

Springwood Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	132153
Local Authority	Salford
Inspection number	293962
Inspection date	20 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Michael McDowell

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	2–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	169
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr S Hayton JP
Headteacher	Mr Paul Morrison
Date of previous school inspection	10 February 2003
School address	Barton Road Swinton Manchester M27 5LP
Telephone number	0161 7780022
Fax number	0161 7285767

Age group	2–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Springwood primary school provides education for children aged between 2 and 11 who have statements of special educational need or who are being assessed for a statement. The majority of pupils have severe or moderate learning difficulties. A growing minority has complex communication difficulties including autistic spectrum disorders (ASD). A few pupils have profound and multiple learning difficulties. Most pupils are White British. A small proportion is from minority ethnic groups. In the great majority of cases English is spoken at home. Because of their learning difficulties and/or disabilities pupils' standards are well below average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The overall effectiveness of the school is good. Pupils achieve well. In the Foundation Stage children make good strides in developing their communication, personal and social skills and good progress towards all their learning goals. Pupils aged from 5 to 11, whatever their starting points, respond to good teaching and make good progress. They achieve more than expected in English, mathematics, science and personal and social education. Their achievements are also particularly good in music and art.

Teachers understand the capabilities of their pupils and the ways in which they learn best. They assess their progress accurately and set work which challenges them. They manage their classes well and make effective use of the support staff and resources. Pupils enjoy their lessons and show this by being attentive and eager to participate. The curriculum is good and meets the needs and interests of individual learners well. In the Foundation Stage learning through play is buttressed by structured opportunities to develop language, communication and social skills. Children learn to use and respond to sign and to make use of simple electronic communication aids. The curriculum for those aged 5 to 11 meets statutory requirements and is enriched by opportunities for learning outside of the classroom. There is good provision for social learning.

Pupils' personal development is good. They attend well and their behaviour is excellent. They are sure that there are members of staff to whom they can turn if they are worried. Over time, they become increasingly sociable and fit well into their class group. They play a part in drawing up positive rules for behaviour and they try hard to keep to these. They are aware of the need to eat sensibly and to take exercise. They are keen to be active and show this by their enthusiasm for school activities such as dance or football and by their happy and energetic play at break times. They would like to contribute their ideas to the school but, while there is a school forum for the older and more able pupils, some are not certain about how they can do this.

Care, guidance and support are exceptionally good. This is chiefly because the school is very well placed to ensure that pupils and their families receive all the help they need because key agencies have bases within the school building. Relationships between the school and other agencies acting in the interests of children are exceptionally effective. Procedures for child protection and safeguarding children are robust and are frequently reviewed. Vetting procedures for all adults who work with the pupils are properly carried out. Pupils are helped to understand how well they are doing and what they must do to improve. Those who are able to do so, play a part in setting their own targets and reviewing their success in achieving these.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher is a very good leader who has worked effectively to move the school forward. He is well supported by the deputy headteacher. The performance of the school is closely monitored. However, it has only recently put in place a system that enables it to track the progress of all pupils over time. The leadership is broadly accurate in its assessment of the school's provision and performance. Only in three areas did it suggest that matters were better than they are. Governance has improved but weaknesses remain. Governors now oversee the school more rigorously and hold the leadership to account. However, not all governors are as active and involved as they should be. Under its present leadership the school is well placed to improve. It offers good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Set up a system to enable the school to track the progress of all pupils over time.

- Provide a means by which all pupils can confidently contribute their ideas about how the school might be improved.
- Improve the effectiveness of governance by ensuring that all governors are actively involved in the task of overseeing the work of the school and holding it to account.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

