

Springhead Infant and Nursery School

Cooper Street, Springhead, Oldham, Greater Manchester, OL4 4QT

Inspection dates 1–2 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- From their starting points some pupils do not achieve as well as they could in writing and mathematics in the early years and Key Stage 1.
- The teaching of writing and mathematics is not good enough in all classes to secure the best possible progress for all groups of pupils.
- Pupils do not always receive clear and precise guidance through feedback and marking to ensure they can improve their work and address errors and misconceptions.
- Sometimes pupils' progress is not checked often enough during the lesson to make certain they achieve as well as they should.
- Occasionally, the work pupils are given, particularly the most able, does not give them the opportunity to be as productive as they could be and allow them to use and apply the skills they have learned.
- Some middle leaders, including the early years coordinator, have not yet fully implemented plans to raise pupils' achievement in their areas of responsibility and strategically monitor their effectiveness.

The school has the following strengths

- Senior leaders and the governing body are working well to enhance teaching and learning. Success has been achieved, for instance, in the good quality of presentation pupils now achieve in their work.
- The newly appointed executive headteacher and the head of school provide a clear and suitable direction for future improvement.
- The teaching of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) is good, and Year 1 and 2 pupils do very well in national checks for these skills.
- Reading skills are taught well. All groups of pupils make good progress throughout the school and standards in reading are consistently above average.
- Pupils are thoughtful and considerate to others. They behave well and feel safe. Pupils learn to share and collaborate through good use of the outdoors to learn. They have a good sense of tolerance and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well provided for.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 15 lessons and conducted several shorter observations of teaching and learning between classrooms, including joint observations with the executive headteacher and head of school. The inspectors also looked at a wide range of pupils' work and listened to them read.
- Discussions were held with several groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and other members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority, an independent education consultant and members of staff, including senior leaders and other leaders with particular responsibilities.
- The inspectors took account of the 76 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View), the results from the school's own consultations with parents, and spoke to many parents during the inspection. The responses from staff to the inspection questionnaires were also considered.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including: information on pupils' current progress; the school's plans for improvement; the management of teachers' performance; the use of pupil premium funding; and documentation and records relating to pupils' behaviour and safety.

