

Springfield Primary School

Broomspring Lane, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S10 2FA

Inspection dates 22–23 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 do not always make fast enough progress from their starting points in English and mathematics.
- As a result, attainment at the end of Year 6 is below that of pupils in many other schools.
- Pupils' achievement is often limited by gaps in their vocabulary and their understanding of the meaning of words.
- There is not enough good or outstanding teaching to enable pupils to achieve well.
- The work set for different groups of pupils is sometimes too hard or too easy. Pupils' progress slows down when this happens.
- Lessons tend not to include enough use of pictures or objects to help pupils understand and learn.
- Too often, teachers do not insist that pupils follow the advice given when books are marked.
- Staff with leadership responsibilities are not all involved enough in moving the school forward.
- Leaders have not provided sufficient opportunities for teachers and teaching assistants to observe high quality teaching in order to develop their own expertise.

The school has the following strengths

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress from their starting points.
- Some teaching is good and enables pupils to learn well by building on what they have learned previously.
- Pupils say they enjoy working and playing with 'children from around the world'. Pupils of all backgrounds get on well together.
- They feel safe, behave well and do not believe that bullying is a problem at their school.
- There are clear signs of improvement since the previous inspection. For example, pupils' writing skills have improved and attainment at the end of Year 2 has risen considerably.
- The current leaders, managers and governors are making sure that the school continues to develop. They are quite clear that their priorities are raising pupils' achievement and improving teaching.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 13 lessons to observe teaching and learning.
- Samples of work by pupils in every class were looked at, together with the school's records of pupils' achievement.
- Meetings were held with staff, groups of pupils and members of the governing body.
- There were insufficient responses to the on line questionnaire (Parent View) to allow the results to be displayed. The inspectors took account of the school's own most recent questionnaire for parents.

Inspection team

Rosemary Eaton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jennifer Lawrence

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- A very large majority of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is over twice the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- Far more pupils than average join or leave the school at other than the usual times for admission. This is often because their parents have taken up places at the university.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has recently begun to receive support from a national leader of education from Hartley Brook and Hatfield Academy Trust.
- The previous headteacher resigned at the end of August 2013 and the deputy headteacher immediately became acting headteacher. Another senior leader became acting deputy headteacher at the same time.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- In order to raise pupils' achievement, improve teaching so it is consistently good or better. In particular, focus on ensuring that:
 - the work set for different groups of pupils takes account of what they have already learned and enables them to make fast progress
 - in all lessons there are planned opportunities for pupils to widen their vocabulary and extend their understanding of the meaning of words
 - pupils, particularly the less-able and those new to learning English, are provided with more resources, such as pictures and objects to help them to understand and learn
 - pupils improve their work by following the advice and instructions given when their books are marked.
- Improve leadership and management and accelerate the rate of school improvement by:
 - making sure that all staff with leadership responsibilities are more involved in checks on teaching and learning, planning for improvement and driving forward developments
 - providing all teachers and teaching assistants with opportunities to develop their expertise by learning from others whose work is of the highest quality.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Attainment at the end of Year 6 has remained stubbornly well below average for a number of years with no clear pattern of improvement. This indicates that progress from pupils' starting points has not been consistently good.
- There is too much variation in the progress made in reading, writing and mathematics and by pupils in different year groups. Pupils tend to make the progress expected of pupils nationally although some do better than this. Progress overall requires improvement in order to be consistently good. The rates of pupils' progress link closely with the quality of teaching that they experience.
- There are indications that in 2013 Year 6 pupils performed somewhat better in English than in the previous year. This was particularly so in writing, which is where the school has focused its attention over recent years. However, attainment remained lower than average.
- Children enter the nursery with skills that are well below those expected for their age. They make good progress so that a greater proportion of children have broadly average skills by the time they start Year 1.
- Until recently, Year 2 pupils' attainment has been weak. In 2013, there was considerable improvement all round, with attainment close to the national average overall and a little above average in mathematics. These pupils had made good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils' ability to learn is often inhibited by their limited vocabulary and lack of understanding of less common words. They learn to read words but the meaning of what they read is not always apparent to them. When writing, pupils often use a narrow range of adjectives and verbs. They sometimes find it hard to grasp what they are required to do when attempting to solve written mathematical problems.
- The school's records show that there are fluctuations but that the achievement of all groups requires improvement. For example, pupils who join the school at other than the usual times for admission often get off to a fast start. This is because, in order to give all pupils equality of opportunity, their ability to communicate in English is assessed quickly and any necessary support is arranged. However, this initial good progress is not usually sustained year on year as these pupils move up through the school.
- Pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs and are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs tend to make better progress than those supported at school action. This is owing to the additional help they receive and the school's strong links with specialist agencies such as speech and language therapists.
- The school's most-able pupils make variable progress and their achievement requires improvement.
- In 2012, the attainment of Year 6 pupils known to be eligible for free school meals was almost one term ahead of other pupils in English but it was one year behind in mathematics. Leaders are using some of the pupil premium funding to improve the mathematical skills of particular Key Stage 2 pupils. They are receiving good quality support although it is too soon to see the full impact of this work. In general, pupils eligible for free school meals make the same inconsistent progress as other pupils, with not enough that is good.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Observations of lessons and scrutiny of pupils' books show that although there is some good teaching, there is not enough of it to enable pupils to make consistently good progress as they move up through the school. This is why teaching requires improvement.
- Teachers have a good awareness of what each pupil knows, understands and can do. However, they do not always make full use of this information when planning lessons. This means that some pupils find the work easy and their learning does not move forward enough. Others may

struggle to cope and have to rely too much on adults' help, making only slow progress.

