

Springdale Infant School

Warstones Drive, Penn, Wolverhampton, West Midlands WV4 4NJ

Inspection dates

18 January and 7 February 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is too variable and not yet consistently good. Despite some good practice, much of the teaching is not effective enough. As a result, pupils do not make good progress.
- Teachers do not always ensure that pupils understand what to do. Some activities lack challenge and pupils do not make sufficient progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils are not making fast enough progress from their different starting points. Very few achieve at a greater depth by the end of key stage 1.
- Leaders do not have an accurate view of the school's performance. As a result, leaders are not identifying the most important areas for improvement.
- Governors do not yet have a clear grasp of the school's performance. Consequently, the level of challenge and support offered to leaders is not rigorous enough.
- The curriculum does not provide sufficient opportunities to develop pupils' skills in reading, writing and mathematics. This holds back pupils' learning and overall achievement.
- The outdoor learning area in the early years is not well used and activities do not adequately promote children's development.
- Pupils do not have a clear enough understanding of the different cultures and faiths found in modern British society.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders from the local junior school are offering effective support to the school. They are working with the school's senior leaders, who bring considerable enthusiasm and drive to their work.
- Pupils behave well and enjoy coming to school. Pupils have positive attitudes and want to do their best.
- Pupils' attendance has improved as a result of the checks the school makes. Most groups of pupils attend well and arrive punctually at school each day.
- Staff are very committed and caring. They support pupils well to ensure that they feel safe.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and thereby pupils' achievement by making sure that:
 - the school's best teaching is shared more widely
 - pupils fully understand the work that they are doing and have a secure grasp of the skills that they are developing
 - pupils are provided with a greater level of challenge in lessons
 - pupils are given opportunities to develop their reading, writing and mathematics skills across the curriculum
 - the outdoor learning environment in the early years is developed to promote learning across the curriculum.
- Improve the leadership and management of the school by making sure that:
 - leaders' evaluations of the school's performance accurately identify the most important areas for development
 - leaders regularly check the effectiveness of their actions
 - governors work with leaders to identify priorities and offer the challenge and support required to secure improvements
 - disadvantaged pupils receive the support required to help them achieve at the highest possible level
 - pupils are provided with opportunities to develop their knowledge and appreciation of the range of cultures and faiths found in modern multicultural Britain.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders' views of the school's overall effectiveness are too generous. Leaders have not fully recognised the impact that inconsistencies in the quality of teaching have had on pupils' progress. As a result, important weaknesses have not been tackled well enough to ensure good outcomes for pupils.
- Leaders have not precisely identified the correct priorities for the school's development. Too often, a large number of initiatives have been introduced together, rather than selecting the most important ones. This has hampered improvement and leaders have not kept a close enough check on the school's performance.
- Leaders' checks on the quality of teaching have led to some improvement. Poor performance has been dealt with. Performance management is appropriately used and linked to professional development opportunities. However, leaders have not been successful in ensuring that teaching is of a high enough standard. At times, they have not focused on improving the most important aspects of the teaching.
- Leaders have not ensured that disadvantaged pupils achieve well enough. Leaders have identified this and sought to improve their plans to use additional funding to accelerate progress. Disadvantaged pupils are now starting to make better rates of progress. However, leaders' plans are not specific enough in terms of the targets they set for disadvantaged pupils to achieve. Too often, leaders' expectations lead to them comparing the school's disadvantaged pupils' progress with other pupils in the school, rather than with national measures.
- Leaders' use of the funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is not effective. Rates of progress for this group of pupils are therefore variable.
- Leaders have checked on the progress made by pupils. This has helped them pick up, for example, on the slower rates of progress made by disadvantaged pupils. However, this information has not been used to ensure that all pupils make strong and sustained progress.
- Leaders have implemented a curriculum that covers a broad range of subjects and after-school clubs. Pupils learn about important historical characters and events such as Florence Nightingale and the Great Fire of London. Pupils also enjoy opportunities to cook and complete investigations in science. However, leaders have not ensured that the curriculum is always as challenging or as interesting as it needs to be for pupils to achieve well. Aspects of the curriculum do encourage pupils to behave well and grow in confidence.
- Pupils have not yet fully developed a clear enough understanding of the range of cultures and faiths in modern British society.
- Leaders have put in place plans to use the additional funding for the physical education (PE) and sport premium. These centre upon improving the staff's ability to teach PE and assess pupils' skills. Plans are also in place to encourage pupils to become more

active at playtimes. However, these plans lack specific targets and are not well evaluated.

- Leaders are very committed to improving the school's performance. They have successfully built a team of staff who share this commitment. As a result, staff show a keen desire to improve their work and value the opportunities for professional development.
- Leaders have created a school community characterised by positive and happy relationships between staff and pupils, and with parents. This places the school in a good position for future improvement.
- Leaders from the local junior school are strengthening the school's capacity to bring about improvements. They are working with members of the school's leadership team, who are highly committed and enthusiastic professionals.
- Pupils are gaining an understanding of aspects of fundamental British values through the school's ethos and its wider work on promoting positive values.
- The local authority has provided support for the school by reviewing its performance, working with leaders and helping governors to gain a better understanding of their role. Despite this help, the school has not been able to ensure that pupils make consistently strong progress.