Inspection team

Andrew Clark, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Kathy Thompson

Additional Inspector

Lynda Johnson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is similar to that found in most schools.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, that is those pupils who receive support through the pupil premium funding, is about one in ten pupils and below the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils of minority ethnic backgrounds is about average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is also similar to average.
- There is a Sure Start Children's Centre on the school site. There is also a breakfast and after-school club. These are independently managed and are subject to their own inspections.
- A significant proportion of teachers have joined the school over the last two years, including several staff in leadership positions. Following the resignation of the previous headteacher, an executive headteacher was appointed in September 2014 to run the school for at least two terms until a substantive headteacher is in place. Several of the leaders, including the head of school who manages the day-to-day running, are in acting or temporary positions.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, including in the early years, in order to raise achievement, particularly in writing and mathematics by:
 - offering more opportunities for pupils to write regularly and often at length in a range of subjects
 - ensuring pupils have plenty of opportunities to show their mathematical calculations and explain their reasoning
 - giving pupils work which always challenges them, especially the most able, so that they make faster progress
 - regularly checking on how well pupils are doing while they are working to ensure they are learning as well as they can at all times
 - ensuring teachers' marking and feedback always helps pupils to improve their work, deepen their learning and address any errors.
- Strengthen the leadership and management more by ensuring that middle leaders fully implement plans for future improvement in their areas of responsibility in a timely fashion and strategically monitor their effectiveness.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Middle leaders, including subject leaders, are not yet fully accountable for raising achievement in their areas of responsibility. Several are new to their posts. They have built on their earlier work with the new senior management team to develop plans for future improvement. However, they have not yet had time or opportunity to implement the actions and ensure they strategically assess their impact.
- The new executive headteacher is supporting senior staff well. She is developing a clear focus to build more rapidly on the school's strengths as staff develop into their roles following the departure of the previous headteacher and a period of some staff turbulence.
- The new senior leadership team act as good role models for other staff through their own teaching and support. Leaders are especially helpful to those new to the profession.
- The support of the local authority is good. In particular, they have worked closely with the governing body to arrange the support of the executive headteacher and, through an independent consultant, to provide training and support for middle leaders.
- The school is working closely with other local schools to establish new assessment procedures following the removal of National Curriculum levels. They are piloting a new approach developed with independent consultants. These are still to be fully implemented and it is too soon to measure their impact.
- The school has appropriate procedures to ensure staff are held accountable for the progress pupils make. Teachers have to meet stringent criteria in order to achieve the next salary level.
- The pupil premium funding is used well to enhance the learning of disadvantaged pupils. Gaps are narrowing with other pupils in the school and nationally by the end of Year 2. Outcomes of their achievement are analysed well and initiatives focus on boosting the learning of the individual pupils concerned, especially in reading.
- Leaders ensure that all pupils have the same opportunities to succeed and to participate fully in the life of the school. There is no evidence of discrimination in the school. However, the school is not yet fully effective in ensuring that pupils consistently achieve the best they can.
- Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements and are based on detailed and accurate record keeping and well-trained and vigilant staff.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through the different subjects that are taught. Through religious and personal and social education, pupils develop a good appreciation of different faiths and beliefs and gain a good understanding of the life and values of modern British society. The programme for learning outdoors, for example, enables all pupils to develop their ability to solve-problems and work together.
- Effective use is made of the primary school physical education and sports funding. The school is building on an already established programme of specialist physical education by further developing the skills of all staff, and widening opportunities for pupils to participate in different sports and team games. This makes a good contribution to pupils' health and well-being.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is well led and managed. It has worked with an independent consultant and with training from the local authority to review all aspects of its work and is working towards a quality mark. The governing body is making increasingly good use of data to improve its effectiveness in measuring rates of school improvement and challenging school leaders. Statutory requirements are met. Governors play a full role in making decisions as to whether teachers and other staff should be rewarded with salary increases and in reviewing targets for the headteacher. They take advantage of a range of training opportunities to improve their effectiveness. Governors ensure the school is a safe environment for all users. The governing body regularly monitors the effectiveness of the budget through its staffing and finance committee including the use of pupil premium and primary school education and sport's funding.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite and considerate towards each other and they respond well to the care all adults show them. They are usually strongly engaged in their learning and eager to succeed. Occasionally, their concentration wanes when they are not sufficiently challenged, but they rarely

misbehave.

- Pupils play and work together well. The school makes particularly good use of outdoor spaces at break, lunchtimes and in outdoor learning sessions to help pupils develop cooperation and other social skills.
- Pupils take responsibility eagerly and support others. They are very actively involved in a wide range of fundraising activities and are proud of their roles on the school council or in their eco work.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe. They have a good knowledge of potential bullying situations, including racial and homophobic concerns and cyber bullying. They understand that their behaviour affects others and know that they should be kind and considerate. They comment that little bullying takes place and any incidents are successfully managed by the staff. This is confirmed by the school's record-keeping procedures, and the large majority of parents agree with their children's positive views.
- The school works well with pupils who sometimes find it difficult to manage their own emotions and social skills. Parents comment strongly on the effectiveness of the support the school gives them and their children and how well prepared their children are for their next stage of education.
- Pupils are keen to come to school and are punctual and well prepared for the day's learning. Attendance has improved over the last few years and is above average.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teachers' marking and feedback are not always effective enough in helping pupils to improve their own work in writing and mathematics. All work is marked; however, comments do not consistently provide precise guidance to help pupils, especially the most able, improve. Sometimes errors and misconceptions, particularly in mathematics, are not addressed as soon as possible.
- There are insufficient checks on pupils' progress while they are working, particularly when they are working on their own, to ensure they make the best progress they can. Occasionally, pupils take too long to produce their work, particularly in writing, and their concentration wanes, and they do not achieve all they could as a result.
- Sometimes the work pupils are given does not provide an appropriate level of challenge to help them achieve the best they can. For example, in mathematics, pupils do not have the opportunity to show their calculations and explain their reasoning sufficiently to deepen their learning. Pupils' opportunity to write at length is sometimes constrained by the size of the space they are given to write in. This particularly impacts on the progress of the most able pupils.
- The teaching of pupils' phonic skills is effective and builds rapidly and securely on their earlier learning in the early years.
- Pupils' reading skills are further developed through good opportunities they have to read regularly throughout the day and the effective use of homework. Pupil premium funding is used well to provide regular and specialist reading support for disadvantaged pupils when required.
- There is a good atmosphere for learning and pupils respond well to this with their good behaviour and positive attitudes. Classrooms are well resourced and attractive. The use of information and communication technology to help pupils learn has improved well since the previous inspection.
- Teacher's expectation of pupil's presentation of their work is now higher. Pupils present their work well. This has been developed through a joint project with the local junior school
- Pupils often make good use of reference material such as word lists, punctuation pyramids and other guides to aid and reinforce their learning.
- Teaching assistants are deployed well. They provide timely extra help and support for disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. This contributes well to the progress these pupils make.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Inspection evidence from pupils' current and previous work shows that too few pupils make consistently better than expected progress in writing and mathematics to ensure that they achieve the best they can and reach their full potential.

