

Springfield Primary School

Lawton Drive, Bulwell Hall Estate, Nottingham, NG6 8BL

Inspection dates

4–5 December 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		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are below average across the school. Standards for pupils in Year 6 in 2013 fell sharply, especially in mathematics.
- Pupils join the school with levels of knowledge and skills well below those expected for their age. Although their progress is often in line with that expected, it remains below that seen nationally.
- Too few pupils reach the higher levels in reading and mathematics and the standard of writing remains too low.
- The quality of teaching is too variable. There are too many lessons where pupils do not get enough done.
- In some lessons, the most-able pupils are given work that is too easy and so they do not reach the standards of which they are capable. Teachers do not always insist on neat enough presentation of pupils' work.
- Teachers' marking does not always tell pupils exactly how they can improve the quality of their work. Teachers do not make sure that pupils follow the advice they give them when they mark work.

The school has the following strengths

- The good leadership and management of the school, during a period of significant change, have led to improvements in the quality of teaching and the progress made by pupils known to be eligible for additional funding.
- The teaching of reading has improved rapidly and in 2013, Year 6 pupils made almost two years progress in reading.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress because teaching is consistently good. Adults are well deployed, and activities effectively planned and resourced.
- Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes towards school are good and this is helping to improve their progress. The school provides outstanding care and support for children facing challenging circumstances.
- Senior leaders, including governors, have minimised the negative impact of significant changes in staffing and have used performance management effectively to bring about continued improvements.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 16 lessons or parts of lessons in the school. A number of these were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings and discussions took place with the headteacher, governors, pupils, staff, parents and a representative of the local authority.
- Samples of pupils' work were examined. Some pupils read books with an inspector.
- The inspectors took account of parents' telephone calls to the inspection team as well as a recent survey of parents' and carers' views carried out by the governing body. Too few parents had responded to the online survey Parent View to enable it to be viewed.
- The inspectors looked at key documents, including performance data produced by the school, procedures for safeguarding, the school's own evaluations of its work, reports to the governing body and the plans for raising attainment.

Inspection team

Geof Timms, Lead Inspector	Additional Inspector
Christine Turner	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Springfield Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is similar to that in most schools. Relatively few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is well above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below average.
- A large majority of pupils is supported by the pupil premium which, in this school, provides additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, or who are in local authority care.
- A much larger than average proportion of the pupils join or leave the school at times other than usual. A significant number of pupils join and leave the school on more than one occasion.
- The school runs a free breakfast club for pupils as well as providing lunches for some of the Nursery children.
- Since the last inspection, there have been a number of significant staffing changes including among the senior management team.
- The school meets government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or outstanding by:
 - ensuring that the marking of pupils' work helps pupils to understand how they can improve and see to it that they follow the advice they are given
 - using teachers' knowledge of pupils' prior learning to set activities for pupils that enable them to make at least good progress in lessons
 - ensuring teachers have higher expectations of the quality of presentation of pupils' work.
- Improve the rate of progress and raise standards in writing by:
 - improving pupils' handwriting, letter formation and pencil control skills
 - developing sufficient opportunities for pupils to write in different subjects and for different purposes
 - providing sufficient opportunities for pupils to widen and extend their vocabulary.
- Raise standards in reading and mathematics by:
 - ensuring that teachers consistently design activities at the right level of difficulty for pupils
 - consistently providing challenging activities for the most-able pupils to enable them to reach the highest standards.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are below average and too few pupils reach the higher levels in reading and mathematics at the end of Year 6. Standards for pupils in Year 6 in 2013 fell, especially in mathematics.
- On starting school, pupils, including those who join at different times throughout the year, have levels of knowledge and skills which are well below those expected for their age. Although they make the progress expected by the end of Year 6, it varies across year groups and remains below that seen nationally.
- Standards in writing are too low and pupils' handwriting, letter-formation and pencil control skills are under-developed. Teachers' recent training is ensuring that pupils have more opportunities to write in other subjects but this is yet to have an impact on raising standards and extending the range of vocabulary used by pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive effective extra help, particularly in reading. However, in 2013, standards reached by this group of pupils at the end of Year 6 remained well below those seen nationally in writing and mathematics, although most had made at least the expected progress.
- The results of the Year 1 check on pupils' phonics (the linking of sounds and letters) show that in 2013, standards were well below those expected. This was partly due to staff-related issues and does not represent the current improvement in the teaching of phonics.
- A higher than average proportion of pupils joins the school at different times throughout the year, and, although they do not always reach the standards expected for their age, they make good progress from their starting points because of the effective arrangements for settling them in. Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes and are well prepared for their move into Year 1.
- The school's data and inspection findings clearly demonstrate that pupils who spend the longest amount of time at the school make the best progress. In 2013, for example, the Year 6 pupils who had been in the school since the Reception class achieved standards that were significantly above the national average.
- In 2013, Year 6 pupils made almost two years progress in reading, although this was rapid, it was not enough to make up for slower progress in previous years. Pupils in Year 2 made similarly strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics in 2013, but this was still not enough to overcome their exceptionally low attainment at the start of the year.
- Leaders and managers have successfully introduced a range of effective interventions to raise standards in reading. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 are developing a clear enjoyment of books and stories. In Key Stage 2, the imaginative use of high-quality children's novels is improving pupils' reading skills well.
- Pupils in Year 6 known to be eligible for additional pupil premium funding made similar progress to their classmates in 2013. However, the standards attained by this group were almost two terms behind other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics.

