

Springfield Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121792
Local Authority	Hackney
Inspection number	380320
Inspection dates	1–2 December 2011
Reporting inspector	Sarah McDermott

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	248
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gwen Gutzmore
Headteacher	Fiona Judge (head of school) / Sian Davies (executive principal)
Date of previous school inspection	9–10 June 2009
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The team observed 12 lessons taught by 12 teachers. The inspectors held meetings with the head of school and executive principal, a member of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They scrutinised pupils' work and looked at the data the school had collected on pupils' academic progress and attendance. They also looked at the school development plan, investigated procedures for keeping pupils safe and analysed the responses to questionnaires from pupils, staff and 63 parents and carers.

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

- The extent to which Brazilians, Black Africans and more-able pupils make equally good progress to other pupils in English and mathematics.
- The extent to which pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good or better progress.
- The effectiveness of all leaders and managers, including members of the governing body, in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and improving the pupils' performance.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. Almost all pupils are from minority ethnic groups, predominantly of Brazilian or Polish heritages. Nearly three quarters of the pupils speak English as an additional language, with a third of these at the early stages of learning the language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. Their needs mostly relate to speech, language and communication difficulties. Nearly half of pupils join or leave the school outside the usual times.

The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises one Nursery class and one Reception class. Children in the Nursery class attend either full or part time. All other year groups have one class, other than two classes in Year 1. The school manages its own breakfast club on site. It works closely with four other primary schools in a federation sharing an executive principal. The school holds the United Nations Rights Respecting Schools award and has National Healthy Schools status.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Springfield Community Primary is an outstanding school. The school has moved from strength to strength under the extremely capable leadership of the head of school and the executive principal. They exude drive and passion to ensure all pupils shine in their talents and get the most out of their education. The senior leadership team is clear about strengths but not complacent and knows there is still more to be done in raising attainment in some aspects. The school works very effectively with the federation to share good practice in teaching and the curriculum. The governing body is very knowledgeable and gives thoughtful and successful strategic direction. In just over three years the school has improved from needing significant improvement to being a beacon of excellence. One parent remarked, 'This school has improved 100%!' This highlights the school's excellent capacity for sustained improvement.

Pupils arrive at the beginning of the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills well below expected levels for their age. Also many pupils start school at other times with no or very little English language. Staff have built up notable expertise in helping pupils who speak English as an additional language to quickly grasp language skills and grow in great confidence in their adopted country. One Brazilian parent commented, 'My son's reading and letter recognition are amazing already – I am very impressed!' All pupils, whatever their ethnic heritage, make impressive progress and leave at the end of Year 6 with attainment in line with national averages. More-able pupils make equally strong progress because teachers set them appropriately challenging tasks. With carefully pinpointed support in lessons and groups outside class, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make just as rapid progress. The quality of teaching is outstanding. The headteacher and executive principal have very high expectations of teachers, setting them individual action plans and frequently checking teaching is having as positive an impact as possible on pupils' progress. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning because the curriculum is lively, creative and very well suited to their interests and backgrounds. On occasion teachers miss opportunities, particularly for pupils who speak minimal English, to raise their attainment further by ensuring they fully understand the meaning of new words once they have learnt the basic reading techniques.

Parents and carers are very pleased with all the school does for their children and feel very well involved in helping their children progress in their learning. Pupils are exceptionally safe at school due to excellent care, guidance and support. One mother commented, 'The staff at Springfield have steered my children into being