- The most able pupils do not consistently reach the standards they are capable of by the end of Year 2. The work they are given does not always ensure they make full use of their skills and deepen their learning, particularly in mathematics and writing.
- By the end of Year 2, standards in 2013 were above-average overall in reading, writing and mathematics. Over the last three years, standards in reading have been above average but more inconsistent in writing and mathematics, especially for the most able pupils. By the end of Year 2, the unpublished 2014 results are above average in reading, but closer to average for mathematics and writing.
- Pupils' achievement in reading is consistently above average because these skills are taught well. Pupils in Year 1 achieve above-average results in the national screening checks for skills in understanding letters and the sounds they make (phonics).
- Pupil premium funding is effectively used to provide additional reading and writing activities which are sharply focused on accelerating pupils' learning. As a result, the few disadvantaged pupils make progress which is similar to other pupils in the school and sometimes better than that of others nationally. Disadvantaged pupils in the school reach standards that are in line or above the national average for all pupils. In 2013 disadvantaged pupils were approximately one to two terms below other pupils in the school. In 2014, inspection evidence shows that disadvantaged pupils are achieving as well as other pupils and the gap is closing in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make progress which is similar to that of other pupils in school and in 2013 reached standards similar to the national average. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are supported well in their learning by effective special teaching programmes and well deployed teaching assistants so that they develop basic skills well, especially in reading. As a result, this prepares them well for learning in all subjects.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language also make progress which is at least similar to others in the school. They often make particularly strong progress in developing their reading skills throughout the school. They reach standards which are similar to other pupils.
- A new handwriting scheme has been effectively introduced and pupils have risen to their teachers' clear expectations of better presentation of work. As a result pupils' presentation of their work has improved well. However, pupils' writing does not always show sufficient depth or length and creative use of language.
- Many activities, such as learning outside, contribute well to the development of the thinking, reasoning and self-awareness of all pupils, especially the most able.
- Exciting topics on earthquakes, farm life and pirates enrich pupils understanding of many subjects including science, history and geography. They have good skills in information and communication technology and use it well in other subjects, which is a good improvement since the previous inspection.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- Children start school with skills which are largely those typically expected for their age. They leave the Reception with average, and increasingly above average, skills. In 2013, 68% of children reached a good level of development, which is above average. However, children's progress from their starting point varied between subjects and classes.
- Many of the teachers are new to the early years. Evidence from children's work shows that they do not make consistently good or better progress over time because the quality of teaching is not yet uniformly good.
- Children are not always challenged by the activities and tasks they are given, especially the most able. Sometimes they have too long to complete a relatively simple task, such as colouring patterns, and some learning that children choose for themselves is not challenging enough. There are not enough opportunities for children to practise and build on their writing and mathematical skills in a wide enough range of activities and tasks.
- Teaching in the Nursery is often stronger. As a result children largely rapidly address gaps in their achievement on entry and so they are well placed to move on in their learning.
- Overall, the teaching of early reading, especially phonics skills, is good and children make good progress and achieve well over time.
- Teachers work closely with parents and children settle quickly into school life. They take a pride in their work and are keen to share their success with other children and adults. Relationships are good.
- Classrooms are attractive with interesting places for children to explore and learn, such as a pirate role-play area and an area to carry out scientific investigations on plants and growth.

- Children are well behaved and they say they feel safe. Children of all abilities play and work well together and concentrate on their activities. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through the themes and topics they study, and they are curious about the world about them.
- The early years coordinator has yet to implement actions planned for future development, which are based on a sound analysis of children's achievement, in a strategic and timely fashion.

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	105668
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	449285

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	265
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Malcolm Milwain
Headteacher	Heidi Reitze
Date of previous school inspection	22 January 2007
Telephone number	0161 770 5620
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