

Springwood Heath Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104545
Local Authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	308624
Inspection dates	12–13 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Geoff Lawrence

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Andrew Campbell
Headteacher	Mr Phil Daniels
Date of previous school inspection	7 July 2003
School address	Danefield Road Liverpool Merseyside L19 4TL
Telephone number	0151 427 7759
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This school was formed from the merger of a primary school with a nearby special school. This was completed in June 2007 when the pupils and staff moved into a new purpose-built school. As a result of this merger, the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need is very high, with 20% of the pupils having complex physical and medical needs. A further 20% have other learning difficulties. The school provides outreach work to support pupils with learning difficulties in other settings. The school offers part-time Nursery provision. The great majority of pupils are White British; very few are from minority ethnic backgrounds or are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The school holds the following awards: Investors in People, Healthy Schools Award, Inclusion Charter Mark and Dyslexia Friendly Status Quality Mark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school is providing a satisfactory education. It is a fully inclusive school with good features. Key strengths are the care, guidance and support provided for all pupils and the provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who, as a result, make good progress. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good and they demonstrate mature attitudes and empathy for their peers. This reflects the emphasis that the school's leadership gives to promoting the welfare of all pupils and giving everyone, whatever their needs, an equal opportunity to take a full part in the life of this unusual school.

Standards overall are very low, but comparing the performance of the school with others is misleading because of the high proportion of pupils with complex learning and medical needs. When an analysis is made of the achievement of its mainstream pupils, using the school's current tracking data, it is clear that, although progress is variable, pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. More needs to be done if all pupils are to achieve as well as those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. There are some inconsistencies across the school, particularly in Key Stage 2. Some lessons have good pace and focus and some have outstanding features. In others, work is not appropriately matched to pupils' ability. As a result, learning slows and standards of behaviour are not as high as in the best lessons.

The curriculum is satisfactory. There is an appropriate emphasis on numeracy and literacy. Teachers are beginning to link subjects together to make them more meaningful for pupils, in addition to making better use of information and communication technology (ICT). These initiatives contribute to pupils' enjoyment of lessons. There is a good focus on personal development, particularly in promoting positive attitudes to health and fitness, which is an aspect of personal development that is outstanding. The curriculum is supported by a good range of out-of-school activities.

Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory, but there are notable strengths. These include excellent partnerships with other agencies. This is a view strongly endorsed by parents. The school has come through a difficult period of change well, during which the headteacher has provided clear leadership. He is ably supported by a dedicated leadership team and this has ensured that the merger of the two schools and the move into the new building took place with minimum disruption. Subject leaders are enthusiastic and many are new in post but, as yet, they do not have a good understanding of whole-school assessment information. This limits their ability to contribute to school improvement, for example by comparing this school's performance to others nationally. The school has good monitoring systems and this has helped to build an accurate picture of its own performance. For example, it has led to the school identifying weaknesses in standards in English and mathematics in Key Stage 2, and taking steps to overcome them. Weaknesses however, lie in the use of information gathered in order to evaluate the impact of the actions taken.

There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The successful merger and the recent record of improvement show the school is soundly placed to make further improvements. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Satisfactory but improving provision in the Foundation Stage enables children to make a solid start to their education. Apart from those who have complex learning difficulties, most children enter the Nursery with the skills and knowledge expected for their age, in all areas. A high priority is given to developing positive attitudes through good personal, social and emotional provision. As a result, children settle quickly, enjoy coming to school and behave well. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are fully included in all activities and all children benefit from this by learning from each other.

The new building has provided a good range of resources that are used well by the staff, but it is too early to see impact of this. Staff plan a wide range of activities for children to develop their knowledge and skills. The outdoor curriculum is used well by some staff. For example, children were busy gardening and when they found worms, staff took the opportunity to extend the children's learning.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Monitoring of individual children's progress helps staff set appropriate tasks. However, the information from assessments of children's learning is not used effectively enough to provide the leadership with a clear overview of progress through the Foundation Stage. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children have made satisfactory progress and their achievement is also satisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the consistency of teaching and learning, particularly in Key Stage, 2 and increase the proportion of good teaching.
- Ensure that leaders make better use of monitoring data to evaluate the impact on standards of school improvement strategies.
- Develop the role of subject leaders so that they have a greater understanding of performance data and so are better able to raise standards and achievement.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