- Learning is sometimes hampered by a lack of resources such as pictures, objects or other materials. Without these, less-able pupils, in particular, are not encouraged to use all their senses to help them learn. Pupils' understanding of mathematical ideas is sometimes slowed because they are not given equipment with which to investigate and try out ideas.
- Teachers often encourage pupils to suggest interesting words or alternatives to mundane ones. Pupils typically find this difficult because their vocabularies are often narrow. When new words are introduced by teachers, pupils are not always helped to understand their exact meaning and use. In general, lessons do not include enough planned opportunities to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of vocabulary.
- Marking usually provides a suitable balance between praise for pupils' efforts and advice to help them improve. There are some excellent examples of pupils editing and improving their work in response to teachers' comments. In too many cases, there is no sign that teachers' words have been heeded. This means that opportunities are missed for pupils to make progress.
- In the best lessons, teachers choose activities well so pupils build quickly and securely on what they have learned already. These teachers adapt their planning in the light of how well pupils have performed previously. They may spend extra time on an aspect that caused difficulty or move pupils on more quickly to avoid wasting time.
- Teachers usually give clear explanations of tasks. In the good lessons, they often give demonstrations to set high standards and make sure pupils know exactly what is expected of them. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, the teacher's written character description helped pupils to extend their ideas beyond physical characteristics to emotions and the reasons for these.
- In most lessons, teaching assistants' expertise contributes well to learning. Just occasionally, they have no clear role to perform during particular parts of the lesson.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Most pupils are very keen to learn and do well. They show this by their readiness to answer teachers' questions and the speed with which they get started on tasks. Occasionally, discussions about their work get rather noisy, but pupils respond quickly when teachers remind them to be considerate.
- Pupils consider behaviour to be good and the school's logs of incidents of unacceptable behaviour support this view. Any occurrences are carefully documented and senior leaders keep a close eye on these, watching out for any patterns of behaviour that warrant investigation.
- A small number of pupils who have difficulty managing their emotions and behaviour are occasionally involved in more serious incidents. Records show that there are usually improvements in their behaviour over time as a result of the school's systems, partnerships with parents and links with support agencies.
- A particular feature of behaviour here is the way pupils from different cultures and of different nationalities work and play so harmoniously together. Pupils enjoy making friends from other countries. When new pupils arrive they are 'buddied' with another who speaks the same language, helping them to get to know routines and settle in.
- Pupils understand the difference between bullying and falling out or getting cross, and about different types of bullying. They are quite certain that bullying is not a problem here. They know that they should tell an adult if they have concerns and are confident that action would be taken. Pupils also know how to stay safe, for example, when using mobile phones or the internet.
- As a result of the school's efforts, attendance has improved markedly since the previous inspection. Far fewer pupils have low rates of attendance. Parents who come from overseas to attend the university are regularly reminded about the impact on their children of visits during term-time to their country of origin.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because teaching is not yet good enough to enable pupils to achieve well. The acting headteacher and acting deputy headteacher are working in close partnership to advance school improvement. There is no sense that leaders are 'caretaking'. Instead, they have risen to the challenge of increasing the pace of change.
- The acting headteacher's knowledge of the school has enabled her to prepare a detailed action plan for the term. It is based on an accurate evaluation of the school's performance and provides a clear focus for the school, with improving teaching and raising achievement at its heart. Planning for improvement recognises the urgency of the current situation: the time allowed for actions means that a brisk pace is set. It is too soon to see the impact of this work because the acting headteacher has been in post for such a short time.
- Since the previous inspection, senior leaders have been involved in successfully improving aspects of the school such as achievement in writing, outdoor provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, attendance, and the quality of some teachers' work. This demonstrates that there has been proven ability in the area of school improvement.
- The previous headteacher's plan for restructuring leadership responsibilities has not yet been implemented. Currently, middle leaders, such as those responsible for subjects, are not sufficiently involved in activities that support school improvement, for example, identifying where developments are necessary and planning and leading these.
- The new plans for improving teaching include opportunities, made possible by links with schools such as that of the national leader of education, for teachers to observe and learn from high quality teaching. These are only just beginning to occur and the plans do not extend to teaching assistants.
- The curriculum has improved since the previous inspection, for example, through the introduction of a philosophy programme which is helping to develop speech and language in addition to personal development. The curriculum fosters harmony between pupils so that all are equally valued within the school community. A further review is now underway with the intention of tackling issues such as increasing the time spent on physical education and sport in Years 4 to 6.
- The new funding for Primary school Sport is enabling the school to broaden pupils' experiences through the work of a sports coach and the two Sheffield football clubs. Staff training is included in this package to provide more opportunities for pupils to improve their fitness and performance.
- The school meets government safeguarding requirements. A rolling programme ensures that staff are well trained in this area of their work.
- Local authority support has been heightened recently and includes arranging the school's link with the national leader of education. This support is effective in promoting improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance has improved markedly since the previous inspection. Under the determined leadership of the Chair, the governing body has actively recruited new members with highly relevant skills and expertise. All members are involved in providing significant challenge and support to the school, for example, by asking for performance data to be presented more clearly, organising an independent evaluation of the quality of teaching, and making visits to observe and check on the school's work. Through actions such as this, governors have gained an accurate view of pupils' progress. They understand how staff performance is managed and teaching improved, including by tackling previously weak teaching. Governors are clear about how the pupil premium is used and the achievement of these pupils compared with that of others.

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	107073
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	425749

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	205
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Philip Barker
Acting Headteacher	Linda Joseph
Date of previous school inspection	22 February 2012
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