



Springwell School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116620
Local Authority Southampton
Inspection number 290566
Inspection date 28 February 2007
Reporting inspector Kay Charlton

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary	School address	Victoria Road
School category	Community special		Netley Abbey
Age range of pupils	4-11		Southampton SO31 5DR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02380 453259
Number on roll (school)	50	Fax number	02380 455438
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Tim Elliott
		Headteacher	Mrs Jackie Partridge
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Springwell School was formed in September in 2006 as part of the Local Authority (LA) re-organisation of special schools. Pupils and staff from the school for pupils with severe learning difficulties joined the school for pupils with moderate learning difficulties. A further twelve pupils were admitted at this time bringing the new school roll to 50. In September 2007, the school is due to move to a new building. Pupils come from a wide geographic area and all have statements of special educational need concerned with learning difficulties. An increasing number of pupils have complex needs. The majority are of White British origin and a small number speak English as an additional language. Pupils come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. Attainment on entry is well below that in mainstream schools. The school has gained the Enhanced Healthy Schools Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Springwell is a good school. At a time of significant change, the very positive attitudes of staff and governors are ensuring that the pupils come first. Teamwork is central to the school's success and pervades every aspect of its work. Pupils and parents hold the school in high regard and comments such as 'This school is brilliant' and 'The school has a very good way of getting the best out of each child' are a testament to its effectiveness.

Pupils' achievements are good, although standards are low because of pupils' low starting points. Whatever their background or ability, they usually meet, and often exceed, their challenging targets because teaching is good. In the Foundation Stage, children settle well and make good progress. Throughout the school, staff plan carefully to make sure that the needs of pupils are met and they gain the confidence to think for themselves. Staff are enthusiastic and make learning both interesting and fun. Occasionally, they do not use a sufficiently wide range of teaching and learning strategies to fully challenge all of the pupils. This is a key priority within the school improvement plan because the range of pupils' needs in each class increased significantly when Springwell School was formed. The curriculum is well organised and there is a good range of enrichment activities. The school has excellent links with parents and other key professionals who provide high quality support for pupils' development.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Relationships are excellent, and pupils work well and play with others happily and show a keen sense of enjoyment in their lessons. Attendance is good. Staff are totally consistent in the way in which they apply the school's behaviour management strategies and this ensures that pupils' behaviour is excellent. Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Staff provide exemplary care and all pupils make significant gains in developing their self-esteem and independence. Staff know the pupils' needs well and they set clear and appropriate targets for individuals. The pupils who were admitted to the school in September did not have records to show the progress they had made over time. Consequently, the school has not been able to set meaningful whole school targets against which it can accurately check its overall effectiveness. This forms another key priority within the school improvement plan.

