

# Inspection of Springfield House Community Special School

Kenilworth Road, Knowle, Solihull, West Midlands B93 0AJ

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Inspection dates: 10–11 March 2020

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Inadequate**

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The quality of education

**Inadequate**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Inadequate**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Inadequate**

Early years provision

**Requires improvement**

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

The education and care provided at this school are inadequate.

Although pupils feel safe in school, they are not protected well enough. Some staff are not sufficiently expert in helping pupils behave well and safely. Many staff are temporary or inexperienced.

Leaders do not make sure that pupils learn enough. The curriculum is poorly organised. Its content is patchy. Lessons are often disconnected. Many staff teach work that pupils find too easy.

Pupils come to this school because they need extra help. But they do not always get enough of it. Although staff work hard, they often lack clear guidance from leaders about how to help pupils learn. Despite this, most pupils are happy at the school. Many are polite and take pride in the work they do. Nearly all grow in confidence. Pupils are usually kind to each other. A few have concerns about bullying.

Recent staff shortages resulted in leaders closing the school. Many parents have serious concerns about this. They worry about the school's leadership, the quality of education and the welfare of pupils.

Staff also have concerns about the school's current position. They are worried that pupils are not taught or cared for well enough.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

Leaders have not been effective in improving the school. They have not acted quickly enough to stem the decline in the quality of education and care provided by the school. Plans for improvement have either stalled or failed. Leaders have closed the school to pupils for five days since early December due to staff shortages. The governing body recognises that the school faces serious problems. Governors have asked for support from the local authority. The local authority has begun to take urgent steps to improve the school.

Early years staff work to provide good care for pupils. They meet the needs of children. Early years staff support pupils well but lack basic teaching resources. Leaders do not make best use of the spacious school grounds to enhance children's early learning. There is very little outdoor equipment.

Early reading is inadequate. Younger pupils do not learn to read in a clear enough way. Books are often too easy or too difficult. Pupils do not read to adults often enough. Not all staff follow the same approach to helping pupils learn to read. Some staff lack expertise. Strategies to include more parents in reading at home are in the early stages. Leaders intend to introduce a new reading scheme after Easter.

Pupils do not learn enough in mathematics. The curriculum does not help pupils build their knowledge over time. Most teachers focus on number. This helps pupils grasp mathematical facts. But pupils do not use practical equipment or mathematical reasoning enough. Some teachers lack subject knowledge.

The curriculum in science and most other subjects lacks detail and organisation. It does not set out clearly what pupils should learn and when. In turn, staff do not have enough guidance about lesson content or how to sequence learning. Although many staff work very hard to teach interesting one-off lessons, few check if pupils are learning. Pupils do not learn as much as they should.

Teachers follow a clear and well-organised series of lessons in physical education (PE). This helps most pupils to learn well.

Many pupils have a very good relationship with staff. Most pupils behave well when they are with staff they know well. Pupils struggle when they are with less familiar staff. Too many pupils do not follow instructions. Minor issues often escalate to become major incidents. The number of pupils excluded from school is growing.

Early years provision is led well. Staff are not confident in other school leaders. Uncertainties about future staffing, and the number of temporary teachers and teaching assistants, has led to this. They do not believe that leaders give enough clear direction.

The provision for personal development helps many pupils grow in confidence. A flourishing school council helps encourage pupils to become responsible and caring citizens.

Many staff work very hard to broaden pupils' interests by providing opportunities for music, sport and community activities. However, this work is not as well organised as it could be. As a result, it does not lead to enough pupils making the personal progress that they should.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Leaders have not ensured that there are enough experienced staff to help pupils behave safely. Some of the written arrangements for assessing risks to pupils lack detail. Leaders do not always follow up on incidents to make sure that pupils are safe. Some record-keeping is disorganised.

Leaders provide training for staff in most key aspects of safeguarding. Staff know how to raise concerns when they are worried about a pupil. However, training does not always help them to spot when a pupil might be at risk. Staff work appropriately with external agencies.

Pupils mostly feel safe in school. But on occasions, experienced staff and leaders have to intervene to keep pupils safe.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Leaders have not ensured that safeguarding processes keep pupils safe. Turbulence in staffing and insufficient training mean that some staff do not have the knowledge to act when they are concerned about a child. Leaders need to ensure that systems for safeguarding ensure that all staff have the essential skills and knowledge to act when a child is at risk and to respond to these concerns effectively.
- The quality of education in the school has declined markedly since the last inspection. School leaders have not responded effectively to this. Staff shortages and very low staff morale are affecting the school's capacity to provide an acceptable standard of education. Those responsible for the school should take immediate action to strengthen leadership and staff capacity, including thorough training in subject knowledge and behaviour management so that pupils are taught effectively and well.
- The teaching of early reading is fragmented. The resources used are not always suitable for pupils. Some teachers lack expertise. Leaders should introduce an approach that helps staff teach all children to read well. Leaders need to closely match the resources they use to the abilities of the pupils. Leaders must also ensure that all relevant staff are sufficiently expert in teaching reading.
- Most subjects in the curriculum, including mathematics, lack coherence. Leaders have not set out what pupils should learn or when. Many pupils have unfilled gaps in their learning. Leaders do not give teachers enough support in identifying what pupils should learn, taking their starting points into account. Leaders must urgently agree what pupils at the school will learn. They should set this out for teachers and ensure there are enough resources to help them teach well. They should put in place more robust arrangements to establish what pupils already know and if pupils are learning subject content.
- Basic resources for indoor and outdoor learning are lacking in early years. Senior school leaders should make sure that suitable resources, such as outdoor play and sensory equipment, are made available to children so that early years staff can help more children achieve a good level of development.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	103623
<b>Local authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	10088432
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	98
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Mrs Julie Walker
<b>Executive Headteacher</b>	Miss Kay Reid
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.spfldhs.bham.sch.uk">http://www.spfldhs.bham.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8 December 2015, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is in a hard federation with Lindsworth Special School. The schools share a single governing body. An executive headteacher oversees both schools in the federation. She was appointed after the last section 8 inspection of the school.

## Information about this inspection

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

- During the inspection, we visited a large number of lessons and observed pupils at work. We spoke with pupils about their learning and wider experience of school. We met with leaders and staff. We spoke to them about the quality of education being provided by the school.

- We paid particular attention to early reading, mathematics, science and PE. We also visited other lessons. We spoke to staff and pupils about these other lessons.
- We scrutinised a range of documents, including key information about safeguarding, behaviour and attendance. We looked at the provision for pupils' personal, social, moral and spiritual development.
- We met with governing body members and a representative of the local authority. We took account of the 15 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including 14 written responses, and met with one parent. We took account of the 31 responses to the staff questionnaire.

### **Inspection team**

Mike Cladingbowl, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Lowry	Ofsted Inspector
Sarah Ashley	Ofsted Inspector

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