

Springfield Junior School

Springfield Road, Swadlincote, DE11 0BU

Inspection dates

27–28 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures.

- Attainment has declined since the previous inspection. Pupils' achievement is inadequate because there is too much weak teaching that is not securing rapid progress.
- Pupils' literacy and mathematical skills are weak and there are too few opportunities to practise and develop these skills. Writing is sometimes untidy with errors in spelling and punctuation.
- Teaching is inadequate because expectations are not high enough in too many lessons and work is not planned effectively to ensure that pupils of all abilities make enough progress.
- Checks made on the quality of teaching are neither robust enough nor focused sharply on learning and progress.
- School leaders, including the governing body, have not successfully addressed shortcomings in the school's effectiveness. Where improvements have been made, these have not been sustained.
- The school's view of its effectiveness is too positive, especially in relation to how it has improved the quality of teaching.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has the respect of the school's pupils, parents and staff.
- There are examples of good teaching in some classes.
- There have been recent improvements in the attendance of pupils.
- Pupils with autistic spectrum disorders are well supported in the specialist resource base and make good progress.
- Behaviour has improved since the last inspection. Pupils respond well to the new award system.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons. Some were conducted jointly with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and special educational needs coordinator. In addition, the inspection team listened to pupils reading and analysed the work in their books.
- Meetings were held with pupils, parents, the Chair of the Governing Body, staff, including senior leaders, one middle leader, and two representatives of the local authority.
- The inspection took account of six responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as one letter and one telephone call. Questionnaires from members of staff were also analysed.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' current progress and attendance, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

John Hucker, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Mary Hinds	Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Information about this school

- Springfield Junior School is smaller than most primary schools.
- Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the Pupil Premium (additional funding for children in local authority care or known to be eligible for free school meals) is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is higher than the national average. This is also true for pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school has specially resourced provision, the 'balloon room', for 12 pupils with special educational needs. The resourced provision is full currently. Most of these pupils have autistic spectrum disorder. All of them have statements of special educational needs and receive support in mainstream classes.
- The school does not meet government floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The deputy headteacher was appointed in May 2012 and the special educational needs coordinator was appointed in September 2012. There was no mathematics leader at the time of the inspection. Several permanent teachers are on long-term absence due to maternity leave. They include a senior leader and a middle leader.
- The school runs a daily breakfast club.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to good or better so that all pupils make rapid progress by ensuring that teachers:
 - plan tasks that are at the right level of difficulty for pupils of all abilities
 - have higher expectations of pupils' presentation, punctuation and spelling
 - question pupils more effectively to check their understanding of what they are learning and to make them think hard
 - deploy support staff more effectively to work with pupils of all abilities
 - improve the marking of pupils' work, especially in mathematics, so that pupils are well informed about how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve
 - provide more opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy and mathematical skills.
- Improve the quality and impact of leadership, including governance, by:
 - checking teaching more rigorously so that the causes of underachievement are known and the steps each teacher needs to take to improve their performance are identified
 - using the outcomes of such checks to provide tailored training and support for staff, including

opportunities for them to observe outstanding practice

- ensuring that teachers who lead subjects are held to account for teaching and progress in their subject
- eradicating inadequate teaching and managing staff turnover more effectively
- ensuring that other leaders are less reliant on the headteacher and are more effective at securing improvement themselves.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- Standards achieved by the end of Year 6 have been persistently low in English and mathematics over several years. Improvements have not been maintained. For example, although the school's results improved in 2010, they fell back sharply in 2011. In 2012 attainment improved slightly, but it still remained too low at a year behind what pupils achieve nationally.
- Pupils join the school with broadly average attainment. While boys' progress was broadly in line with what is expected in mathematics in 2012, most groups of pupils made inadequate progress in reading, writing and mathematics throughout their time in school.
- Pupils do not have a good grasp of the basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics. They lack confidence and do not have enough opportunities to practise these skills in other subjects. Too many pupils have difficulties in using their knowledge of the sounds letters make to work out the meaning of unknown words and they are unable to read fluently and with understanding.
- Pupils' progress is tracked and support, funded by the Pupil Premium, is provided for identified pupils. Supported pupils make slightly better progress than other pupils because of effective one-to-one tuition and the use of additional adults to help them learn. However, teaching in classes is not strong enough to ensure that these pupils sustain their progress without this support and gaps in their attainment are not closing rapidly enough.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make inadequate progress. This is particularly true of pupils supported through school action. Although these pupils are given extra support, it is not as effective as it should be. The work of the adults who support them is not monitored effectively.
- However, pupils in the specialist resource base for autistic spectrum disorders are well supported on a small-group or individual basis by teachers and other adults. They make good progress.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- As a result of weak teaching over time, too many pupils have made inadequate progress. During the inspection, too few lessons were good or better and pupils are not making up for their any earlier underachievement. Teaching overall is not strong enough and the quality varies between classes.
- Work given to pupils is often not matched to their abilities and a single task is set for the whole class. While tasks may be presented differently for different groups, they are not broken down into small enough steps for those who need more support. Neither are they hard enough for pupils who need more demanding work.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough. This includes pupils' presentation skills, including handwriting and spelling. There are too few opportunities for pupils to use their literacy and mathematical skills to solve everyday problems in other subjects.
- In more engaging classrooms, stimulating ideas and information are on display. Pupils use them easily in their daily learning. However, this is not the case throughout the school.

