



Springfield Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number 134083
LEA Birmingham

Inspection number 274801
Inspection dates 21 - 22 June 2005
Reporting inspector Mrs Lorna Brackstone

Inspection deemed to have been carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996 according to section 12(3) of the same act.

Type of School	Primary	School address	Springfield Road
School category	Community		Moseley
Age range of pupils	3 - 11		Birmingham
			B13 9NY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	(0121) 4643618
Number on roll	678	Fax number	(0121) 4646988
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Roger King
Date of previous inspection	N/A	Headteacher	Ms Liz Rose

Age group	Published	Reference no.
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Introduction

The inspection was a pilot of the new arrangements for inspection announced by Ofsted in consultation paper of February 2004. It was carried out with the support and co-operation of Springfield Primary School and of the local education authority.

The inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Springfield is a very large primary school with 22 classes, which is situated about halfway between Birmingham city centre and Solihull in the West Midlands. Almost all its pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and speak English as an additional language. The vast majority of pupils are of Pakistani heritage. Thirty-nine per cent of the pupils claim free school meals, and this is above average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is average, and most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. The turnover of pupils each year is higher than in most schools. Staff recruitment and retention have been significant problems in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 since the school opened in September 2003, following the amalgamation of the infant and junior schools on the same site. Whilst there was extensive refurbishment at the time of the amalgamation, the buildings date from Victorian times and offer little opportunity for further development.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

This is a satisfactory school that provides sound value for money. Parents and pupils hold the school in high regard. A particular strength of the school is the good personal development and well-being of its pupils. Pupils have good attitudes to learning, behave well and form very good relationships.

The school's perception of its effectiveness and the inspectors' view match in all areas of the school's work except in leadership and management. The school judges these to be good but inspectors consider that they are satisfactory overall because standards are still not high enough by the time children leave the school, although standards have improved in the most recent national tests. Nevertheless, in relation to their attainment on entry into school, which is very low, pupils make satisfactory progress overall. In Years 3 to 6, pupils make good progress because curricular provision, teaching and learning are good. Staff in these year groups have been consistent for many years and this makes a difference.

Progress in Years 1 and 2 was unsatisfactory because there were difficulties in recruiting staff to teach in this area. Senior staff have been teaching in these six classes and, as a result, standards and progress have improved.

In the Nursery classes, children make satisfactory progress but this is not maintained during their time in Reception. The quality of teaching has not been good enough in the Reception classes because of significant staff changes, the unavoidable long-term absences of key staff and the inexperience of some teachers within the Reception Year group. The accommodation has also restricted what the school can provide in this area. There is a satisfactory improvement in the quality of teachers' planning in Reception, which is improving the quality of teaching. This is a result of the decision to use the skills of the deputy headteacher to support the teachers in the Reception.

The headteacher and her deputy have worked very hard over the past two years to unite the staff of the two schools and to raise standards. The improvements already made in the school demonstrate that it has the capacity to make further progress.

Grade: 3

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of the provision for Reception children.
- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science so that more pupils reach the levels expected nationally.
- Improve the quality of teaching.

Achievement and standards

Progress is satisfactory overall in relation to the pupils' very low starting points. In the Year 6 national tests in 2004, results were below average in English, mathematics and science. They were above average when compared to schools are similar. Standards seen during the inspection were also below average, but there has been an improving trend over time and challenging targets have been met. The positive results against those of similar schools indicate good progress, and this matches the inspection findings for pupils in Years 3 to 6. The most recent national tests for Year 6 indicate that, in particular, improvements have been made in mathematics and science. Progress in Years 3 to 6 is good because there is a steady, competent team of staff who teach well.

In Year 2, results in 2004 were well below average. The most recent national test results for Year 2 show a good improvement in science and an upward trend in mathematics. This improvement is a result of senior staff working in Years 1 and 2. This has created a more stable team which has improved teaching, learning and the curriculum provision in these classes.

Children start school with skills that are very low, particularly in their social skills, and many do not speak English. By the end of Reception, most children will not have achieved the expected level for their age. Each step they take is very small in relation to the journey they need to make to reach the expected levels for their age. However, inadequate accommodation within the Reception classes has an adverse effect on the range of activities teachers can provide and this slows children's progress. The impact of this is particularly noticeable on the achievement of boys. This is because there is insufficient space to provide activities that enable them to learn through active participation.

