

# Springfield School

At The Bronze Barrow, Cedar Drive, Witney, OX28 1AR

**Inspection dates** 27–28 February 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Children get a very good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make consistently good progress through the school from their different starting points. All pupils achieve well.
- They acquire good literacy, communication and mathematics skills and are well prepared for their next stage of education.
- Staff make lessons interesting so that pupils enjoy learning. Teachers mostly plan effectively to meet pupils' individual needs and use assessment well to set work at the right level.
- The school's choice of subjects provides a good range of learning opportunities and is enriched through lunchtime and after-school activities.
- Behaviour is good across the school. Pupils' attitudes are consistently positive. They relate well to staff, who create a very positive climate for learning and manage behaviour consistently well.
- Pupils feel safe and have a high level of trust in staff. Pupils and parents are very positive about behaviour and safety in the school.
- The headteacher and assistant headteachers consistently communicate high expectations. They check on the quality of teaching and learning well and, in partnership with the governing body, have secured consistently good teaching and achievement.
- The governing body is well organised and focuses on the right priorities to bring about improvements.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- On occasions, teachers allow the pace of pupils' learning to slow once they have acquired skills or knowledge in a subject. At times, activities are not demanding enough for pupils.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 15 lessons, which covered every class in the school. Some classes were visited more than once. Inspectors observed 11 lessons jointly with members of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors met with two groups of randomly selected pupils, a group of parents, representatives from the governing body and members of staff with leadership and management responsibilities.
- They also visited some lunchtime activities, including the primary choir and the secondary art club.
- The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority about the school's wider involvement with the authority, other schools and parents.
- Inspectors analysed the school's performance data showing the attainment and progress of pupils. They also looked at attendance data, safeguarding arrangements and other key documents.
- A sample of pupils' work from across the school was analysed and comparisons made regarding the achievement of different groups of pupils.
- Inspectors also took account of 21 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and 48 questionnaires from school staff.

## Inspection team

Barnard Payne, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Liz Bull

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is designated to take pupils between the ages of 2 and 16, living in West Oxfordshire, with cognition and learning difficulties.
- All pupils have a statement of special educational needs, predominantly for severe learning difficulties. The next largest group is of pupils with autistic spectrum disorder. There are small groups with profound and multiple learning difficulties, behavioural, emotional and social difficulties and physical difficulties.
- The proportion of pupils from ethnic groups other than White British is lower than the national average and most pupils speak English as a first language.
- The school has a lower-than-average proportion of pupils eligible for support through additional pupil premium funding. This is additional government funding provided for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those looked after by the local authority and those with a parent in the armed services. In this school the pupils receiving additional funding are those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school also receives the literacy and numeracy catch-up premium, which provides schools with additional funding for each Year 7 pupil who did not achieve at least Level 4 (the nationally expected level) in reading and/or mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2. In this school the funding applies to all Year 7 pupils.
- In common with all schools with primary-age pupils, the school also receives extra funding to improve physical education (PE) and sport.
- Mobility in the school is much higher than average because a sizeable number of pupils join the school at different times, arriving from other schools.
- The school shares its two, adjacent sites with two mainstream schools, one primary and one secondary.
- An after-school club is run by an external provider and subject to a separate inspection.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of teaching that is outstanding by ensuring that all activities are sufficiently challenging for all pupils.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' progress across the year groups is consistently good. Work in lessons and in pupils' books shows that they achieve well, irrespective of their individual special educational needs or disabilities. Different groups make similarly good progress, including those who join the school at different times of the year, those from different ethnic backgrounds, and the few who do not speak English as a first language.
- The achievement of pupils eligible for additional funding through the pupil premium matches that of others. Like their peers, they make good progress from their individual starting points. As a result of the wide variation in these starting points their attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Year 11 varies widely, as does the attainment of other pupils.
- Highly focused and individualised teaching in the integrated Nursery, shared with the mainstream primary school, provides children with detailed and clear learning objectives, which ensure that they make consistently good progress. The emphasis placed on speech and language in the Early Years Foundation Stage provides a very secure foundation for their future development.
- Pupils have good opportunities to read, write and communicate throughout the school. Pupils at earlier stages of reading use symbols, objects, photographs and signing in order to understand narratives and sequence. The most able readers use their understanding of letters and sounds (phonics) in order to read unfamiliar words and do this confidently.
- All abilities make good progress and there are examples of excellent achievement in writing by the most able pupils, where individuals show perseverance and an ability to write independently.
- Pupils acquire equally good mathematical skills due to well-planned lessons that meet the needs of each range of ability effectively. For example, in a lesson where pupils compared quantities using mathematical language, some pupils counted groups of up to three objects, while the most able took numbers away from 10 and used mathematical symbols.
- Pupils' good achievement in reading and mathematics in Year 7 and above shows that the school makes good use of its literacy and numeracy catch-up premium. Additional resources are used well to ensure progress.
- All pupils in Key Stage 4 are working towards external accreditation that recognises their achievements. This allows the school to create individualised time-tables and to offer a degree of flexibility to meet pupils' needs and interests. For example, one pupil has been working on a farm. There is no early entry policy for GCSE.
- Pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education because they acquire the skills and positive attitudes to learning to ensure continued progress.
- Achievement is good rather than outstanding because pupils do not always move on quickly enough once they understand how to do something. Occasionally, some pupils undertake activities that are too low-level to challenge them sufficiently.