- In the few good lessons, tasks were pitched at a sufficiently demanding level and the teacher and other adults regularly checked on pupils' understanding. This gave pupils the skills and confidence to try out what they had learned in practical ways. In addition, the work was relevant to the pupils; they were expected to cooperate with one another and given a challenge. The pupils enjoyed this way of working.
- Too few teachers use questions to help pupils piece ideas together or to stretch the thinking of those pupils who show a good understanding. While there are examples of such good practice in a few lessons, it is not widespread.
- The use of additional adults in class and the regular withdrawal of pupils for extra help in reading, writing and numeracy are not having enough impact on the progress lower-attaining pupils make.
- The resource-based provision focuses well on teaching pupils the skills they will need to cope in the main school and beyond.
- Staff have developed better systems for assessing pupils' attainment and marking their work. Some teachers mark pupils' work well, clearly identifying what has been done well and what pupils need to improve. However, the quality of marking varies and is less well developed in mathematics. Pupils do not have enough time to respond to marking in order to practise and extend their skills.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Behaviour has improved. This is because the new behaviour policy is being used consistently and most adults manage pupils' behaviour well. The 'Super Student Scheme' has been welcomed by pupils. Pupils have to aim high to achieve rewards. There are now fewer incidents of poor behaviour and less low-level disruption. The rate of exclusions decreased in 2012.
- Pupils are friendly and polite. They usually behave well in lessons. They have good relationships with their teachers and other adults. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibility, such as being a member of the school parliament. Nearly all pupils behave sensibly in the playground.
- Pupils work hard when they find the work interesting and it is set at the right level for their abilities. Sometimes their attention wanders when they are asked to remain inactive for too long, such as when listening to others read aloud.
- Pupils develop well socially. They are welcoming to visitors. Pupils listen to the views of others and respect their opinions when working in groups. They work well together.
- The school has a nurture group, which supports eight pupils for three afternoons each week. Pupils in the 'balloon room' and nurture room respond very positively to each other and work cooperatively in the classroom. They appreciate the routines and support they receive from adults. They become confident and well-mannered pupils.
- Pupils feel safe in school. Vulnerable pupils receive effective pastoral support. The inclusion mentor provides vital support for families and has strengthened relationships with parents. The

breakfast club provides pupils with a good start to the school day.

- Pupils say that bullying is usually dealt with quickly and effectively. Bullying is most often name-calling. There have been some instances of pupils using unkind and homophobic language. This is usually dealt with by the staff. Parents expressed positive views about pupils' behaviour on 'Parent View' and those who wrote or spoke to inspectors were also happy.
- Pupils' social and moral development is good. Pupils have a keen sense of right and wrong and understand the consequences of their actions.

The leadership and management are inadequate

- Leaders and managers throughout the school have been too reliant on the headteacher to get things done. Leadership and management are inadequate because improvements are fragile and underachievement has not been robustly tackled.
- The headteacher has had to deal with a series of staffing issues, including leadership at all levels. New staff have not been sufficiently trained or made aware of the school's expectations, for example in how to teach reading, resulting in many pupils being far behind in their learning across the school.
- Despite this, the headteacher has created a much more unified team of staff. They are beginning to share her high expectations and her drive to improve the school. She is well supported by the new deputy headteacher.
- Teachers who lead subjects have not been held fully to account for the low standards achieved and for shortcomings in how well their subjects have been taught.
- Checks on the quality of teaching have not focused closely enough on how well teaching promotes pupils' learning and progress. This has given school leaders, including the governing body, a generous view of teaching and pupils' progress. Information from this monitoring has not been analysed and used to identify the training needs of individual teachers.
- The 'balloon room' is well led by a coordinator who has appropriate training and is supported by specialists from elsewhere. This ensures staff are effective in preparing pupils for the time they spend in mainstream classes. As a result of the safe atmosphere instilled by the leader, pupils make good progress.
- The school has received a sustained and high level of support from the local authority. This has helped to improve the behaviour of pupils and their attitudes to learning. The local authority has also supplied consultants to work with teachers. It has provided good training for governors in relation to their statutory responsibilities and roles. However, the effect of this support overall has been weakened because of the high turnover of staff.
- Work planned and set by teachers does not meet pupils' needs. It is not leading to good or better achievement or giving the pupils the level of basic skills they need to succeed at secondary school. However, assemblies and the Friday 'Springfield life' activities, where pupils learn to work in teams, promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

- The new special needs coordinator has ensured that individual plans for pupils have measurable and specific targets to gauge the success of strategies. Prior to this, leaders did not evaluate precisely whether teaching assistants were providing the best support for pupils in the school.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors understand the school's weaknesses and know what is being done to tackle them. However, they have not challenged the school well enough or held leaders and managers to account. They have relied too heavily on leaders' evaluations. They have not had sufficient knowledge about teachers' performance to inform accurate monitoring of salary progression. However, their understanding of pupils' achievement has informed their judgements on how well leaders are rewarded. The governing body has approved the use of the Pupil Premium funding and is beginning to check the impact of the spending on the achievement of the pupils who are supported by it. The arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements and underpin the school's caring approach. The school is successful in tackling any overt discrimination, but the underachievement of a large number of pupils shows that equality of opportunity is not well promoted. Governors have sought, and benefited from, professional training to develop their roles.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	112633
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	405413

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	186
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joan Lane
Headteacher	Sue Hughes
Date of previous school inspection	16 November 2010
Telephone number	01283 217855
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Email address	info@springfield.derbyshire.sch.uk

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