The best progress occurs in the acquisition of the English language. This is because those pupils who do not speak English are very quickly identified and are given good quality support. During the past academic year, there has been an improvement in the quality of writing as a result of a greater focus on teaching writing in all years. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and the very small number of pupils whose first language is English make satisfactory progress. The school is aware that Somali pupils do not achieve as well as other pupils and is working hard to provide extra support for these children when they enter school with little or no knowledge of the English language.

Grade: 3

Personal development and well-being

Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils are respectful of each other, whatever

their background or particular needs, and relationships are positive except in the Foundation Stage, where children's social skills are still at a low level. Most pupils enjoy lessons and they behave well. A small number of parents expressed concerns about bullying in school. Whilst the school's systems for dealing with bullying are good and all pupils play an important part in dealing with tensions through acting successfully as mediators, it has not yet been completely eradicated.

Pupils know that every child is important to the staff, and that an adult is always around to help them resolve any issues. Pupils say that they are pleased that they feel that their school is a safe place to be. However, the children in the Reception classes do not always have a secure understanding of safety and this is because of the cramped conditions in which they are required to work and play. This happens mostly with the boys who become frustrated with each other and their play becomes aggressive. Pupils in years 1 to 6 have a secure awareness of safety when at play and as they move through the school, and know that daily exercise is important; they have a clear understanding of how to adopt healthy lifestyles.

Pupils make a good contribution to the school and the wider community. For example, the school council has been responsible for many of the changes being made around school, such as the improved provision during lunchtimes. Pupils are involved in charitable fundraising activities, many of which they initiate. They are learning key skills for life. For example, in the school's stationery shop, pupils are solely responsible for buying and selling the stock. There have been determined efforts to improve the level of attendance, but it is still below the national average, and too many pupils turn up late for school. This has a detrimental effect on their learning and does not help them to prepare for later life.

Grade: 2

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. It is good in the junior classes and satisfactory in most other classes, but there are weaknesses in two of the Reception classes. Members of the leadership team are fully aware of the weaknesses within the quality of teaching and carefully monitor planning. However, despite their very best efforts to resolve the inconsistencies in the Foundation Stage, they have been thwarted by staff absences, an unavoidably high turnover of personnel and the need to support inexperienced teachers.

In the most effective lessons, teachers develop positive relationships with the pupils and ensure that learning intentions are clear. Expectations of both

behaviour and work are high, thus promoting a keen response from pupils. Teaching assistants are used well to support those with learning difficulties. The good use of resources, such as interactive whiteboards, helps to make the learning clearer and enables the pupils to develop their basic skills effectively.

The weaknesses in the Foundation Stage are frequently as a result of the unsatisfactory accommodation. Consequently, the needs of these young children are not fully met and this has a detrimental impact on their learning. Teachers in the Nursery classes and in one of the Reception classes provide a good range of interesting activities for the children. However, time is not always used well and some staff organise the children too much and this limits opportunities for learning. In the Nursery classes behaviour is managed well. However, some teachers in Reception are inconsistent in their approach to behaviour management. This means that the children are not always sufficiently challenged and their progress slows down. This is particularly noticeable with the boys who are not given access to a sufficient range of stimulating and meaningful opportunities.

Teachers mark pupils' work regularly but do not always clearly identify what they need to do to improve. Teachers gather a lot of detailed information about the progress pupils are making. For example, since the school identified weaknesses in writing, it has introduced new ways to record how well pupils are progressing and the next steps that are required to help raise standards. However, this information is not used well enough in the Reception classes to provide appropriate teaching and learning activities.

Grade: 3

Curriculum and other activities

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. An appropriate range of activities promotes pupils' learning in Years 1 to 6. A good range of visitors work with the pupils, and visits to local exhibitions and places of interest, and the performance of dramatic presentations also enhance the curriculum. The curriculum for children in the Nursery and Reception classes has significant weaknesses and this is because the accommodation is inadequate. Consequently, staff are not able to provide these young children with a full range of exciting and stimulating activities, which enable them to make sufficient progress in all areas of learning. The school promotes a healthy lifestyle and makes the pupils aware of risks that they might meet and the need to keep safe when faced with these risks.

