

# Springfield School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123334
<b>Local Authority</b>	Oxfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	359413
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 June 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Charles Hackett

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	83
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ted Moore
<b>Headteacher</b>	Emma Lawley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 May 2008
<b>School address</b>	Cedar Drive Witney OX28 1AR
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed 11 lessons, covering all key stages, and saw 11 teachers. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at lesson planning, data on pupils' achievements, a range of school policies, some pupils' progress files and met representatives of the school council. The responses to questionnaires from 27 parents and carers, nine pupils and 14 staff were considered.

The inspectors reviewed many aspects of the school's work. They looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How well the school can demonstrate the rates of progress of individual pupils.
- Whether the curriculum for pupils in each key stage offers appropriate learning opportunities and if having mixed-age classes is effective.
- The impact that sharing accommodation with mainstream schools has on the pupils.
- The effectiveness of having an acting headteacher and deputy on the quality of leadership and management of the school.

## Information about the school

Springfield provides for pupils with severe and profound and multiple learning difficulties. A significant number of pupils have additional complex needs such as autistic spectrum disorders. The school is based on two sites. The primary department shares accommodation with a mainstream primary school. Most of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are integrated with mainstream children in a separate nursery provision. Secondary pupils are educated in premises in the grounds of a mainstream secondary school. There are four times as many boys as girls on roll. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals and the number from ethnic backgrounds other than White British heritage are below the national average. Until recently, the school has been managed by an acting headteacher and deputy headteacher, although the acting headteacher has now been appointed as the substantive headteacher.

**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

Springfield is a good school. The impact of its work on pupils' personal development is excellent. As a result, all groups of pupils' understanding of how to be safe, the benefits of healthy living, their contribution to the school and wider community, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are all excellent. A major strength of the school is the seamless manner in which Springfield pupils of different ages integrate with their mainstream peers. Parents and carers fully appreciate this. 'We really value the opportunities she has for mixing/integrating with mainstream kids' is how one parent commented on this. Outstanding examples of highly effective integration were seen during the inspection, including a lesson where children in the Early Years Foundation Stage happily mixed and learnt with children from mainstream, known as their 'foundation friends'.

Staff know the pupils very well and ensure that the plans and strategies to care and support them are detailed and very effective. The excellent links established with other agencies and parents and carers support this further. The curriculum provides pupils of all ages with a wide range of experiences and gives good priority to their communication, language and literacy development. Although there are pupils of different ages in the same class, the high quality of individual planning ensures that pupils are not disadvantaged. For children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, the excellent provision ensures they make outstanding progress.

Pupils make good progress in their learning. This was very apparent in all the lessons observed during the inspection. A key element is the consistently high quality of lesson planning. This makes very good use of assessment information to plan what pupils are expected to learn during each individual lesson and over a course of lessons. There is a rigorous system for regularly setting pupils challenging improvement targets. These are monitored very closely by senior staff to ensure that in achieving the targets pupils are making good progress. A range of achievement data has been collected on pupils' progress but the school acknowledges that this is not always sufficiently well collated to give an accurate picture of the good progress pupils are making.

There is very clear evidence that pupils enjoy being in school. This was observed in many lessons and at playtimes. As one parent wrote in responding to the inspection questionnaire, 'We can't thank the school enough for putting the smile back on her face.' Although the attendance of a few pupils is affected by their medical conditions, attendance overall is above average, which is further testament to how much pupils enjoy their lessons and other activities.

The school is well led and managed by its newly appointed headteacher. She has ensured that staff morale is high and that work practices are very consistent. The governing body's strong commitment to securing high expectations for the school was shown by members'

