6 through effective improvement plans and the determined leadership of the headteacher. As a result, progress and achievement are satisfactory and improving. Improvement is particularly evident in Years 3 and 4 where progress is now good. Attainment has risen and is now average.

The leaders' drive to improve the school is clearly articulated and enthusiastically embraced by staff, especially in literacy and numeracy. Leaders' very rigorous monitoring of the school's performance provides them with secure and accurate information for self-evaluation. Their subsequent actions have brought about significant improvement. This effective self-evaluation and strong leadership record show the school has a good capacity to improve further. The school recognises that strategic roles and responsibilities of some subject leaders are not as well defined as those for English and mathematics. This results in some inconsistencies in the emphasis on improvement across different subjects.

There are many signs that teaching and learning are improving as a result of focused professional development. Teachers plan interesting and relevant work that leads an increasing proportion of pupils to make good progress. Relationships are strong and pupils have positive attitudes to their work and try hard. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to learning through the well-timed use of their expertise in supporting those who need help with literacy and numeracy. This is most evident for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and pupils who speak English as an additional language. While a significant number of good lessons were seen across the school, teaching overall is satisfactory. This is because teaching is not yet securing good progress for the great majority of pupils. The level of challenge in lessons is not always sufficiently fine-tuned to secure good progress. Typically this is because teachers do not always use assessment information well enough to plan work that matches closely the needs of different pupils in the class. The quality of marking and feedback to pupils, especially the

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older ones, is also inconsistent, which means that not all of them are clear about what they need to do to improve their work.

Pupils are cared for extremely well in school and feel very safe. They really enjoy lessons, school clubs and meeting friends. The interest and challenge that the good curriculum provides is promoting accelerated progress. For example, an on-going project on looking after the environment, and the regular use of computers and games across the school, engages pupils well. They share a range of religious festivals, which gives them a good insight into the diversity of British culture. Most pupils come to school regularly making attendance average.

Up to 40% of the 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?

- Improve teaching by making better use of assessment information to plan work that closely matches the needs of each pupil so they are fully challenged.
- Sharpen the quality of marking and other feedback to older pupils so that they better understand how to improve their work.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - making clear the school's expectations about the roles and responsibilities of subject leaders
 - ensuring that subject leaders have a consistent impact on pupils' attainment and progress.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, enjoy learning, and their achievement is satisfactory. The progress of girls has accelerated and they now make progress at the same rate as the boys. Pupils who are at an early stage of learning English make rapid gains in the language because of the expert help they receive from staff. Pupils are keen to learn and take pride in their work. Their research and planning skills are quickly improving and many are becoming proficient as independent learners. Pupils enjoy discussing ideas in small groups and with their class, which is promoting their self-confidence, communication skills and understanding. This was seen when Year 6 pupils were well engaged writing a recount of their visit the previous day to a Sikh temple. Vocabulary about the visit was discussed and, after talking with partners, pupils used these words, with appropriate punctuation, to rapidly develop their writing. At the close of the session, they used highlighters to show themselves and their partners how well they had completed the task and how much progress they had made. Occasionally, pupils find their work either too hard or too easy and this slows their progress.

Pupils know precisely how to keep themselves and others safe. They do their best to eat a healthy diet and take plenty of exercise, and this is reflected in the school's national recognition in this area. Pupils are keen to take responsibility. For example, the school council regularly passes its views to the headteacher so action can be taken. Older pupils act as 'Squabble Busters' at playtimes, helping younger ones to resolve disagreements.

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Pupils collect generously for charity. Positive attitudes and average standards in their basic skills mean pupils' preparation for secondary school and future work is satisfactory. Pupils reflect maturely on their own feelings and those of others, for example, in the way they treat their less fortunate classmates. A strong moral code supports their good behaviour. Pupils work productively in teams. These opportunities contribute effectively to their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
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	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?

Teachers have developed skills that enable them to plan interesting and relevant work that engages pupils well. Generally, they are raising their expectations of the effort and progress that pupils need to make. They make good use of resources, such as electronic whiteboards, to develop learning. The impact of this strengthening of teaching was evident in the good progress shown by the Year 2 results in 2010. In Years 1 and 2, teachers' questions and the tasks they set make pupils think deeply. The challenge provided by teaching is inconsistent in Years 3 to 6. Targets set for pupils are challenging and pupils have a growing understanding of them.

The curriculum supports aspects of pupils' personal development well. Recent changes to the English and mathematics curriculum, to give learning more relevance, have given these subjects greater appeal, especially to the boys. This is contributing to increasing rates of progress. The school has developed a strong awareness of environmental issues

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by exploiting pupils' interests and is extending, for instance, opportunities to study the natural world. A good range of well-attended clubs and many educational visits, including a residential stay in Hathersage, add to pupils' enjoyment of school and widen their horizons.

Staff use their detailed knowledge of each pupil expertly to provide them with outstanding pastoral care. Pupils with a concern turn confidently to an adult knowing that it will be quickly resolved. The tracking of academic progress gives accurate information that teachers use to give good individual support. This enables the school to provide effective support, through one-to-one tuition, for pupils who are falling behind and help them catch up. While safeguarding arrangements are good, the exceptional quality of pastoral care and relationships between staff and pupils give the pupils very high levels of confidence in their safety and security in school.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive very sympathetic support and individual learning programmes that mean they join in all that the school offers. The school works closely with many external agencies and its targeted support for the small number of pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable is extremely effective. A particular outcome is that their self-confidence increases so that they, in turn, help others. The level of attendance this year shows that the school's strong focus on this and its effective work with pupils, parents and carers to improve attendance is proving successful. The provision of breakfast is appreciated by pupils, who feel able to start the day well supported by the school.