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independent, motivated and conscientious young students. Their desire to learn and their love of Springfield leaves me overwhelmed at the wonderful future that lies ahead.' Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent and as a result, pupils from a wealth of different backgrounds and countries get on very well with each other, a fact acknowledged in the school's United Nations award. Behaviour is exemplary and pupils have a wonderful sparkle to their learning. They have a genuine concern for the planet and are excellent ambassadors for healthy and environmentally friendly living. The school is preparing pupils exceptionally well to be committed and active members of a multicultural society.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the attainment of pupils, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage, in English by July 2012 by:
 - ensuring teachers provide plenty of opportunities for pupils to understand and extend their spoken and written vocabulary once they have learnt to recognise and spell words.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Most pupils who transfer into Year 1 have skills below the levels expected for their age and some still have a very limited grasp of the English language. A significant number of pupils arrive at different points across the key stages with limited knowledge of English language, often with previous disjointed education. Pupils make excellent progress so that by the time they leave at the end of Year 6, their attainment in English and mathematics is broadly average and they achieve well. While pupils make good progress in learning new words, on occasion a few are not sufficiently fluent in understanding the meaning of the vocabulary to improve their writing. All groups of pupils add significantly more value to their education than the national average for similar groups. Pupils are extremely enthusiastic learners. Lessons are vibrant and extremely productive occasions because pupils are hungry to find out more and cannot wait to get down to work. Pupils relish sharing ideas with each other. In an excellent Year 4 mathematics lesson, pupils made the most of their talking partners to extend their learning and particularly to help classmates who speak less English. Pupils are very clear about expected routines, quickly finding their books and pens and producing very neat and tidy work. They tackle exercises independently, confident in having a go even when the task is tricky. All pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve their work and attain higher levels.

Pupils arrive each morning with a spring in their step. They overwhelmingly agree that they are happy at school because of a warm welcome from their teachers and an exciting range of activities each day. Attendance is above average. Pupils have an excellent understanding of safety and know how to avoid dangers on roads, railways

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and when using the internet. They appreciate the importance of a healthy diet and gain much from growing their own vegetables, recognised in the Healthy Schools status. A great many walk to school and participate in clubs such as dance and football. Pupils take on a wide range of jobs around the school such as eco-monitor, playground buddy or councillor. Particularly impressive is the way councillors carry out classroom audits and share ideas with fellow councillors from other federation schools. Pupils are very sociable, mature and sensible – a true credit to the school.

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	3
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils’ behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
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	2
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Teachers are highly capable and enthusiastic. They want to help their pupils to achieve their best, whatever their backgrounds or starting points. All teachers are very well organised and methodical in preparing for lessons. Learning moves along at a good pace because teachers set time limits for tasks to be completed. Teachers collaborate very effectively with teaching assistants to ensure all pupils’ needs are catered for extremely well. Together they are very well trained in delivering thorough and very well-monitored programmes to develop pupils’ knowledge of letters and sounds, although on occasion they omit to check all pupils understand the meaning of new words. Teachers devise very interesting activities which capture pupils’ imaginations brilliantly, particularly involving pupils who speak English as an additional language. In an excellent Year 1 lesson, a small group of pupils with limited English made outstanding progress in their literacy by using a torch in a dark tent to find out more about nocturnal animals to stimulate their story writing imagination. Marking is of a very high standard, with staff training pupils routinely to

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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check and perfect their work.

The curriculum is extremely well adapted so pupils’ learning is of high quality. Curriculum organisation is used as a model of good practice in other schools. Right from the Reception class, pupils are allocated to ability groups for literacy so they can have teaching and support at just the right level. Subjects are threaded into literacy to enliven learning, as in a lesson using the history of Tutankhamun as a writing theme. The school makes a point of introducing memorable experiences and encouraging pupils to aspire to the best. A recent visit to Cambridge University has opened pupils’ eyes to what is possible in the future. The Rights Respecting award recognises the excellent work in promoting rights and respect in all relationships.

Robust and methodical systems to track both academic and pastoral needs means pupils feel particularly well looked after and grow rapidly in confidence. Pupils have a very strong voice in how the school is run. The school has very well-established links with outside professionals to support pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, to make just as strong progress as others. The breakfast club provides an excellent start to the school day with active games and a healthy meal for those attending.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The head of school and executive principal work very well together to lead an extremely committed and enthusiastic team. Morale is high among the staff and ambitious targets are taken in their stride. Accountability for the best achievement is evident at all levels, from subject leaders to class teachers to pupils themselves. The principal and head of school, aided by a very useful bank of tracking information, have a meticulous overview of how individual pupils or groups of pupils are progressing. They are constantly checking what needs to be improved and already have concrete plans to raise attainment further in reading and writing. They are relentless in their focus on improving pupils’ life chances and ensuring each pupil, whatever their background or home language, has equally outstanding opportunities to make the best of their education.

