

Inspection of a good school: Spring Lane Primary School

Spring Lane, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN1 2JW

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 October 2021

Outcome

Spring Lane Primary School continues to be a good school.

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Spring Lane is a friendly and inclusive school. Pupils are polite and well mannered. Teachers help pupils to understand the difference between right and wrong. Pupils respect each other's differences. They welcome new pupils to the school regardless of their background. Pupils say that bullying is rare, but that adults help them to resolve any issues quickly.

Pupils understand the school's behaviour strategies and enjoy the rewards they receive. In classrooms, staff manage pupils' behaviour well. Leaders ensure that staff reward positive behaviours. Pupils comment that in class 'good behaviour is famous'. This is not always the case during lunchtimes, when some pupils are not respectful to all staff. Some pupils use derogatory language. A few pupils struggle to manage their behaviour on the playground, and occasionally, fights break out. Adults step in quickly to manage these situations, but sometimes pupils try to keep out of sight of the adults.

Parents commented how staff at the school are 'professional, supportive and helpful'.

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

Leaders promote positive relationships and high aspirations. They are ambitious for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school's special educational needs coordinator (SENDCo) ensures that pupils with specific needs have access to the resources they need to succeed in school.

The mathematics curriculum helps pupils, including those with SEND, to know more and remember more over time. Teachers identify the small steps needed to help pupils understand the learning. Leaders have identified that pupils need more practice in

recalling key facts quickly. They have adapted plans to ensure that pupils do this regularly. Pupils in the early years are supported well to understand basic concepts through play-based activities.

The teaching of early reading is in a period of change at the school. Leaders are still considering which programme to use. Currently, teachers use a mixture of different phonics programmes. Pupils at the earliest stages of reading do not consistently receive high-quality phonics teaching. Books do not always match the sounds pupils have learned in lessons. This means that the weakest readers are not being supported to catch up quickly.

Leaders have designed a curriculum that outlines what pupils need to learn. However, this knowledge is not broken down into small steps. Some curriculum plans do not show exactly how pupils will develop their understanding of how to become experts in the subject. For example, in geography plans do not show how pupils will get better at using different types of maps and fieldwork. Therefore, curriculum plans do not enable all staff to support pupils at different stages of development in all subject areas.

Pupils are encouraged to show resilience, independence and collaboration throughout the school day. As one pupil commented, teachers 'encourage and inspire us'. Pupils enjoy a wide range of after-school clubs. Staff ensure that pupils with SEND are able to participate in clubs and visits. The school introduces pupils to the principles of democracy and voting. Teachers help pupils develop their understanding of well-being and mindfulness. Leaders use local community groups to understand what is happening beyond the school gates so that they can meet the needs of pupils.

Staff in the early years ensure that the curriculum meets children's needs. They use resources and equipment well to support children's learning. For example, adults help children in the three-year-old setting to explore language and experiences linked to rain collecting in the covers, while pupils in the Reception class used the construction equipment to compare the lengths of castle walls.

The majority of staff feel that leaders are considerate of their workload and well-being. They are given time to complete any additional work. Governors and trustees make checks on the well-being of all staff.

In discussion with the headteacher, the inspector agreed that early reading, curriculum planning and lunchtime behaviour may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have identified the risks pupils may face in the local area. They have adapted curriculum plans to help pupils understand about these risks. For example, as pupils increasingly have access to technology, leaders have prioritised the teaching of online safety.

Leaders ensure that all staff have regular training and up-to-date information about safeguarding. Staff understand the procedures for reporting concerns. Leaders monitor records regularly to ensure that trends and patterns in pupils' behaviour and safeguarding needs are identified quickly.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- An effective, consistent phonics programme is not used. For pupils at the early stages of reading, reading books do not consistently match the sounds they know. As a result, pupils who need additional support to learn to read do not quickly develop the knowledge and skills needed to become successful readers. Leaders need to implement and establish the new phonics programme quickly. They should ensure that all staff are provided with training so that the programme is implemented rigorously.
- Although leaders have developed curriculum plans, the knowledge that leaders want pupils to know is not identified and carefully sequenced. Curriculum plans do not outline the disciplinary knowledge pupils need to know over time. This hinders pupils from building on what they already know and can do. Leaders need to identify the precise knowledge that they want pupils to acquire and remember so that they are ready for their next stage in education.
- Pupils' behaviour remains inconsistent during some parts of the school day. Some pupils do not respond to all adults in the same way. This means that at key social times, pupils do not demonstrate the high standards of behaviour that are evident at other times. Leaders need to ensure that all adults have sufficient training so that pupils' behaviour is consistent throughout the school day. Leaders need to ensure that pupils who need more help to regulate their emotions are identified early and provided with timely support.

Background

When we have judged good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2016.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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

Unique reference number	138493
Local authority	West Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10199891
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	475
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Oliver Coss
Headteacher	Peter Hynes
Website	www.springlaneprimaryschool.com
Dates of previous inspection	28 and 29 June 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school joined the Campfire Education Trust in September 2018.
- The current headteacher started in April 2021. A new leadership structure has been established, including the appointment of a deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher and a school business manager.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school has received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in their school evaluation.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the SENDCo, representatives of the local governing body and the trust, curriculum leaders and teachers.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their

learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about art and design and geography.

- Attendance, behaviour logs and safeguarding records were analysed. Meetings with leaders and different staff across the school were held to discuss the safeguarding of pupils.
- Pupils' behaviour was considered at various times of day, including lunchtime.
- Views of parents, pupils and staff were considered through the Ofsted surveys and by meeting parents during the inspection.

Inspection team

Shaheen Hussain, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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