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?

Leaders articulate clearly to staff their ambitious targets and their plans to make the school better. The English and mathematics subject leaders take a high level of responsibility for checking standards in their areas and ensuring they are improving. Leaders have accurately identified needs and, supported by good partnerships with other schools, have provided successful training that has sharpened teachers' skills. One example of this is teachers' better understanding of how to make English and mathematics lessons interesting and relevant. Governance is good. The governing body is very supportive of the school. Governors' good understanding of data means that they are able to challenge the school over its performance and rigorously hold leaders to account. Through links with subjects and staff, the governing body has an up-to-date view of what is happening in the school and this is helping to improve provision.

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Regular homework, valuable help and advice given to parents and carers, and specialist courses in literacy and numeracy are examples of the school's good support for parents and carers for improving children's learning at home. Liaison through the innovative 'parents' panel' means their voice is heard and acted upon. The school puts its commitment to equal opportunities at the centre of its ethos and the success of its plans to remedy previous gender differences in progress shows that its policies are having a good impact. The thorough way that school carefully checks the progress of different groups of pupils reflects the school's strong commitment to promoting equal opportunities and tackling discrimination.

Safety and safeguarding have a high priority. The school makes rigorous checks on the suitability of adults to work with pupils. Child protection procedures are robust, regularly updated and fully meet current safeguarding requirements. The school is a happy and harmonious society in which pupils from all backgrounds integrate well. It promotes community cohesion well in the local area. It is promoting religious cohesion through the celebration of a range of religious festivals that encourage an understanding of Sikhism and Christian worship, for instance. The school is developing links with schools in Uganda and Australia that supports pupils' understanding of global diversity.

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	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Boys and girls make similarly good progress in all areas of learning because teaching is good. Children are well behaved and polite to each other and to adults and their personal development is good. Parents feel well informed about their child's progress and are happy with the advice they are given about how to help their learning at home. Children are very safe and well cared for in the stimulating classrooms and large outdoor learning area.

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Teachers' good planning ensures there is an appropriate balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities which promotes good learning. In one lesson for the youngest ones, for example, children developed their speaking skills as they played outside in their boats, buses and trains, acting out the roles of drivers, passengers and conductors, demonstrating their independence and their skills of collaboration. In a number session children happily guessed the number of beans in their boxes as they developed their estimating skills, improving their appreciation of number. Occasionally progress slows when the resources available do not fully extend the opportunities for learning.

The training provided for adults who work in the Early Years Foundation Stage is promoting their teaching skills well. Leaders are correctly focusing on the fine tuning of assessments to make planning more precise and ensure further acceleration in the children's progress.

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

A lower proportion of parents and carers than is typical returned a questionnaire. Their responses showed they are very happy with the quality of education the school provides. Some added positive comments about how much their child enjoyed school and how confident they were about their child's safety. Many parents and carers said they felt the headteacher led the school well and that teachers were welcoming and approachable. Inspection evidence endorses these positive comments. A small number of responses described individual concerns. Inspectors explored these concerns with the school and took the evidence into account in their findings.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Springbank 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 33 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 210 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	23	70	9	27	1	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	27	82	4	12	1	3	1	3
My school informs me about my child's progress	22	67	9	27	1	3	1	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	17	52	14	42	1	3	1	3
The teaching is good at this school	20	61	11	33	1	3	1	3
The school helps me to support my child's learning	22	67	9	27	1	3	1	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	64	11	33	1	3	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)	16	48	12	36	0	0	1	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	21	64	9	27	2	6	1	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	20	61	10	30	3	9	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	24	73	6	18	2	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	23	70	9	27	0	0	1	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	26	79	5	15	1	3	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and 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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



19 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Springbank Primary School, Nottingham, NG16 3BE

Thank you for being so polite and friendly when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our visit and having the opportunity to talk to some of you and to see you in lessons and at play. I especially enjoyed joining a group from Reception as they played at going on their journeys, and seeing older pupils singing heartily in assembly. You are rightly proud of the school's happy atmosphere in which you all get on so well together. Springbank is a satisfactory school and it is improving. Here are some of the things we found out:

- your teachers ensure that you get off to a good start in Reception
- you told us you enjoy school and feel very safe and secure
- you try your very best to eat a healthy diet and take plenty of exercise
- your behaviour is good
- you have good relationships with your teachers and you try hard for them
- the school has got good relationships with your parents and carers
- the curriculum provides you with exciting clubs and visits, which you enjoy
- adults look after you exceptionally well and are always ready to help you
- the headteacher and staff are working hard to make the school get better.

We have asked the school to do three things to help you do even better in your learning:

- make sure teachers always provide you with work that is neither too hard nor too easy, so that you make better progress
- provide older pupils with more information about how they can improve their work
- ensure that all staff with responsibility for subjects have a good effect on your learning and progress.

All of you can help the school by continuing to try your best in lessons, behaving well and supporting your classmates. We wish you all the best in the future.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Stafford

Lead Inspector

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