- There are no significant differences in the progress made by pupils from minority ethnic heritages. The school successfully promotes equality of opportunity and good relations, and this ensures that these pupils are effectively supported.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The school has had significant changes in staffing since the time of the last inspection, with a number of teachers recently leaving or joining the school. Leaders have worked to reduce any negative impact on pupils' progress and the current staff work well as a strong team to rapidly improve the proportion of good and outstanding teaching.
- Teaching still requires improvement, however, because activities are not always planned appropriately for all groups of pupils. Too often, the most able pupils are given work that is too easy for them and not enough is done to extend their learning. In a number of lessons, pupils do not get enough work done.
- The recent improvements in teachers' marking have yet to be fully effective in helping pupils to understand what they have done well and what they need to do to reach the next level. Pupils do not always act on the advice in teachers' comments on how to improve their work, and teachers do not always insist on neat enough presentation of work.
- The best teaching is well planned to meet the differing needs of pupils and to ensure that they are fully motivated and have positive attitudes to learning. In a successful Year 2 mathematics lesson, the teacher made effective use of her teaching assistant to work with the most-able pupils while she revised the use of number lines with those who found the concept difficult. This enabled all pupils to make rapid progress.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is consistently good. Adults are well deployed, and activities effectively planned and resourced. In the Nursery and Reception classes, activities increase children's interest and develop inquiring minds and curiosity. For example, two girls in Reception were inspired to discuss a range of books, while boys used their emergent writing skills to write interesting letters.
- The teaching of reading has improved and this is having a positive impact on standards. Although the current team of teachers have not worked together for long, staff are clearly committed to doing the best they can for pupils. A major strength is the way teachers accept professionally any criticism and suggestions for improvement from leaders and act upon them decisively. This is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching and the progress pupils are making.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

- During the inspection, pupils were polite, friendly and happy to talk to inspectors about their work. In the best lessons, this clearly had an impact on their learning and progress and they thoroughly enjoyed their work.
- Most pupils have positive attitudes towards school, they want to learn and they work together co-operatively. Pupils talk positively about how they enjoy looking after those new to the school and how they appreciate the opportunities to talk to adults if worried about anything.
- Pupils feel safe in school and their views are supported by a large majority of parents who

responded to the school's questionnaire. One parent wrote to inspectors about how well his child had settled into the school and how well he was progressing. One pupil who had recently arrived from abroad talked about how welcome he had been made.