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meticulous approach to securing the best possible candidate for the substantive post of headteacher. The quality of self-evaluation is good and accurately reflects the strengths of the school. It is not, though, used sufficiently well to inform the choice of priorities in the school development plan. Nevertheless, the impressive development of the school to its present level of provision and the strong sense of commitment from staff and governors to providing a high quality of education for all pupils shows that the capacity for sustained improvement is good.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the data collected on pupils' achievements are thoroughly collated to accurately portray all aspects of the good progress pupils make in their academic and personal development to further inform planning.
- Make more use of the information gained through self-evaluation in deciding on priorities for school development.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The good progress pupils make in lessons is often reflected in the enjoyment they get from learning. This was very evident in a secondary physical education lesson for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties. These pupils laughed with excitement as they experienced massage and made exceptional progress as they investigated a range of equipment in the gym. Likewise, Key Stage 4 pupils taking part in a horticultural project off site enjoyed describing what they had been doing and cooperating with each other in completing the tasks set. This ability to work together was evident in many lessons. It included pupils with autistic spectrum disorders who can find such cooperation difficult. For example, in a geography lesson for Years 2, 3 and 4, pupils worked collaboratively as they explored sand and sea as part of Barnaby Bear's travels to Australia. Different groups of pupils were observed making good progress in lessons. In a lesson for Key Stage 3 pupils, most of whom have autistic spectrum disorders, pupils successfully joined in a short skittles game to count numbers up to five. They then successfully engaged in individual number tasks based on their assessed levels of ability. In a communication and language session for children in the Nursery group, children showed good progress in using signs and symbols to respond to staff.

Achievement is good and all groups achieve equally well. There is a wealth of data to confirm this, although it does not, in its present form, give a full picture of the range of pupils' achievements.

Behaviour is good both in class and in other situations, such as at lunchtimes when pupils eat in the same halls as their primary and secondary peers. Pupils' good attendance supports the good progress they make in developing their economic well-being. This is confirmed by their successful completion of work experience placements and by their involvement in horticultural enterprise activities. Their participation in a recent Oxford Consumer Challenge quiz demonstrates the positive interest they have taken in this.

Pupils state how proud they are of their school and how safe they feel in school and when out on trips with the staff. Through the participation of their representatives on the school council, they are very active in sharing with staff their views on the school community. This has been extended by having a pupil representative on the Oxford schools' council.

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Further evidence of pupils' excellent understanding of the benefits of exercise is shown in a register of the many outside clubs, such as Brownies, tag rugby and sailing, that a large majority have joined.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	*
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	
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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

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

\* In some special schools inspectors do not make a judgement about attainment in relation to expectations of the pupils' age.

## How effective is the provision?

The excellent opportunities pupils have to be educated alongside their peers are used very effectively. This was evident in an Early Years Foundation Stage lesson where five children from the mainstream school joined five Springfield children. All children integrated so well that making identification of which school children came from was difficult. They engaged in role play based on the Little Red Riding Hood story and enjoyed investigating the varied range of resources available. In this lesson, as in many others, teaching assistants worked very effectively with teachers in supporting the pupils whatever their special needs to enable them to access learning. This was the case in a lesson at the start of the day for Years 4, 5 and 6 pupils. The teaching assistants were able to ensure that all pupils could respond to instructions and were very well prepared for their timetable for the rest of the day.

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Lessons are well structured, often with starter activities that interest the pupils. This was demonstrated in two mathematics lessons observed. In one lesson, pupils had a game of money bingo and in the other, pupils enjoyed taking part in money dominoes. Just occasionally, the pace of activities slows and this reduces the rate of pupils' learning.

The curriculum has recently been reviewed and extended, and this is ensuring that as pupils move into different key stages they build on previous experiences and prior attainment. Planning is effectively differentiated and the curriculum is adapted where necessary to personalise learning experiences to meet the individual needs of pupils at each key stage. Activities offered include residential experiences and many extended curriculum clubs. Some opportunities for pupils to gain external accreditation for their achievements exist but the school recognises the need to extend these further.

Very detailed individual support plans ensure that the approach of staff to supporting pupils is consistent and effective, and this was observed during the inspection. Staff follow behaviour management plans very carefully if, for example, a pupil with complex needs refuses to undertake a task. This ensures that the learning of other pupils is not affected. It also ensures that the individual concerned is safe, and able to move on and re-focus on learning after the episode. Excellent use is made of the strong links that have been established with other agencies to support the very high quality of care and support provided for each pupil.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## **How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher works effectively with her staff team to ensure that each pupil's needs are comprehensively addressed. Acting appointments within the senior leadership structure have not adversely affected the effectiveness of leadership and management. Through effective monitoring, the senior staff ensure that appropriate work is being planned for each pupil and that challenging individual targets are set. This, together with the strong commitment of all staff to meet the needs of all pupils, brings consistency to the high standards of provision that exist across the school. Work to develop the roles of subject leaders has begun and is already bringing about a wider distribution of effective leadership and management across the school.

