

# Springdale Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	104307
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wolverhampton
<b>Inspection number</b>	324013
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 April 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Rodney Braithwaite

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	226
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Hayden Poyntz
<b>Headteacher</b>	Denise Shotton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 May 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Warstones Drive Penn Wolverhampton WV4 4NJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01902 558805
<b>Fax number</b>	01902 558806

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

Springdale Infant School has an average number of pupils and provides for the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school has a Resource Base for 14 pupils with statements of special educational needs, mainly with language and communication difficulties, who are drawn from throughout Wolverhampton. The school has a much higher than average number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average. The number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is lower than average. There is a privately run breakfast and holiday club on site.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Springdale Infant School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. The school has a warm and supportive ethos, and provides a good standard of care and guidance to pupils. This helps them to achieve good personal development. Parents are particularly appreciative of what the school provides for their children. One parent summed up the views of many, saying, 'I cannot praise the staff enough for our child's happiness and enjoyment in a caring and nurturing environment.' Pupils are equally pleased with the school, and their enjoyment and eagerness to learn are obvious from the moment they arrive each day. They make friends easily, develop confidence and self-reliance and join in all their learning activities with great enthusiasm. Pupils feel safe and emphasise that they always have an adult who will help them.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory generally, although many girls make better progress than boys. The school realises that this has been a problem for some time and has introduced new approaches to help boys do better. Early evidence suggests that there is some improvement in boys' attainment, but this takes time and the school understands that it must be sustained. The achievement of pupils with English as an additional language, and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good, including pupils in the Resource Base. They are taught well and receive good support from teaching assistants. This is resulting in an increase in demand for places in the school and a gradual change in the school profile. Attainment on entry to the school in the Nursery is becoming more weighted to children with skills below those expected for their age. The school is meeting this challenge well, and children make steady progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory, and sometimes good. New tracking systems to monitor the progress of pupils have been introduced. Although the data produced is accurate, not all teachers are confident in interpreting the learning progress of pupils or make enough use of this information. Consequently, the school has sometimes been unsure about how much progress has been made by individual pupils. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and manage them well. They provide them with a good, lively and practical curriculum and encourage them to talk confidently and become independent. Teachers have improved their marking and make effective use of both verbal and written comments to help pupils understand their learning targets.

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. There has been improvement in the contributions made by subject coordinators, who have responded well to the guidance of the headteacher and deputy headteacher. An effective team has been created with much more shared responsibility. A strength of the school is its inclusivity, where every pupil feels unique and valued. Challenging targets are being set, but these are sometimes unrealistic because the school does not have enough understanding of children's starting points. This is also shown through the school's self-evaluation which, although satisfactory overall, is inconsistent and occasionally contradictory. Resources are generally of a good quality. However, there is limited access to the outdoor area in the Early Years Foundation Stage which is not used enough. The governing body, although having some vacancies, makes a satisfactory contribution to the management of the school. Although provision for community cohesion is satisfactory overall, the governing body is in the early stages of introducing a new policy for this important area of the school's work.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory, with a strong focus on personal, social and emotional development. The majority of children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills below those expected for their age, especially communication skills. Children are encouraged to take responsibility for a variety of tasks and are confident to explore the activities and opportunities with which they are presented. Children work in a secure environment and adults support them well. Staff observe children's learning carefully and use their observations effectively to inform future planning. Basic skills are covered well and there is a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities. Children make satisfactory progress in most areas of learning and make good progress in communication and language skills from their point of entry. The introduction of a 'letters and sounds' strategy is improving skills. Children enjoy their learning, are courteous and well mannered, and are happy to engage in conversation with adults. Provision for the welfare and care of children is good, with very effective links with parents. The pupils enjoy using the outdoor area, especially 'the forest'. However, although stimulating and exciting, the area is not easily accessible for all children, and there are a number of steps which are tricky to negotiate. The well-balanced curriculum is lively and engaging, and pupils gain great enjoyment from the themes covered. The classrooms are inviting, bright and well resourced, and present a calm and orderly environment for children. All adults work well together as a team and their planning ensures a clear focus on learning.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all staff fully understand pupil tracking data, and can use it to produce a regular and accurate analysis of all pupils' learning progress.
- Firmly establish the recently introduced strategies in literacy to improve the standards and achievement of boys.
- Improve the access and provision for learning in the outdoor area of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

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

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Standards in the school are mostly average and have been for several years, except in 2007, when they were above average. The variation is explained by the differences in the attainment of different year groups on entry to the school. There is strong evidence that the school has a significantly higher proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities than recognised in the past. Additionally, there is a much higher than average number of boys in some year groups, especially in the present Year 2. The school recognises that boys' standards, especially in reading, are below those of girls and overall national expectations, and that some boys have been underachieving in the past. As a result, the school has introduced several new initiatives designed to improve the achievement of boys. Early indications are that boys throughout the school are doing better and are now making satisfactory progress. Most girls achieve well. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those in the Resource