The school is an active member of the federation, contributing to professional development in other schools as well as pooling finances to bring in high quality

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educational training. The governing body is extremely well organised and keeps a close eye on the school’s performance against national standards. It is not reticent in asking difficult questions to hold the school to account. Links with parents and carers are excellent, which is especially impressive when many do not speak English or frequently move house. Staff go out of their way to communicate with families, using translators from the staff or parent body. In return, parents and carers work very hard to support their children’s learning and turn out in force at international celebrations and end of term plays. Safeguarding procedures are robust and extremely effective, with regular checks on proper recruitment procedures and child-protection systems. The site is very secure and potential risks in school or out on trips are assessed very carefully.

The school has a very detailed understanding of the characteristics of its pupils. It very successfully draws on these to enhance the curriculum and extend pupils’ knowledge of each other’s backgrounds. Consequently, pupils get on together exceedingly well and are very proud of the wealth of different cultures and religions in their school. They are well aware what it means to be a good citizen in the local neighbourhood and thoroughly appreciate the literary and historical heritage of the United Kingdom.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle very quickly to school routines because staff create a warm, welcoming atmosphere where children feel safe and confident in their new surroundings. Although a few children are shy at first, soon they make friends with children from many different backgrounds. Children enter Nursery with skills well

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below expectations for their age and make good progress in all areas of learning. Staff concentrate particularly on speaking and listening, well aware that many children have very little knowledge of the English language. Often the day starts with a story involving plenty of repetition of sounds and letters. Throughout the day staff talk to children, describing activities and introducing new vocabulary. Children are well behaved and listen well, but adults sometimes miss chances to encourage children to respond by repeating new words so they really understand the meaning. Children have a good understanding of healthy living through washing their hands, eating fruit and making the most of scooters and the climbing frame. They enjoy their trips on the 'magic carpet' to travel to other countries to find more about different food, dances and clothes.

Staff provide a good range of interesting ways to learn in the classroom and outside in the play area. For example, making gingerbread men not only introduced children to cooking but also improved their numeracy skills by counting out currants for buttons. Useful notes are made on individual learning, so staff can intervene and give extra support if any child is not progressing as expected. Early years staff keep parents and carers well informed on what their children are learning and how they can help from home. Already they have plans to make the large books charting individual progress through photographs and special pieces of work easily accessible so children can delight in and share their achievements with their parents and carers. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has a good understanding of what is going well and what needs improving. She works effectively with the federation to share in the best practice.

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

Fewer parents and carers than average replied to the questionnaire. All parents and carers responding believe their children enjoy school, learn to lead healthy lives and are looked after safely. They all also feel that teaching is good, their children make good progress and that the school is led and managed well. The inspection team concurs with all these positive statements. A very small number have concerns that the school does not take account of their suggestions and concerns. The inspection team judges that the school listens very carefully to parents' and carers' views and inspection evidence indicated that it addresses them positively.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Springfield Community 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 63 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 248 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	47	75	16	25	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	43	68	20	32	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	39	62	23	37	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	34	54	27	43	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	38	60	25	40	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	34	54	26	41	2	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	35	56	24	38	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)	25	40	26	41	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	31	49	26	41	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	48	27	43	2	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	48	25	40	3	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	39	51	22	35	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	45	62	17	27	1	2	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.



5 December 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Springfield Community Primary School, Hackney N16 6DH

Thank you very much for welcoming us to your school. Springfield Community Primary is an outstanding school. You all make excellent progress and leave school with average attainment in English and mathematics. Those of you who arrive speaking very little English make great strides in your learning.

Teaching is outstanding because teachers plan interesting activities and always check no one is falling behind. We think the school provides you with a very exciting range of trips, visitors and clubs. We are particularly impressed with the way you lead very healthy lives, know how to keep yourselves safe and have a very important role in helping to run the school. Your behaviour is outstanding. The head of school, the executive principal and their team lead the school exceedingly well and know precisely what is going well and what needs improving.

To help you reach higher standards in English, we have asked your teachers to ensure that they always explain the meaning of words so you can increase your vocabulary and improve your writing.

We certainly enjoyed our visit to your school. We know that your teachers and their assistants make Springfield Community Primary a very special place for you. All of you can help by continuing to strive to do your best and making your families and the school proud of you.

Yours sincerely

Sarah McDermott
Lead inspector

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