A range of lunchtime clubs has recently been introduced at the suggestion of the school council. These clubs, such as sewing, Urdu and mathematical games, as well as the more usual sports, are very popular and are organised effectively by the teaching assistants.

Grade: 3**Care, guidance and support**

Parents and carers feel that the school cares for and supports their children well, and they appreciate the regular opportunities for meeting teachers to discuss their children's progress. Inspectors agree with their views and recognise that this includes all pupils, including those who find learning difficult. Child protection and health and safety procedures are very clear, up-to-date and fully understood by staff. Through a variety of initiatives, staff carefully promote and monitor pupils' health and progress. Discussions with pupils confirm that they know their opinions are valued and that they will be listened to when they need help. For example, they talk to the school council if they have a concern or pop a message into a box that is kept outside the headteacher's office. '*Bully Busters*' also ensure that pupils know what to do if they have a problem with their classmates. Pupils are looked after well and the child protection procedures ensure that all staff are aware of the most vulnerable pupils. Staff manage the behaviour of most pupils well. Pupils receive satisfactory guidance from their teachers to help them to improve their work and the school's arrangements are improving.

Grade: 3**Leadership and management**

There are several good features of leadership and management but there are also some aspects that are less sharp. The headteacher and her deputy provide strong leadership to the whole school community. Their passionate commitment to the pupils and their determination to provide a high standard of education are shared successfully with most staff. The leaders of key subjects have a satisfactory but developing role. Management of the Foundation Stage has been a real challenge because of unavoidable staffing issues and this is reflected in the weaknesses in the provision. Governors are supportive of the school and are involved in major decisions. Whilst they fulfil their statutory duties, the school is aware that governors could challenge the senior management team more effectively.

There has been a consistent focus on raising standards in writing and the success of this initiative is evident in the improving progress of pupils. However, standards in other key skills remain below average. There are regular checks on the quality of teaching but these are not sufficiently rigorous to focus on what needs to be improved. The data collected on how well pupils are doing are used satisfactorily to check on how well different groups of pupils perform. For example, the headteacher and deputy are fully aware of the weaknesses in the Foundation Stage.

Resources are managed well but staffing difficulties are having an impact on provision within the Reception Year group. The accommodation for the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory and does not fully enable the systematic development of children's basic skills. The school works closely with parents and links with external agencies support pupils' learning well.

Grade: 3

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INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate.	School Overall	16-19
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OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	4	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	N/A	

ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS

How well do learners achieve?	3	
The <i>standards</i> reached by learners	4	
How well learners make <i>progress</i> , taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The behaviour of learners	2	
How well learners enjoy their education	2	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	

THE QUALITY OF PROVISION

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	3	
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote a high quality of care and education	3	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily.	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise.	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse.	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health.	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements.	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place.	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism.	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them.	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships.	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them.	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community.	Yes
The extent to which the school enables learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills.	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams.	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in Key Stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form.	N/A
Education for all learners aged 14-19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy.	N/A

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The School Council
Springfield Primary School
Springfield Road
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23 June 2005

Dear Pupils

As you know, we visited your school recently. We very much enjoyed our time and would like to thank you for all the help that you gave us. We were impressed with how well you behaved and the care you take of one another. We thought that you would like to know our views about your school.

What we think your school does well

- You are looked after very well by the adults who work in your school.
- The school council does a really good job of collecting the views of others, and helping the adults to organise daily routines. We particularly like your Notice Board and Stationery Shop, and the way you help at breaktimes.
- Most of you take seriously the importance of eating healthily at school and taking physical exercise.
- We thought it was a very good idea that your parents and friends were invited into school for a weekly health programme.

What we have asked the school to do now to improve:

- The standards you are reaching in your work are gradually rising, but they are still not as good as they need to be for your future.
- We think that the learning for the younger children needs to be more exciting and interesting, and better organised.
- We saw some good teaching in your school, and would like to see even more.

Your headteacher and teachers know what needs to be done to give you the education you deserve, and we are sure that the staff will continue to work hard in the future to make Springfield School even better.

Very best wishes

Mrs Lorna Brackstone
Lead Inspector