Governance of the school

- Governors have a great deal of information about the school's work at their fingertips but do not yet clearly see the most important areas to work on. They do not evaluate these priorities with sufficient rigour.
- Governors are starting to see the aspects of school performance, such as the achievement of disadvantaged pupils, which need to improve. However, minutes of their meetings point to the fact that, in the past, they have not checked on the disadvantaged group's progress enough. Other aspects, such as the school's use of additional funding for the PE and sport premium, have also not been fully reviewed.
- Governors are clear about the importance of the school's ethos and check carefully on this. They have attended assemblies and listened to pupils' views on the school.
- Governors have also ensured that the school fulfils its safeguarding requirements and that staff are fully trained in areas such as the government's Prevent strategy.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have ensured that all of the requirements are fully in place. Senior leaders have the appropriate level of training to oversee this area and have provided staff with training to carry out their responsibilities well. Staff keep a careful watch on pupils' safety and well-being.
- Leaders work effectively with external agencies to keep pupils safe. Record-keeping is thorough and effective.
- Recruitment checks are robust and thorough. Checks are well used to ensure that any

adults appointed to work at the school have the appropriate skills and qualifications.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching is not yet consistently good. This is partly because new teaching strategies have not been fully implemented. Leaders have not checked rigorously enough to see how well teachers are adjusting to them. For example, despite the recent focus on improving handwriting, teachers have very different expectations of the quality of pupils' work in this area. These inconsistencies result in pupils' slower rates of progress.
- At times, the work teachers set is not challenging enough and does not ensure that pupils make as much progress as they should. Teaching does not ensure that pupils secure a strong enough grasp of new skills or a deep enough understanding of what they are learning. For example, some frequent basic errors in pupils' books are not routinely addressed by teachers. Some pupils are not given sufficient guidance in their writing, including how to hold a pencil correctly. As a result, some pupils develop poor habits and repeat common errors. This limits the progress that they make.
- Teachers do not always reinforce and strengthen pupils' reading, writing and mathematics skills in the different subjects of the curriculum. Some of the tasks set in subjects such as history and geography are too easy.
- Teachers do not use time in lessons consistently well. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise their skills and often spend too long completing work they already can do.
- Teachers' questioning skills are not effective enough. Questioning does not always help pupils fully understand their work or challenge their thinking.
- The quality of homework varies. In some year groups, it is clear that good homework is set, which helps pupils make better progress. However, in other classes, this is not the case. Parents are aware of this and it was raised with inspectors.
- In mathematics, there are some good examples of pupils being made to think hard and deepen their understanding. This is helping to provide a better level of challenge to the higher-attaining pupils and accelerate their progress.
- Several teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge. In key stage 1, teachers have incorporated elements of grammar and punctuation into their teaching of composition. Where this has happened, pupils can write engaging and detailed texts. Recent changes to help pupils think about and plan their writing are starting to have a positive impact.
- There are some strengths in the teaching of phonics. When this is done well, pupils develop a good knowledge of their phonics and many are starting to apply their knowledge to help them write.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are confident and are keen to talk about themselves and their learning. They have formed good relationships with one another and are keen to cooperate. Pupils are respectful to everyone they meet.
- Pupils have a positive view of school and are keen to do well. They talk with enthusiasm and pride about their achievements. This sense of achievement was well summed up by a pupil who said, 'I love my neat, joined handwriting. I can write better now!'
- The school's work to promote positive values has helped support pupils' personal development. Pupils are able to talk about many of the different values that are displayed in the school hall and what they mean to them. This also helps to promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Staff provide a good level of support in this caring school. They form positive relationships with pupils and provide sensitive support when needed. Pupils express a high level of confidence in the staff's work to support them. Parents recognise this too and share their confidence in this aspect of the school's work with inspectors.
- Pupils say that there is very little bullying at school. They understand what to do if they ever feel bullied and have full confidence in the staff's ability to sort out any problems.
- Pupils have a growing knowledge of how to keep safe when using modern technology such as the internet and can talk about the importance of this.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well. In lessons, they are calm and settled. They follow the instructions of teachers, although occasionally need reminding of what they should do. In such cases, they respond quickly to their teacher's guidance. Pupils also behave well at playtimes and when moving around the school between lessons. Pupils understand the importance of rules. The school's strong focus on positive values helps promote this good behaviour well.
- Pupils' attendance has improved in the last two years. Pupils' attendance is in line with the national average and the proportion of pupils frequently absent is slightly above the national average. Pupils like winning prizes in assembly for good attendance and the school keeps a close check on pupils' attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes require improvement because pupils do not make consistently good progress in all classes.
- National assessment results indicate that pupils are not making consistently good rates of progress from their different starting points. At the end of key stage 1 in 2016, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading was broadly in line with the national average, but below average in writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils that reached the higher standard was below average in all three subjects. In 2014, from broadly average starting points, pupils reached average standards by the end of key stage 1 but standards in 2015 were below average.
- The work of current pupils shows that inconsistencies remain. Progress has been accelerated for pupils in Year 2 but overall progress is still not fast enough. There are some improvements in writing, with pupils demonstrating an ability to write at greater length and with growing sophistication and accuracy.
- The most able pupils have not achieved well. Too few continue to reach the higher standards because teaching, too often, does not challenge this group. However, pupils' work shows some improvement in mathematics, where the most able are making faster progress through better opportunities to solve problems and more chances to think deeply about their work.
- In reading, pupils have a mixed range of opportunities to practise their reading skills. The most able pupils read a much wider range of books, which helps to accelerate their progress. Other pupils have fewer opportunities to do so.
- Disadvantaged pupils have not made fast enough progress and the quality of their work and progress is variable. Pupils with average starting points are beginning to make faster progress but the most able disadvantaged pupils do not always achieve well. This is a pattern that the school has identified.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are not yet making good progress. However, pupils in the resource base achieve better than others and a number reached the expected standard in last year's national assessments. There is evidence in pupils' work, and from observing their learning, that pupils are making faster progress this year.
- A higher proportion of pupils are achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Pupils have reached standards that are in line with the national average for the past three years.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Children are not achieving good outcomes because the quality of teaching is not consistently good. Despite some strong practice, the teaching and experiences that children receive are variable.
- Though children are reaching broadly national standards by the end of the Reception Year, progress is not yet rapid enough. Children's work shows that too few are on track