As a result of effective teaching and careful guidance, children in the Foundation Stage, whatever their capabilities, get off to a good start. Their social and self-help skills develop well. They begin to communicate effectively by emulating the careful signing that teachers and classroom staff use to clarify instructions and questions. Pupils aged between 5 and 11 continue to make good progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities. Those with profound and multiple learning difficulties focus more purposefully on the world around them and join in with or initiate activities. Pupils with ASD make particularly good gains in communication. Pupils who have severe or moderate learning difficulties become confident learners and recall their previous lessons very well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Over their time in the school, pupils become sociable, considerate young people who behave very well. They learn to recognise their own feelings and take account of the needs of others. They are very good at turn-taking and sharing. They have played a part in making the school rules and they keep them well. Their good attendance shows that they like coming to school. They have no fear of being bullied or being treated unfairly. They would like to do more to help the school improve but at present they are not sure how they might do this or how well their suggestions would be received. Pupils are less involved than they might be in contributing to the community of the school and to the broader community beyond it. Pupils enjoy the fruit that they eat at snack time and know that it is important to drink lots of water. Through play, physical education, dance and games, they keep active.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers have good subject knowledge, understand their pupils' needs, and know the best ways to enable them to learn. They skilfully use a variety of methods to engage their attention and help them to communicate. Very good use is made of signing. In the teaching of pupils with ASD picture exchange communication and symbols are used very effectively. Real objects are used well to engage the attention of those with profound and multiple learning difficulties. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively to lead small groups and to support individual learners. Pupils are interested in their lessons and are very attentive and eager to participate. Teachers assess their pupils accurately and keep them informed about their progress. Good use is made of home/school diaries, annual reviews and reports to let parents know about how their children are getting on.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

In the Foundation Stage, play and activities chosen by the children are balanced by well-structured taught sessions. These help to develop vital communication and social skills and move the children forward towards their learning goals. For pupils aged between 5 and 11 the requirements of the National Curriculum are met. The specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities of pupils are taken into account and effective methods are used to make the curriculum accessible to them. Lessons planned for 'hard to reach' pupils seek to provoke positive responses from them by stimulating all of their senses. On the other hand, pupils with ASD are taught in an environment that is free from distraction so that they might focus properly on their tasks. Pupils have opportunities to go on residential visits, to take part in sport and to be involved in cultural events, such as the Salford Dance Festival.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The health and safety of pupils is promoted very well and very thorough risk assessments are made. The policy and procedures for child protection are regularly reviewed and distributed to all members of staff who are required to sign these documents to show that they are fully aware of what is expected of them. The provision made for vulnerable pupils and 'looked after' children is exceptional because the school has excellent links with social services safeguarding teams and other key professionals. This enables prompt and preventative action to be taken. Because medical and health service professionals are based within the school, children who need to attend clinics or receive therapy can do so very readily. This enhances the quality of care that the school provides. The school monitors the progress of pupils effectively, and pupils who are able to do so play a part in setting their own targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher recognises that an increasing proportion of the pupils entering the school have complex communication difficulties, including ASD, and that the school must adapt its provision to meet their needs. Since his appointment in September 2005, he has resolved long standing staffing anomalies and has taken steps to make assessment of pupils' progress more accurate and consistent. The school seeks the views of parents and relationships with them are good. Most praise the school highly. Very rarely however, differences arise with the carers of pupils that the school complaints procedure does not fully resolve. Links with external agencies, including social and health services, are exceptionally good. A tightly focused school improvement plan has been drawn up. Next term it will replace the present plan that is too broad to usefully guide development. The issues identified at the last inspection have been resolved. Teaching and learning are well monitored and behaviour is now very well managed. The school promotes inclusion well and provides all pupils with the opportunity to achieve as well as they can. Governance is adequate. The governors are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and support it, but not all play a sufficiently active part in overseeing its work.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
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.

Annex A

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	3
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	3
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you very much for being so helpful when I visited your school this week. I enjoyed seeing you at work and at play and talking to some of you.

I noticed that you work very hard in your classes and behave very well during lessons, at lunchtime and when you are playing. You are getting on well. You have certainly learned a lot. I was very impressed by your good signing, your good reading and your very good work in mathematics.

Those of you who talked to me said that you enjoyed school. You liked football and sums and going to the Lowry for dance. You were quite sure that there was no bullying going on and you felt safe. You know all about healthy eating and keeping active. I saw how very active some of you were on your tricycles at break. You would like to make suggestions about how the school could become better but you were not sure that any one would listen to your good ideas and take them seriously.

From talking to Mr Morrison and your teachers and looking at records of your work I found out that yours is a good school and that you make good progress. You are well taught and the school helps you to become more independent, sociable and considerate. Your behaviour is excellent and you know how to stay safe and keep healthy. The school looks after you very well and keeps you safe. Springwood is a well run school with a good headteacher and staff.

In order to make your school even better, I have asked Mr Morrison to find a way to keep track of your progress over all of the time you are at the school and to make sure that you are encouraged to put forward your ideas about how to make the school better. I have also asked the governors to become more involved in making sure the school continues to improve.

Thank you once again for being so helpful.