Base and the small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language, make good progress. This is because they receive good quality intensive teaching and support.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils show considerable enjoyment in school life and great enthusiasm for a wide variety of learning activities. They have very positive attitudes to school that contribute strongly to their good personal development. Typically, they describe school as 'fantastic' and 'amazing'. Although there are pupils with specific behavioural problems, pupils generally behave very well in school and the playground. Their relationships with staff and each other are good, and help them to develop confidence and self-reliance. Attendance is satisfactory, although it has fallen slightly this year, but the school is able to identify clearly the reasons for the extended absences of a small number of pupils. Pupils understand the importance of being healthy and the school achieved Healthy School status in 2008. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and assemblies are enhanced by the tuneful and joyful singing of pupils. The recently formed 'little voices' school council members enjoy helping out with 'lonely children' and make suggestions to improve the environment. Pupils feel very safe at school and say they have many adults they can turn to for help. They feel that they learn much from their visits to the botanical gardens and the safari park, and like opportunities to raise money for the local community such as 'teddies for hospitals'. Preparation for their future lives is satisfactory, as pupils develop sound skills in speaking, literacy and numeracy.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, but there is evidence of good teaching in all year groups. Lessons are well planned and teachers manage their classes effectively. Teachers often make learning fun for pupils by choosing themes which they find stimulating. Pupils enjoy their lessons and are always eager to learn and take part in verbal activities. In a Year 1 class, for example, pupils were very enthusiastic in sharing their writing about Jack and the Beanstalk because they had enjoyed many creative opportunities beforehand. Relationships are good and pupils are therefore keen to work hard. Teachers use a variety of strategies in their lessons and many of the pupils are given opportunities to find out things for themselves and learn independently. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively, and support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities particularly well. They are skilled at making pupils think for themselves in order to achieve success. A few lessons lack pace and pupils become frustrated by having to wait to start their tasks. Some teachers are over cautious in setting challenges for pupils, tending sometimes to play safe rather than encourage pupils to attempt higher challenges. Teaching and learning in the Resource Base are consistently good.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school provides a good, stimulating, broad curriculum well matched to pupils' needs. Pupils are provided with a wide range of themed activities such as the design and making of decorated clay tiles of a high standard in Year 2. The provision for art is of good quality throughout the school and classrooms are ablaze with pupils' colourful pictures. One classroom in Year 1

resembled a flower shop, giving pupils experiences across a wide range of the curriculum. Music, singing and Spanish are also areas with good provision by the school. There is a wide range of provision for visits and visitors to the school, which include opportunities to learn about other cultures. Information and communication technology is used well to enhance learning. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is particularly good and is based upon extensive knowledge of each pupil's needs. Literacy and numeracy skills are being developed across all areas of the curriculum, and the introduction of a new phonics scheme is having a positive impact on reading and writing, especially that of boys.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are very well cared for, and both they and their parents appreciate the commitment given by all staff to their welfare. One parent echoes the comments of many when saying, 'The headteacher and teachers do a fantastic job, and you can see they really care.' Parents have opportunities to join their children in school under the 'SHARE' scheme, and are helped to understand how they can contribute to their children's learning. The school has good systems in place to protect pupils and safeguarding arrangements are in place. There are particularly good care arrangements for pupils within the Resource Base. Academic guidance is satisfactory and rapidly improving as pupils become more familiar with their learning targets. Pupils who have learning difficulties are quickly identified and good provision is put in place. The school uses a wide range of different ways to support children, so extra help can be closely matched to their needs. The school makes good use of its many links with outside agencies such as speech and language therapists, to enhance support for pupils, particularly the most vulnerable.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The headteacher is very well respected by the whole school community and parents, and promotes a high standard of care and concern for the well-being of pupils. She is very ably assisted by the deputy headteacher, who is closely involved in supporting the improving contributions to management by subject coordinators. All leaders share a common vision for improving the standards pupils attain. They have improved tracking systems since the last inspection. However, the data provided is not sufficiently well understood by all staff and their analysis of pupils' progress is not always clear. Similarly, whilst there are adequate systems for monitoring teaching and learning, the setting of challenging targets is inconsistent and the school is not always certain on how much progress individual pupils and year groups are making. This is reflected in the school's self-evaluation. Although satisfactory overall, it sometimes offers conflicting or uncertain judgements, especially on progress. Inclusion and equal opportunity are effective and promoted well. Governors make a satisfactory contribution to school management. School resources are used satisfactorily, with good deployment of resources for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

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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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

<sup>1</sup>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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which 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	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	3
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?	2

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
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 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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

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

30 April 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Springdale Infant School, Wolverhampton, WV4 4NJ

We really enjoyed our visit to you in the last two days. You were all so cheerful, we saw lots of smiling faces, and you told us how much you enjoyed school. We also enjoyed your excellent singing in assemblies.

These are the things we liked most about your school.

- You enjoy your learning, behave well, and work well with your teachers and their helpers.
- You get on well with each other, with most of you trying to help others.
- You are all very well cared for in school, and feel safe and know what to do if the fire alarm goes off.
- You reach satisfactory standards in your work. Girls do better than boys, though, so we have asked your teachers and headteacher to make sure that boys catch up with the girls in their work.
- Those of you in the Resource Base, and those of you who find learning quite hard, are doing very well because of the good help you receive.
- You have some very exciting activities in school, especially in art.
- Your parents are very proud of the school and are very pleased with all the staff.
- You have a good team of leaders in the school, who are working very hard to make it even better.

We would like your school to:

- make sure the boys do better
- be certain that everyone knows how well you are making progress, and check this often
- make it easier for all the children in the Reception classes to get outside quickly, safely and often, to the outdoor area.

You can help the school by continuing to work hard. Thank you once again.

Yours sincerely

Rod Braithwaite

Lead inspector