

Springwell School

Hinkler Road, Southampton, SO19 6DH

Inspection dates 13–14 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Teaching is outstanding. The headteacher, supported by the deputy headteacher and other senior leaders, sets high expectations for pupils' development and is highly effective in rigorously monitoring the quality of teaching to ensure these are achieved.
- There are constant day-to-day examples of lessons where pupils' learning is outstanding. As a result, all groups of pupils make rapid progress in all aspects of their learning across the school. This is very often from very low starting points.
- The staff are constantly reflective about how to improve their teaching, in the light of pupils' levels of need. They plan lessons where learning is individually tailored for each pupil.
- Pupils are extremely well cared for. They feel secure and appreciated as individuals. Pupils' behaviour improves from the day they start at the school. They feel very safe.
- Children make an excellent start in the outstanding Reception classes. Lessons are carefully planned and include a wide range of lively activities which engage the children so that they become keen to learn.
- All staff work very effectively together throughout the school, and support staff make a strong contribution to lessons. This ensures that all pupils join in fully and make outstanding progress.
- Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher is extremely effective in developing the skills of the staff and supporting them to take on additional responsibilities. This has led to constant improvement in key areas such as the monitoring of progress and school improvement planning.
- As part of its constant drive for improvement, the school is always looking for ways it can develop further; for example, it is planning to update aspects of its provision and use of information technology.
- Members of the governing body know the school very well and provide consistent support and challenge to drive improvement.
- The school receives effective support from the local authority with whom they work, through their outreach service, to support other schools.
- Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and appreciate the excellent progress their children make.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons, and a number of these were jointly seen with the senior leaders. In addition, the inspection team made shorter visits to lessons to focus on specific aspects such as different therapies and integration with the local primary school.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, other senior and middle leaders, teaching staff and a representative from the local authority. The lead inspector met with a group of governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body.
- Inspectors took account of 23 responses to the on-line questionnaire for parents and carers, Parent View, as well as 61 responses to a survey for school staff, in informing the inspection findings. Inspectors also spoke to a number of parents to gather their views about the school.
- The inspection team looked closely at a range of documentation, including information on pupils' performance, their individual education plans, the school strategic plan, safeguarding and behaviour policies as well as policies on teaching and learning, and documents relating to the targets set for teachers to improve their work.

Inspection team

David Marshall, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Ian McAllister

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Springwell is an average-size special school for primary-aged pupils with complex learning difficulties. There are more boys than girls on roll.
- All pupils enter school with a statement of special educational needs and many have associated disabilities, including autism, epilepsy and challenging behaviour.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and almost all speak English as their first language.
- The school serves the city of Southampton and the Hampshire boundaries and pupils are admitted across the whole primary age range. The school has a stable population, with low numbers of pupils entering school during the year.
- Since opening in September 2006, the school has expanded and currently provides 80 places, having been built for 58. Of these 80 places, eight are based within the local primary school. Further plans for expansion from September 2013 include an additional 16 places: eight on the school site and eight in a mainstream school across the city.
- Almost half of the pupils are supported by the pupil premium, (additional government funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, who are looked after by the local authority or whose families are in the armed forces). This is above the national average. No pupils are from service families.
- The school is accredited as a National Support School and provides on-going support, advice and training for both special and mainstream schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Embed the plans to enhance the provision of information technology equipment for all pupils to use on an individual basis

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Although there are minor variations, pupils enter the school with standards that are very low for their age.
- All pupils receive a very good start on entry to the school in the Reception classes as assessments of what they know and can do are rigorous, and integration plans, with supportive care, are very well thought out. This means they settle very quickly and make immediate progress.
- Observations of lessons during the inspection confirmed that throughout the school, all groups of pupils almost always make good, and some outstanding, progress towards the clear and challenging targets in their individual education plans because they are taught outstandingly well. Pupils gain an improved level of self-esteem due to the committed relationships they have with adults and the sensitive way in which their needs are met through one-to-one support.
- Pupils' reading, writing and speaking skills progress well and, as their confidence grows, they grasp the chance to use mathematics in other subjects and they do so increasingly well.
- The school's excellent assessment and recording systems show that its aim for every pupil to achieve his or her potential, often based on making ambitious points progress each year, is being successfully accomplished.
- The pupil premium funding is targeted very effectively to raise achievement, for example through providing additional therapy, focused individual support, and intervention programmes for identified pupils. For example, in 2012 the average points score (which is a method of measuring pupils' attainment) for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals in both English and mathematics was well above that for similar groups of pupils.
- Parents and carers strongly agree that their children are achieving well, and now enjoy their learning.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teaching across the school is outstanding. Teachers' planning is detailed and focuses on helping all pupils to succeed whatever their level of need. Teachers carefully match tasks to the needs of individuals, and as a result pupils make secure and sustained progress over time.
- Additional support staff are deployed very effectively and make excellent contributions to supporting pupils' progress, using carefully targeted questioning and regularly checking their understanding.
- A clear whole-school approach to making sure that all pupils participate in learning is very effective. Teachers make use of a range of strategies to engage all pupils actively in lessons; an example of this is the use of the simple plastic cards that some pupils carry with them, and the use of singing. Teachers skilfully adapt their lessons in response to pupils' responses and feed back to these by reinforcing pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- In all lessons, the teachers and support staff provide tasks that are progressively more challenging and enable pupils to continue to progress through their careful monitoring of the pupils' learning each day.
- The whole-school approach to providing what is best for each pupil was perfectly illustrated in an outstanding lesson where the teacher used the technique known as 'shared attention'. Pupils were highly engaged by the quietly enthusiastic approach of the teacher; they enjoyed every single aspect, and knew from their previous lessons what to expect and how to respond. The teacher's very skilful use of language and tone encouraged lively responses. Pupils were able to quickly deepen their understanding and they made decisive gains in their learning.
- Teachers' excellent knowledge of each pupil and enthusiasm to help pupils make the best possible progress provides a highly motivating learning environment. They are dedicated to providing the best educational experience for the pupils and give very generously of their time.