The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. She inspires the staff team so that all are working tirelessly to achieve the school's vision. Together they review and evaluate practice so that there is clarity of purpose about how future improvement will be achieved. The senior team work effectively alongside colleagues in classrooms to ensure that significant improvement has taken place since September 2006. The school is well on its way to addressing its current key priorities and it is very well placed to improve in the future.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that staff use a sufficiently wide range of teaching and learning strategies to fully challenge all pupils.
- Ensure that meaningful whole school targets are set, against which the school can check its overall effectiveness.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The achievement of pupils of different backgrounds and abilities is good. Although standards are well below those in mainstream schools, all pupils have made good progress from first starting school. The school stresses the importance of pupils thinking for themselves. From first starting in the Foundation Stage this has a very positive impact on pupils' achievements. Throughout the school, pupils try hard and usually meet or exceed the challenging targets that staff set for them. The strong focus the school places on literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) ensures that pupils make good progress in developing the skills they will need in later life. There are situations, because of the very wide range of pupils' needs in each class, where not all pupils are fully challenged and at these times the progress of some individuals is too slow. The school is actively addressing this issue.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development is a major strength. They make impressive gains in developing their confidence, independence and social skills. They learn to understand their rights and their responsibilities because this is a cornerstone of the provision. Pupils gain insight into their own feelings and how these affect others. They thoroughly enjoy school, have extremely positive attitudes and are keen to attend. Attendance is good and pupils' behaviour is excellent. They care for each other very well and the school council plays a very active role in helping to improve provision; for instance by improving the facilities available at playtimes. Pupils develop an excellent understanding of healthy eating and say how much they like the healthy school meals. They appreciate the importance of being safety conscious and become very mature, making a particularly strong contribution to the school community. Through the very thorough development of their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills, they are well prepared for their future economic-well being. Overall, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teaching and support staff work together very successfully to make sure that pupils learn effectively. All are enthusiastic and make learning fun. In the Foundation Stage, good use is made of play to ensure that children are active in their learning. In all age groups, staff know the pupils' needs well and use high quality resources to advantage to make learning meaningful. As a result, the pupils are highly motivated and try hard to improve. Staff assess each pupil's progress thoroughly and make good use of this information to plan future work. A significant strength is the totally consistent way in which they apply the school's behaviour management strategies. This establishes a secure and stable learning environment in which pupils feel valued and want to do their best. There is some excellent practice where staff use a very wide range of teaching and learning strategies to fully challenge the learning of all pupils in the class. A particularly good example was seen in a lesson about the use of factual books. However, this is not consistent in all lessons and, at these times, some pupils could do better.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. The school ensures that the pupils have full access to the Foundation Stage curriculum or the National Curriculum as appropriate. There is a very strong emphasis on pupils' personal development and careful attention is given to the development of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. There is a very good programme of enrichment and pupils are impressed with all the extra activities they can take part in. They talk about these with real enthusiasm, such as a recent visit to a mosque and the football coaching sessions. The school is systematically reviewing all its schemes of work to ensure that they are fully relevant to the wider range of learners' needs in the school. This process is well underway and is making good use of the skills of staff from the two very different schools that were amalgamated.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Exemplary care and guidance are provided for pupils' personal development, based on the excellent relationships between pupils and staff. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are robust and reviewed on a regular basis. Teaching and support staff show commitment to ensuring very high levels of care for pupils at all times. At breaks, lunchtimes and during out-of-school activities, they are vigilant and conscientiously implement the school's procedures. Staff give generously of their time to listen to pupils and help them to appreciate the need to think through situations for themselves; for example to sort out a disagreement about the way a game was being played. In

this way, pupils make significant gains in developing their confidence and independence.

Support for pupils' academic progress is good and is based on a secure understanding of the needs of individuals. Clear individual targets are set and these play a crucial part in helping pupils to achieve well. The school involves parents very effectively in supporting their child's learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The overall leadership and management of the school, including that of the Foundation Stage, are good. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership by inspiring everyone through her practical and caring approach. Staff fully support her vision of excellence and work together very well. This is an important factor in the school's success. By working closely with individuals and by a strong commitment to professional development, the senior team has already had a significant impact on improving the quality of teaching since the school was opened in September 2006.

The governing body is supportive and holds the school to account. It is fully involved in school life and governors are often in school. They ensure that all statutory requirements are met and that the school provides good value for money. The governing body is open to new ideas and provides very good opportunities for parents to express their views and takes account of these appropriately. Subject co-ordinators, most of whom took on changed responsibilities in September 2006, are very positive about their roles and have made a good start in leading their subjects.

The school's self-evaluation is good. The work of the senior team is particularly effective in ensuring that there is thorough monitoring of classroom practice and other aspects of the school's work and that there is real clarity about where improvement is most needed. However, as yet the school does not have sufficient data against which to set whole school targets and judge its overall performance.

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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
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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for your help when I came to inspect your school on 28 February 2007.

You said that you like coming to school and everyone is very friendly and that you can go to the staff if you are unhappy about anything. I agree with your views and, like you, I think it is a good school.

I could see that you try hard and enjoy your work. You achieve well and usually reach your targets and often do better than this. You work well and play happily with others and clearly enjoy school. Your behaviour is excellent and you take on responsibilities, such as being members of the school council very well. Teaching is good. Staff plan carefully and they make learning fun. They organise a wide range of events and visits out of school to add extra interest, for example visits to the mosque and football coaching. All of the staff care for you and put your needs first. Staff listen to what you have to say and help you to think through things for yourselves, for instance if you do not agree when playing a game.

The headteacher and the senior team support you and the staff very well and they are helping everyone to develop their skills so that the school continues to improve. Staff are working towards using a wider range of ways to make sure that all of you think hard in every lesson. They are also trying to build up more information about how well you are all doing so that the school can check that it is doing a good job. You can help by making sure you do your very best at all times.

Yours sincerely

Kay Charlton

(Lead inspector)