to reach or exceed the national expectations by the end of Reception this year. This is also the case in the Nursery.

- Disadvantaged children's progress is starting to speed up. This group's achievement has not been good and very few have been reaching the higher standards.
- Opportunities for outdoor learning are limited. The outdoor environment has not been sufficiently developed. This limits valuable opportunities to develop children's learning and stimulate their enjoyment of, and interest in, learning through play.
- Children enjoy taking part in the activities planned such as writing 'holiday checklists'. However, learning is not consistently challenging in all classrooms. For example, opportunities are missed to improve important skills that children are not getting right and some staff do not always correct common errors.
- Phonics teaching is not yet consistent. Recent changes are helping to improve outcomes but there are insufficient opportunities for children to apply and use their growing knowledge. For example, when writing independently about Little Red Riding Hood, children were given words to copy rather than being encouraged to use their phonics skills and have a go for themselves.
- Assessments do not always provide a fully comprehensive picture of children's development. At times, staff are not using assessments well enough to ensure that children are set challenging experiences.
- Safeguarding is a strength in the early years. Staff ensure that children are well cared for. Staff are also sensitive and responsive to the children's needs.
- Children respond well to staff and behave well. Children are keen to do the right things and interact well with one another.
- Parents have opportunities to talk to staff about their child's development. They contribute to assessments when their child starts their learning journey. The provision's 'wow board' provides a space for achievements from home to be celebrated and collected.
- The recently appointed early years leader has a clear understanding of good practice. He has well-thought-out plans to improve outdoor learning. The leader has checked on the quality of provision and provided staff with appropriate guidance on how they can improve their teaching.

School details

Unique reference number	104307
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	10000814

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	Infant
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	246
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Linda Murphy
Headteacher	Catherine Foley
Telephone number	01902 558 805
Website	www.springdaleinfant.co.uk/
Email address	springdaleinfantschool@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	16–17 November 2011

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The local authority recently brokered arrangements for the headteacher of the neighbouring junior school to support the school as the acting executive headteacher.
- The number of pupils attending the school is just below the national average.
- The school has a resource base for 12 pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils have specific needs in speech, language and communication.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is just below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is just below the national average.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with the national average.
- The school runs a breakfast club and after-school club for its pupils.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was initially conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The lead inspector first visited the school on 18 January 2017, during which the inspection was converted to a full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The lead inspector returned, accompanied by a team, on 7 February 2017.
- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in 29 lessons or parts of lessons. A number of these were made with the substantive headteacher and acting executive headteacher.
- The inspectors looked at a range of pupils' books with work from across the curriculum. They also listened to some pupils read. They met with groups of pupils and spoke to a number of other pupils throughout the inspection. The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes, as well as in lessons.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including assessments and records of pupils' progress, the school's checks and records relating to safeguarding, child protection and attendance, records about how the school reviews teaching and school improvement plans.
- Meetings were held with the substantive headteacher, the acting executive headteacher, the deputy headteacher, two assistant headteachers and the attendance worker. The lead inspector met with members of the governing body on two occasions and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of 47 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. They also talked to parents on both days of the inspection. They considered the responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Jonathan Moore, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
John Bates	Ofsted Inspector
Sarah Ashley	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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