In 2007, Year 2 test results for pupils without learning difficulties and/or disabilities rose for the second consecutive year to reach standards in line with their national counterparts. Standards in Key Stage 2 had previously been adversely affected by staffing difficulties that were beyond the control of the school and this resulted in standards falling to well below average. In the 2007 Key Stage 2 tests, the standards of pupils without learning difficulties and/or disabilities improved on the previous year but remained below average in English and science and well below in mathematics. Pupils' work and school data indicate that measures taken to address some previous underachievement have had the desired effect. Pupils' outcomes are beginning to reflect the standards of which they are capable and all year groups are making at least satisfactory progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well even though they reach lower standards, because their progress is closely monitored resulting in

well targeted and focused learning support. The very few pupils from minority ethnic groups achieve in line with White British pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils' awareness and understanding of others are exceptional because of the successful integration of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities into the school. Their good behaviour contributes well to the school's caring ethos. Pupils feel safe and well cared for and are confident that they can turn to an adult if they have a problem. They are friendly and polite and talk enthusiastically about their lessons and the good playground facilities in the new building. Pupils have an excellent understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and practise this well through sport and physical activities. They work well together and readily accept responsibility as members of the school council. They are also involved in contributing to a variety of local and national charities. The overall levels of attendance are below average, but these are adversely affected by the number of pupils who have complex needs and require additional medical support off site. Attendance for the remaining pupils is average. Their below average basic skills mean that, despite good overall personal development, pupils' readiness to move on to the next stage of education is satisfactory overall.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

In Years 1 and 2, good and better teaching has resulted in pupils making improved progress and standards rising. In Years 3 to 6, while there is some good teaching, too much is simply satisfactory with inconsistencies in practice. Some teachers do not always plan activities that are suitably matched to pupils' ability, partly because they are not making the best use of their assessments of pupils' learning. This means that some pupils find the work either too easy or too difficult and, as a result, do not achieve as well as they could. The school has recognised this as a key area for development. The teaching of pupils with complex learning needs is often exemplary because the staff have good expertise and experience to provide for these pupils. This helps them to make good gains in their personal and academic development. Teachers establish good relationships with their pupils and manage classroom support well. They have been successful in integrating all pupils into class activities wherever possible.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is improving because of better resources in the new building and the fact that teachers are beginning to link subjects together to promote the skills of literacy and numeracy in meaningful ways. It is too early to see the outcomes of these changes. Recent initiatives to improve performance in mathematics and English are not yet embedded and their full impact on standards has not been realised. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported throughout the school, especially in the resourced areas. Personal, social and health education has a strong focus on healthy eating and lifestyles and promotes pupils' awareness very well. There is a wide variety of enrichment activities to enhance the curriculum such as

residential visits and visitors to school. This is supported by a good range of extra-curricular activities. Good use is made of ICT resources to help pupils to learn.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. There are some outstanding features in the level of care provided and the way in which the school works with outside agencies to provide for its pupils. The staff show a high level of commitment to the well-being of all pupils, particularly those who are especially vulnerable or have complex learning and/or medical needs. The school provides a safe and supportive environment, which parents appreciate greatly. Comments include, 'the care my child receives cannot be bettered' and 'my child is thriving'. Most pupils have a good understanding of their targets but the marking of their work is inconsistent and does not always help them to understand their next steps in learning. The school meets the latest government requirements related to safeguarding children, including those who are more vulnerable. Procedures for first aid and risk assessments are in place.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has successfully combined the staff of the two schools. He is building an effective team, which is tackling previous underachievement, resulting in an improvement in pupils' progress. School self-evaluation is satisfactory. Through good monitoring systems, many of the new subject leaders have started to recognise areas for improvement and are beginning to address them. It is in the sharper use of monitoring information to ensure consistently good teaching that leaders have been less successful. Despite some improvement in Year 6 test results for mainstream pupils in 2007, achievement in mathematics and English still requires improvement.

The leadership has been instrumental in developing excellent relationships with local schools, organisations and agencies that contribute well to pupils' good personal development. Governors perform their duties satisfactorily and are supportive of the school.

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Annex A

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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
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 the 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?	2

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Inspection of Springwood Heath Primary School, Liverpool, L19 4TL

Thank you for making us welcome during the recent inspection. We enjoyed talking to you and seeing you work. We think your new school building is superb and has excellent facilities. We were impressed by how friendly, polite and helpful you were towards us and pleased to hear about the many things that you enjoy in school.

These are some of the things that we judged to be good in your school:

- How well all the children and adults from both of the previous schools get on together.
- Adults in school make sure that you are safe, well cared for and happy when you come to school.
- There are interesting things for you to do including after-school clubs and lots of sport.
- You understand the importance of healthy eating and taking lots of exercise.

Yours is a good school, but we have asked your teachers to do some things to make it even better. We want them to try to make sure that all the teaching in your school is as good as the best that we saw. We would also like teachers and the school's leaders to make better use of all the information the school has about you and check that the work planned for you helps you all to get good results.

You can help by continuing to work hard and enjoy school. Best wishes for the future.