Pupils and their parents and carers value this highly.

- The assessments which take place across all subjects every half-term provide excellent opportunities to accurately identify pupils' progress. Pupils and teachers are very clear about whether or not this progress is fast enough and what to do to if it is not.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- As a result of the carefully constructed individual learning programmes and exemplary care, behaviour and safety and pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding throughout the school.
- Pupils enjoy positive and supportive relationships with all staff members.
- The school places a strong emphasis on the implementation of thorough and practical behaviour plans. As a result, the behaviour of pupils improves considerably, particularly the behaviour of those with autistic spectrum conditions.
- During the inspection, most pupils consistently demonstrated high standards of behaviour, and positive attitudes to learning and developing social skills.
- When one or two pupils were distressed and demonstrated potentially aggressive behaviour, their outbursts were handled with exemplary care and calm. The other pupils were enabled to carry on with their tasks undisturbed.
- Given the number of medical conditions some pupils have, their attendance overall is above average.
- The range of therapy support currently in place is very well deployed, especially the use of hydrotherapy, art and music therapy, which make a significant difference to the progress and all-round development of those pupils involved.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The drive and ambition of the management under the rigorous, and outstanding, leadership of the headteacher has moved the school forward very well in the three years since the last inspection, and has built on its outstanding provision at that time.
- In particular, the very effective senior leadership team ensures that thorough assessments of pupils' progress are enabling changes in the curriculum to be implemented. A real sense of urgency to continue to improve is established.
- Systems to track pupils' progress are detailed and individual. The information is used thoroughly to plan for pupils' next steps.
- Staff work very well together and all, including the administrative team and site management staff, are considerable assets to the school and are very much appreciated by all concerned. As one staff member said, summing up the views of many, 'I cannot think of another school that I would rather work in.'
- The school knows itself very well and sets the right, and very demanding, targets to become even better. Documentation is thorough and the evaluation of the school's work is honest and accurate.
- The headteacher and governors have a very clear and accurate view of the quality of teaching and its impact on the pupils' learning. There is a high level of professional support for all staff, which is linked closely to setting targets for teachers in order to improve their practice continually. This holds teachers accountable for pupils' progress at all times. Weaker aspects of teaching have been tackled vigorously, and better teaching rewarded accordingly.
- The leadership team skilfully weaves together academic, personal and therapeutic aspects so that the curriculum meets the individual needs, aspirations and interests of each pupil. The school strives to ensure genuine equality of opportunity and avoid any discrimination. The curriculum supports pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development exceptionally well through creative activities such as music and drama activities, swimming and many visitors. There are many examples of where pupils are given memorable experiences. For example, the recent local Rock Challenge focused pupils extremely well, and was thoroughly enjoyed by all

involved.

- Very careful attention is paid by managers at all levels to ensure the highest levels of safety and quality of care for each pupil. Procedures for safeguarding pupils meet all current government requirements and there are robust arrangements in place for checking staff and other adults. Pupils' safety and well-being are paramount at all times, ensuring that the school is a very safe and supportive place to be.
- The local authority offers 'light touch' support to the school. The school, in turn, is organised to offer exemplary layers of outreach support to pupils in other special and mainstream schools.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is fully involved in all school processes, checking decisions and requesting explanations where necessary. It holds the school to account in a challenging but supportive manner by asking probing questions when presented with documents and reports, including those related to the quality of teaching. Governors know the school extremely well, because members visit regularly to scrutinise the school's work and regularly analyse the performance of pupils, especially those with additional support through the pupil premium. They ensure that pupil premium funding is spent appropriately on additional one-to-one support or additional therapy sessions. Their involvement in performance management underpins the school's strong capacity for further improvement. This includes ensuring that there is a clear link between how well pupils achieve and how well staff are paid. The governing body also has a firm grasp of the school's finances.

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	116620
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	403792

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	80
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Angela Allerton
Headteacher	Jackie Partridge
Date of previous school inspection	12–13 July 2010
Telephone number	02380 445981
Fax number	02380 426874
Email address	head@springwellschool.net

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

