

Spring Park Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131464
Local Authority	Croydon
Inspection number	381346
Inspection dates	20–21 September 2011
Reporting inspector	Jackie Krafft 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	376
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Syreeta Campbell
Headteacher	Stuart Roberts (Executive headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	27–28 January 2009
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. They observed 18 lessons and saw all 15 teachers. Inspectors spoke with parents and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, looked at pupils' books, the school's data on pupils' attainment and progress, the school's improvement plan, examples of the school's monitoring, minutes of meetings of the governing body and a range of policies. The team analysed questionnaire responses from 170 pupils, 53 parents and carers and 29 staff.

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

- Whether the quality of teaching is improving and raising attainment, particularly in English and Key Stage 1, by helping pupils to make more rapid progress.
- How effectively all leaders and managers are evaluating the school's work and taking action to drive improvements.
- Whether the care, guidance and support given to vulnerable pupils, those who are new to the school and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are strengths.
- The impact of changes to the curriculum on engaging pupils, including boys and those who are underachieving.

Information about the school

Spring Park is a larger-than-average primary school with a nursery. It serves a culturally diverse community that experiences high levels of economic and social disadvantage. A third of pupils are of White British heritage. The next largest groups are from Black African and Asian backgrounds. A large number of pupils speak English as an additional language, a small minority of which are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is high. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to that found nationally. The main needs of these pupils are identified as moderate learning difficulties. A high number of pupils join and leave the school at different times. There have been a number of staff changes since the previous inspection, including to the leadership of the school. The executive headteacher joined in April 2011. He is a Local Leader of Education and also the headteacher of West Thornton Primary Academy. He leads the school with the acting headteacher and two deputy headteachers who took up post in September 2011.

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

3

Main findings

Spring Park is improving following a turbulent period of change. It provides its pupils with a satisfactory education. Parents and carers, pupils, staff and governors are positive about the school, and those who spoke with inspectors recognise that recent changes have brought greater stability and improvements. As one parent said, 'You can see the difference, it's getting much better.' The decline in standards over the past few years in Key Stage 1 has been reversed and a focus on reading has resulted in improvements throughout the school. Improvements in mathematics, however, are more variable. Although standards are below average by the time pupils leave the school, the progress they make from their low starting points is being accelerated. The school tracks carefully the progress that pupils make to identify those who are falling behind. It provides a range of good additional support to help those who need it to overcome barriers to their learning, particularly the most vulnerable and those who are new to the school. Consequently, pupils in all year groups, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language, are now making satisfactory progress in their learning.

The executive headteacher is driving improvements and has very recently established a strong team of senior leaders to support this. Through systematic and accurate self-evaluation, they have a clear understanding of what needs to be improved. Rapid action taken to eradicate inadequate teaching has been successful. Evidence from the lessons seen, work in pupils' books and the school's own monitoring information shows that although there are examples of good teaching and learning, which is contributing to improving the progress that pupils make, this has not yet been secured across the school as a whole. Relationships are good so pupils behave well and are keen to participate in lessons. Teachers plan tasks for different groups of pupils and make effective use of teaching assistants to support pupils who need extra help. However, their use of assessment information is variable, so expectations of all pupils are not consistently high and some tasks lack sufficient challenge to maintain a good pace of learning. The effective use of learning targets and good quality marking to help pupils understand how they can improve is not embedded.

Children enjoy an appropriate range of practical activities so are interested, make choices and grow in confidence in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff are making observations of children's learning and these contribute to planning the next steps. However, some have not yet received training in assessment methods and activities are not consistently providing enough challenge to move children's learning

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and development on more quickly. A safe, welcoming environment is created and children are getting to know the routines of the day, but expectations of behaviour are not consistently applied across all the Reception classes.

Governors have an accurate understanding of the school's performance and the effectiveness of the governing body. For example, they recognise that they need to engage more systematically with pupils, parents and carers. They are supportive of the actions being taken by the school's senior leaders to improve teaching. However, their monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance are not yet rigorous enough to enable them to challenge leaders and hold them to account robustly. Middle leaders are involved appropriately in monitoring the quality of provision in their subjects and supporting the professional development of staff. However, this is not yet embedded consistently across all curriculum areas so their impact on improvement is variable. Senior leaders have implemented a comprehensive plan for improvement and a detailed programme of monitoring and evaluation. This has already improved attendance, accelerated the progress that pupils make and enhanced the quality of teaching. This demonstrates that the school has satisfactory capacity to improve further.