- The school provides outstanding care and support for children and families facing very challenging circumstances. Staff support families and children in a range of ways which have a very positive impact on pupils' social development and on the quality of learning during the afternoon sessions. The breakfast club and lunches for the Nursery class provide excellent support opportunities for children and their families.
- Pupils are open about the occasional misbehaviour or bullying, but say it is dealt with well if it occurs. They have a sound awareness of the different types of bullying, such as through the use of computers or mobile phones.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school is good and there are effective systems for dealing with any incidents. Detailed records are kept and analysed well to highlight any patterns in the behaviour of individuals or groups. Disruption within lessons is uncommon and well managed by teachers if it occurs. The number of exclusions has fallen as a result of the school's highly effective systems for successfully dealing with pupils' difficulties internally.
- Attendance remains stubbornly below average although the school uses all appropriate methods available to them to encourage parents and carers to ensure full attendance. Where necessary, external support is sought and for a small number of persistent offenders, legal action is appropriately taken.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher are strong and effective leaders. They have worked successfully with governors to minimise the disruption caused by the substantial changes in staffing since the time of the last inspection. The effective professional development programme has enabled some teachers to become senior leaders, and this has strengthened the school's capacity to improve.
- A major strength is the school's willingness to seek advice and support for areas they identify as requiring improvement. The school has recently joined a partnership of 20 schools around the country working to move from satisfactory to outstanding. This has already had a very positive impact on raising pupils' achievement, as demonstrated by the rapid progress made by pupils in Years 2 and 6 in 2013.
- Strong teamwork, detailed development planning and rigorous self-evaluation provide the school with a clear set of targets and actions for the future. The work of subject leaders is effective and they are well supported by senior leaders. Staff benefit from and value the professional development and training they receive. Challenging targets are set for teachers and these are based appropriately on improving pupils' progress. The good leadership at all levels is evident in the higher proportion of good or better teaching and the identified support for teachers who need to further develop their skills.
- The headteacher and other leaders rigorously monitor teaching and learning by observing lessons and checking pupils' work and teachers' planning. Pupils' progress and attainment are carefully tracked so that their performance can be analysed. Regular meetings between senior leaders and teachers regarding pupils' progress are held so that any underachievement can be quickly identified and tackled. Because of this, the school is effective in its work to ensure

equality and a lack of discrimination.

- The local authority has not had close links with the school recently but has provided effective support for the governing body, the Early Years Foundation Stage and the checking of pupils' assessments to ensure that they are fair and accurate. In addition, the school works closely with other local schools by, for example, sharing staff to monitor and check on persistent absenteeism.
- The funding available through the pupil premium is used effectively to help eligible pupils take a full part in school life, and receive, where appropriate, specific resources and additional support. The good progress made by these pupils is monitored well by the headteacher and governors.
- The school uses the money it receives to fund more sporting activities effectively. The use of external sports coaches and regular sessions at a local ice rink promote pupils' physical development well and provide opportunities for more-able pupils to extend their sporting skills to a high level.
- The curriculum provides a good range of activities and promotes good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Good use of visiting experts, and extensive visits, locally and further afield, enrich the curriculum and enhance the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the wider world.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body have recently restructured to create a more efficient and effective team which is working hard to raise standards and do the best possible for the many pupils who face challenging circumstances. Governors have a good knowledge and understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses through good access to data. Governors visit the school regularly and report on their findings. Governors have an appropriate understanding of the school's performance management of teachers and how this is used to improve teaching. Decisions about teachers' pay are closely linked to their performance and responsibilities, so the school's systems for this meet requirements well. Governors track finances robustly and support the school in deciding how to spend the money to support pupils eligible for the pupil premium. The governing body ensures that arrangements for pupils' safeguarding meet the current regulatory requirements.

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	122721
Local authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	425033

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	197
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mary Lawrence
Headteacher	Jane-Belinda Francis
Date of previous school inspection	2 November 2011
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