Good progress has been made since the previous inspection and areas requiring improvement have been tackled effectively. There is a strong determination throughout the school to ensure the best possible provision to meet the needs of all pupils, to promote equality and to avoid any forms of discrimination. Pupils' good achievement is evidence of the effectiveness of the provision made to meet individual needs. Good

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development plans show how the school hopes to develop over the next three years but not all priorities are linked closely to the areas identified in self-evaluation as needing further development.

The governing body plays its part well in holding the school to account. It also, together with the senior staff, gives a good emphasis to safeguarding. A nominated governor and senior staff have ensured that detailed policies and procedures are rigorous and that risk assessments are all in place. The excellent working relationship with both the primary and secondary mainstream schools ensures that all matters relating to the accommodation are effectively addressed.

The excellent relationships developed with parents and carers are confirmed by their responses to the inspection questionnaire and the comments parents and carers made to the inspector when he met them as they collected their children from school. Prominence has been given to enabling pupils to engage in community activities and, together with pupils' own involvement in the school community, this is ensuring that community cohesion is promoted well. A rigorous audit of provision has led to further work being planned to provide pupils with a greater understanding of the cultures and values of people from different ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

**Early Years Foundation Stage**

The children in the Early Years Foundation Stage enjoy a very good start to their school lives. Excellent collaborative working with the mainstream school facilitates an inclusive approach that meets the diverse needs of all children. The use of the foundation friends promotes communication and literacy development through providing good models for the use of language. Children enjoy being in school, benefiting from the stimulating environment and well-planned purposeful activities that meet individual needs



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exceptionally well. These ensure that they make very good progress in developing their skills, knowledge and understanding in all expected areas of learning.

There is an excellent balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities which consolidate learning very effectively. All staff work well together, successfully encouraging pupils to be as independent as possible. The excellent relationships with parents and carers and other agencies means there is a consistent approach to supporting each child. The provision is led and managed very effectively. The work is monitored and evaluated very well and there is a clear vision for the development of the provision. Rigorous attention is given to safeguarding and all statutory welfare arrangements are met.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

## Views of parents and carers

An above-average proportion of parents and carers responded to the Ofsted questionnaire. Without exception, they are very positive about the school and the impact it has on their children and families. 'The school supports the whole family' and 'This school has been fantastic' are typical of the comments made. A repeated theme is the way the school increased the confidence of their child. For example, one parent wrote 'The change in our son since September has been remarkable •.he has become more confident and made significant academic progress.' The conclusions of the inspection team were similarly very positive.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Springfield 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 inspector received 27 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 83 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	25	93	2	7	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	23	85	4	15	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	22	81	5	19	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	78	6	22	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	21	78	6	22	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	20	74	7	26	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	78	6	22	0	0	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)	21	78	6	22	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	24	89	3	11	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	20	74	7	26	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	81	5	19	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	22	81	5	19	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	26	96	1	4	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	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](http://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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



23 June 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Springfield School, Witney, OX28 1AR**

Thank you for being so helpful when Mrs Walker and I came to your school recently. We very much enjoyed meeting you all and a special big 'thank you' to the council members who told us about the school. All of you were extremely polite towards us and helped us carry out the inspection. You told us how much you like being in school and that all the staff work hard to help you.

Your school is good, with some aspects that are outstanding. We can see that you enjoy being there and that you make good progress in your learning. You do especially well in understanding how to be safe, live healthily and in contributing to the school and local community. All the staff work very well together and they communicate very well with your parents and carers and the other agencies that support you and your families. We can see there are lots of activities you all enjoy taking part in such as doing physical education in the hall and engaging in the Propeller project. The school is very well led by your headteacher. She has developed a staff team who are all determined to do the best they can for you.

To help it be even better, we have made just two suggestions to the school.

- Find even more ways of showing how well you are doing.
- Make better use of what is known about the school to plan improvements.

Keep working hard and doing your best to help the school.

Yours sincerely

Charles Hackett Lead inspector

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