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 the quality of teaching to raise attainment in all key stages by:
 - ensuring teachers have high expectations of all pupils and maintain a good pace of learning throughout each lesson
 - using assessment information to match appropriately challenging activities to the full range of pupils' different needs
 - making consistent use of pupils' targets and teachers' marking comments to show pupils how they need to improve.
- Ensure children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a good start by:
 - using information from observations and assessment to provide challenging activities that are well matched to the full range of children's abilities and move learning forward more quickly
 - consistently applying clear expectations of behaviour in the Reception classes
 - training all staff in assessment methods.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of the governing body by implementing rigorous procedures to:
 - monitor the impact of the school's work on improving outcomes for pupils
 - challenge leaders and hold them to account for raising attainment and improving the quality of provision
 - engage more in the school's self-evaluation and planning for improvement
 - systematically seek and act on the views of pupils, parents and carers.

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Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language, say they enjoy school, feel safe and learn a lot. Work seen in lessons and pupils' books shows that, from their low starting points, the progress and achievement of all groups are satisfactory. Their literacy, numeracy and social skills are improving and prepare them adequately for the next stage in their education. However, their skills in using information and communication technology (ICT) are less well developed. More pupils are attending school regularly. Those who spoke with inspectors explained that they feel safe because behaviour in the school has improved. They know who to go to if they are worried and are confident that any incidents of bullying are dealt with. Pupils, including those with challenging behaviour, are learning effectively how to manage any distractions that may get in the way of their learning. In the lessons observed, pupils had good relationships with their teachers and other adults. They knew what was expected of them so responded quickly and collaborated with each other well. They were keen to answer questions and participated enthusiastically. This was particularly evident when they had opportunities to discuss their ideas together or take part in practical activities or games, for example when learning how to count in Spanish. Pupils concentrated well and remained focused when activities were appropriately challenging, but this wavered when tasks demanded less of them.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, for example when using the internet and crossing the road. They take part in regular physical activity and talk with confidence about the importance of eating healthily. They also understand well that smoking and alcohol present health hazards. Pupils make a good contribution to improving the school and local community, for example through running the school council and taking part in projects to improve local play areas. They socialise with each other well and those who are new to the school are made to feel welcome and involved. Pupils develop a satisfactory awareness of cultural and religious diversity.

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	2
Pupils' behaviour	2

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

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The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

The school provides its pupils with an attractive, well-ordered learning environment which contributes to their well-being and positive attitudes to learning. Eye-catching displays and welcoming reading and role-play areas are designed to encourage pupils, particularly boys and those who are reluctant to read, to participate.

In the most effective lessons seen, which usually resulted in pupils making good progress, common features included:

- detailed planning
- maintaining a brisk pace through all parts of the lesson
- varied activities which were well matched to pupils' different needs and kept all pupils engaged
- good use of practical resources, such as photographs and games
- frequent opportunities for pupils to talk together, share ideas and learn from each other
- skilful adult questioning to involve all pupils, encourage them to explain their reasoning, assess their understanding and challenge their thinking
- good use of vocabulary
- explicit links to prior learning and next steps.

When such features were less evident, pupils made satisfactory rather than good progress.

The curriculum meets pupils' needs satisfactorily. There is an appropriate focus on developing their literacy and numeracy skills, although opportunities to promote their ICT skills are underdeveloped. The curriculum has been reviewed and changes made to ensure topics are engaging boys more effectively and are more closely matched to pupils' interests. Visits and practical activities enrich the curriculum appropriately. Evidence in the lessons observed indicates that this is having an impact but changes, particularly in providing opportunities to develop problem-solving skills, are not yet firmly established.

Well-targeted pastoral support and interventions, based on a thorough understanding of pupils' specific needs, are helping pupils to overcome barriers and access the curriculum well. Good links with a range of other agencies and specialists are making a strong contribution to keeping pupils safe and improving their

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behaviour and attendance. Additional adults support pupils' learning and pastoral needs in lessons effectively. As a result, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language are making similar progress to their peers.