### The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good across the school, enabling pupils to make consistently good progress.
- Teachers mostly monitor pupils' progress effectively and use assessment well to set work at the right level. They use questions and discussion with pupils well to make sure that they understand the work.
- Teachers provide good feedback to pupils so that they know how they are getting on. Teachers annotate pupils' written work to record and clarify achievement, for example, whether a piece of work required a verbal or gestural prompt from staff or whether the pupil produced it independently.

- Staff create a very positive climate for learning in their classrooms and this ensures that pupils enjoy their lessons and concentrate well.
- There is a wide range of needs in each class. In order to meet these, teachers typically plan a complex range of activities well, particularly in English and mathematics lessons, and including work that engages and motivates the more able pupils. Typically there are several activities running simultaneously. In a reading lesson, pupils used phonics, pictures and signing; the planning was highly specific to pupils' literacy needs and the staff used assessment well to summarise achievement during the lesson.
- Teaching assistants are well deployed and well informed. They work alongside teachers to form effective teams, helping to make transitions between activities easy and playing a key role in focusing on individuals' learning programmes.
- The work that teachers give pupils is nearly always challenging enough, but occasionally the pace of learning slows because activities are not sufficiently demanding.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils' attitudes to learning are consistently good and this is a major contributor to their achievement. Pupils are happy in lessons and enjoy the activities. They conduct themselves very well around the school, helping establish a very positive ethos on both sites.
- Good relationships are promoted well and pupils relate very well to staff, as well as to each other. Parents, pupils and staff are very positive about behaviour. Parents say that their children's behaviour improves significantly through being in the school.
- The leadership and management of the school's behaviour systems are highly effective and staff are consistent in their approach. Where pupils have problems in managing their own behaviour, staff have the strategies to help them deal with it. Disruption in lessons is very rare.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel very safe in school and their parents agree. Neither pupils nor parents have raised any concerns regarding bullying.
- There are very few recorded instances of bullying of any type, showing the school's effectiveness in tackling any potential discrimination.
- Opportunities to learn outside school enable pupils to consider risk beyond their familiar environment, although they do, understandably, look to adults in order to respond to risk.
- Pupils' attendance is higher than in similar schools nationally and has improved over the past year. The school has reduced the proportion of persistent absentees.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- The school's leadership has established a strong ethos, focused on achievement and based on care and respect. Since the last inspection the school has secured improvements in collecting data on pupils' achievements and uses this to set targets for staff and to inform planning. The school also makes more use of the information gained through self-evaluation in deciding on priorities for school development.
- The school receives a very strong endorsement from parents. Under the effective leadership of the headteacher, the school's leaders consistently communicate high expectations to staff and pupils. They manage the performance of staff well, closely monitoring quality and following up areas for improvement. They hold staff to account for outcomes. Staff are keen to develop their skills and pupils are keen to learn, as well as displaying consistently good behaviour.
- The senior leadership team and the governing body employ well-targeted self-evaluation strategies and their evaluations are accurate and based on secure evidence. The senior leaders carry out very thorough tracking of pupils' progress using robust data analysis.
- Much of the drive for continued improvement is through the senior leaders, but the middle leaders' roles are developing at a good rate and they are taking on a greater level of

responsibility.

- Equality of opportunity is at the heart of the school's work and the leadership and management of the curriculum ensure that there are no gaps in achievement when comparing different groups of pupils. Pupils have a broad range of learning opportunities, individualised programmes and a firm grounding in key literacy, communication and mathematics skills.
- The school has used additional funding for primary-phase sports and physical education to increase what it is able to offer, including bringing in external providers. This has a positive impact on pupils' physical well-being and on the development of their skills, with several popular lunchtime and after-school activities on offer.
- The school carefully monitors the spending of additional pupil premium funding and its impact on achievement. It has successfully ensured no gaps in achievement when comparing eligible pupils with others. A detailed report to the governing body shows the impact pupil by pupil, reflecting a highly individualised approach.
- The school provides a variety of ways to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Through very positive relationships with staff and a well-planned curriculum they grow in self-esteem and confidence. Pupils' excellent opportunities to meet and work with pupils from the mainstream partner schools contribute significantly to their social development. They recognise what is right and wrong and often show curiosity about new experiences.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements.
- The local authority provides light touch support for this good school.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body uses its monitoring and evaluation to gain an accurate view of the school's provision and its impact. Consequently, governors are clear about what needs to be done to continue to bring about improvements. They receive detailed reports regarding additional funding, including the pupil premium, and the impact of spending on achievement. The governing body keeps the quality of teaching under review, including development needs, and receives regular reports from the senior leadership team. It is well informed about performance management. It judges the value for money of spending on staff against the national teaching standards and is fully involved in making decisions about staff pay. The governing body is appropriately skilled and trained, with, for example, a good understanding of performance data. Specific responsibilities of individual governors include data analysis and acting as a mentor for new governors. The governing body is in a good position to hold the school to account and to provide challenge as well as support. It ensures that financial resources are used efficiently and effectively.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	123334
<b>Local authority</b>	Oxfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	432063

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	85
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jessica Patton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Emma Lawley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21–22 June 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01993 703963
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