

# Inspection of Spring Gardens Primary School

Brightman Road, North Shields, Tyne and Wear NE29 0HP

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Inspection dates: 8 and 9 December 2021

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Good**

Early years provision

**Good**

Previous inspection grade

Good

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

This is a school where everyone knows each other. Leaders have built a close-knit community. Strong relationships between staff and pupils mean that pupils feel safe and well cared for. Pupils say that bullying is not tolerated. They are confident that staff will sort it out if it happens. Pupils told inspectors that they can speak to staff and 'buddies' if they have any worries or concerns.

Pupils work hard in lessons and want to achieve well. They have positive attitudes to their learning. Pupils take pride in their work. The vast majority of pupils behave very well. They like the rewards they receive for good behaviour. Pupils are polite, courteous and respectful. They happily say 'Good morning' while holding doors open for each other and adults.

Since the last inspection, the quality of education that pupils receive has declined. Pupils have not achieved as well as they should in a range of subjects, including reading, despite the good start in the early years. The new headteacher and other leaders are making the right changes to improve the school's curriculum.

Parents and carers welcome the improvements. Typically, they describe the school as 'getting better'. They appreciate being included in the life of the school more recently.

Leaders are determined to provide opportunities that will broaden pupils' horizons. Pupils engage in constructive debates. During the inspection, Year 6 pupils enthusiastically debated topical issues such as climate change. Pupils appreciate the wide range of after-school clubs such as football, choir, steel pans and gymnastics. All of these are well attended.

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

Leaders, including governors, want the best for pupils. The new headteacher has galvanised staff and raised expectations of what pupils can achieve. As a result, pupils' achievement is improving. Even so, pupils still have gaps in their knowledge in a few subjects.

Leaders have not ensured that the curriculum for reading is effective. The school's reading curriculum is not well thought out and organised. Books are not well-matched to the sounds pupils know. As a result, pupils are not securing the basics of reading in key stage 1. This means they struggle to access a range of subjects. A large proportion of pupils throughout the school are working below what is expected for their age. This is the result of weaknesses in the phonics curriculum and a lack of subject expertise of leaders and staff.

In key stage 2, struggling readers do not receive effective support to help them catch up quickly with their phonics. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Most subject leaders are passionate about their roles. They have strong subject knowledge. They now ensure that teachers know what to teach and when. Teachers have recently received subject-specific training. They plan the important knowledge that they want pupils to know. For example, in mathematics, teachers explain new learning clearly. They address misconceptions effectively. Teachers provide additional support for pupils who need it to ensure that they keep up with the school's curriculum for mathematics. Teachers start lessons by checking what important knowledge pupils can remember. These checks help pupils build upon their prior learning well in mathematics. Pupils enjoy mathematics and solving complex mathematical problems.

In a few subjects, such as design technology and science, some teachers have not received subject-specific training. Because of this, they do not consistently teach the planned curriculum as intended. In these subjects, pupils do not learn and remember more as they should. Leaders have plans in place to address this.

The school's special educational needs team has a clear strategy for improving provision for pupils with SEND. Pupils' needs are identified quickly and accurately. Teachers receive ongoing high-quality training to support pupils with SEND. They use the information to ensure that pupils with SEND are well supported in lessons.

Leaders are beginning to take effective action to improve attendance. Still, too many pupils are persistently absent from school. Leaders have a range of plans to improve attendance, including working with families.

Leaders promote pupils' personal development effectively. For example, pupils are taught about physical and mental health. Pupils learn how to share their ideas and feelings with confidence. As one pupil commented, 'Healthy does not just mean exercise and healthy eating, it also means keeping your mind healthy.' Voting for the school council members helps pupils to understand how democracy works. Pupils understand about tolerance and respecting others' differences.

In the early years, children get off to a great start. They develop good learning habits and respond well to enthusiastic staff. Children are happy and safe. Parents agree. Adults support pupils to improve their vocabulary effectively. Children develop their basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics well. During the inspection, children eagerly used objects to count and order numbers.

Governors know the school well. They are fully committed to improving the school. They are beginning to hold school leaders to account more effectively for the quality of education. Governors recognise that there is more to do to improve the quality of education that pupils receive.

Staff well-being is at the forefront of leaders' minds. Staff appreciate the kind gestures from leaders that remind them that they are valued. All staff who completed Ofsted's online survey agree that their workload is well considered by leaders. Staff morale is high.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding. Leaders and governors make sure that safeguarding is a high priority. The relevant recruitment checks are carried out on staff before they start to work at the school. Record-keeping is meticulous. Staff know pupils and their families very well. They are vigilant and they know exactly what to do if they have concerns about a pupils' welfare or safety. Staff receive up-to-date safeguarding training, including on sexual abuse, harassment, radicalisation and extremism. Staff with responsibility for safeguarding work with external professionals to make sure pupils get the help they need in a timely manner.

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

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

- Leaders have not ensured that the school's early reading curriculum is effective. As a result, too many pupils do not learn to read as soon as they should. Leaders should review the teaching of reading and phonics across the school and ensure that staff and leaders are well trained to teach phonics. They should check that the school's new programme is being implemented rigorously so that pupils quickly catch up with the expectations of the programme. Leaders should ensure that struggling readers in key stages 1 and 2 receive high-quality support to make sure they catch up to become fluent readers.
- Too many pupils are persistently absent from school. Because of this, these pupils are not achieving as well as they should. Leaders should continue to address weak attendance by implementing their well-considered plans to improve attendance. These include working with parents so that they understand the importance of strong attendance.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	108574
<b>Local authority</b>	North Tyneside
<b>Inspection number</b>	10200732
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	375
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Michael Young
<b>Headteacher</b>	Timothy Jones
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.springgardensprimary.org.uk">www.springgardensprimary.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	29 November 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in September 2021.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the senior leadership team, the special educational needs coordinator, middle leaders and a range of teaching and support staff. An inspector also spoke with representatives of the local governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors evaluated the quality of education by looking closely at the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, design technology and history. Here,

inspectors met with the curriculum leaders for each subject, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and spoke to pupils and teachers.

- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Inspectors met pupils formally and informally to discuss their views on behaviour. Inspectors also met with different members of staff and support staff to gauge their views on how well pupils behave and conduct themselves. Inspectors spoke to some pupils who have received sanctions in the past.
- Inspectors evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding. Inspectors looked at the school's policies relating to safeguarding, met the designated safeguarding lead and considered records of the vetting checks the school makes on its staff.
- Inspectors looked at other information about behaviour, attendance and extra-curricular activities that support pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors considered the 16 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff. Inspectors also considered the views of the 21 parents in their responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, as well as the 17 free-text responses.

### **Inspection team**

Jean Watt, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Angela Whistler

Ofsted Inspector

Kathryn McDonald

Ofsted Inspector

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