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	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders are thorough in ensuring that pupils are safeguarded well. This makes a strong contribution to pupils feeling safe and well cared for. Relevant safety checks and risk assessments are undertaken systematically and staff are well trained. Leaders understand the diverse needs of the families that the school serves. Appropriate steps are taken to ensure that all groups of pupils are provided with equal opportunities to participate fully in school life and achieve as well as each other. The school is a cohesive community and the curriculum promotes the celebration of religious and cultural diversity satisfactorily. There are relevant links with the local community, for example through the use of volunteer readers, the church and other local schools. However, the systematic planning for, and evaluation of, how the school promotes an understanding of wider national and global issues are not yet established. The high expectations promoted by a strong senior leadership team are understood and supported by all staff. One member of staff wrote, 'I feel Spring Park is now moving forward in the best interest of children and staff.' Systems have been put in place to achieve the school's aims and are having an impact. However, leaders recognise that much is still relatively new and not yet embedded consistently at all levels in the school.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3

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The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children learn routines, are interested and get involved in an appropriate range of indoor and outdoor learning activities which cover all areas of learning. Adults are welcoming, pay good attention to children’s welfare needs and offer encouragement and praise consistently. An appropriate balance of activities led by adults and those which children can choose helps to develop their confidence and independence. As a result, children settle well, enjoy their time in the Nursery and Reception classes and make satisfactory gains in their learning. However, there are inconsistencies in the expectations of children’s behaviour in the Reception classes. Adults understand how children learn and develop but have not yet established robust assessment and observation systems. Activities, therefore, are not yet consistently well matched to children’s needs. Consequently, they are not routinely providing children with appropriately challenging learning experiences to help them make faster progress, particularly in the development of their early reading and writing skills. The new Early Years Foundation Stage leader has been instrumental in improving the learning environment and is taking appropriate steps to involve parents in supporting their children’s learning, but rightly recognises this is at the early stages of development.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

The proportion of parents and carers who returned the questionnaire was small, but most were positive about their child’s experience of school. A very large majority agreed their children are kept safe and enjoy school. A few parents felt their child did not make enough progress and the school did not meet their child’s needs or prepare them well for the future. Inspectors identified that this is improving but agree that more remains to be done. The school’s leaders are aware of this too, and are taking appropriate steps to make improvements. The school also wants to involve parents more in their child’s learning, which a few parents would like to be improved also.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Spring Park 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 53 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 376 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	31	58	17	32	2	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	31	58	20	38	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	22	42	24	45	2	4	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	34	27	51	5	9	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	22	42	26	49	3	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	18	34	24	45	5	9	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	40	27	51	1	2	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)	15	28	23	43	5	9	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	16	30	22	42	7	13	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	32	23	43	4	8	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	26	28	53	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	15	28	23	43	5	9	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	22	42	24	45	3	6	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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.



22 September 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Spring Park Primary School, Croydon CR0 8HQ

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. We especially enjoyed talking with you, looking at your work and seeing you in lessons.

Your school is a welcoming and an attractive place to learn. You and your parents told us that you enjoy school and feel safe. Your teachers and other adults care for you very well and have made the school a safe place to be. You also told us that things have been changing for the better recently. Lessons are more interesting and fun. You get extra help and support if you need it. All this is helping you to learn more. You generally behave well and are polite and considerate towards each other. More of you are coming to school regularly which is also helping you to learn more. It was good to see you having fun on the playground with all the outdoor equipment at lunchtime. We were also impressed to hear how well some of you could count in Spanish.

Your school is providing you with a satisfactory education. There are lots of things that it does well and some things that could be even better. To help improve the school even more we have asked the staff to make more of your lessons as good as the best ones we saw. That will help you make even more progress in your learning. We have also asked them to make sure that the children in the Nursery and Reception classes get off to a really good start by learning even more than they do now. We want the school's governors to help your headteacher and teachers more too. They can do this by regularly checking how well the things that the school is doing are helping you to learn and also by asking you and your parents what you think can be done better.

Thank you again for such a warm welcome and we hope you carry on enjoying being at school and working hard in lessons.

Yours sincerely

Jackie Krafft
Her Majesty's Inspector

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