

Springfield Junior School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 112633 |
| Local Authority | Derbyshire |
| Inspection number | 329633 |
| Inspection dates | 13–14 October 2008 |
| Reporting inspector | Andrew Cook HMI |

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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| Type of school | Junior |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 7–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School (total) | 189 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mrs Joan Lane |
| Headteacher | Mrs Lana Coy |
| Date of previous school inspection | 3 May 2007 |
| School address | Springfield Road Swadlincote Derbyshire DE11 0BU |
| Telephone number | 01283 217855 |
| Fax number | 01283 217855 |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

In May 2007, the school was inspected by Ofsted inspectors and judged to require special measures because it was failing to provide an acceptable standard of education. Since that inspection, the school has been regularly monitored by inspectors to evaluate the progress it has made.

As part of the school provision there is an Enhanced Resource facility for children with learning difficulties and those with statements of special educational needs. As a result, there is a much higher proportion of children that have statements of special educational needs when compared to schools nationally.

Most children are of White British heritage. The proportion of children from minority ethnic groups or whose first language is believed not to be English is much lower than the national average. The proportion of children eligible for free school meals is above the national average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools (HMCI) is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Springfield Junior School is an improving school. Children enjoy school and their behaviour is good. While at school all children receive a good level of care. The school now also has a sharper focus on raising standards and an increasing proportion of good teaching is making this happen. Leadership and management of the school is satisfactory. The senior leadership team is growing in confidence and effectiveness and is now ready to build on what has already worked well with the effective support from governors.

Children start the school with standards that are below average and most make satisfactory progress resulting in standards at Year 6 also being below average. Where children achieve standards that are below what is expected of them, the school has generally been successful in targeting extra teaching and support to boost the progress these children make. Although this strategy is having some success there is still some way to go, especially in making sure more able children reach the standards of which they are capable. Teaching for those children who have learning difficulties or statements of special educational needs is helping them to make satisfactory progress. Overall, teaching is having a satisfactory impact on the rate of progress children make.

Children's personal development is satisfactory and the skills they acquire are sound preparation for their education after Springfield. They talk about the improvements that have taken place in the school and are eager for more. Attendance has improved, confirming that children are pleased with what is happening in school. Children feel safe and understand what they need to do to keep healthy. One area of personal development that is lagging behind others is children's cultural development. The school does not give children enough experiences or understanding of their local area, the culturally diverse country they live in or the global community.

The curriculum is satisfactory and the school recognises that lessons can be learned from the way it has improved teaching and learning in English and mathematics. The senior leadership team has rightly seen the need to replicate these successful leadership strategies in other subjects in order to further raise standards and the quality of teaching.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English and mathematics, especially those attained by children that are more able.
- Enable all curriculum co-ordinators to replicate current effective leadership and management strategies.
- Extend children's experiences and understanding of the local, national and international communities.

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

Standards are gradually rising as shown by the school's assessments of children's progress. Although the provisional results for Year 6 tests taken in the summer term 2008 show a small dip in standards, the children who took these tests had lower starting points when they joined the school in Year 3 and most achieved satisfactorily. Standards are rising as measured by tests in other year groups, and the gap between national standards and those achieved by Springfield children is closing. The rise in standards reflects the improved rates of progress children are making. Most children make satisfactory progress and increasing numbers are making good progress. This positive picture is also the case for children with learning difficulties and those with statements of special education needs. The school has accurately identified that the progress more able children make needs to improve.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Two very clear indicators that the school has recently improved are the fact that children enjoy school more and their behaviour is good. For example, children have appreciated the new interactive white boards and lap top computers, which have made learning more exciting. Attendance has also improved and is now much closer to the national average. Children's social, moral and spiritual development is satisfactory. Children's understanding and appreciation of different cultures, including their own, is underdeveloped and they are missing out on learning that would enrich their experiences. Children's understanding of how to stay healthy and safe is satisfactory and they all enjoy appropriate numbers of physical education lessons. The school council and a number of responsible jobs for children in Year 5 and 6, for example as information and communication technology (ICT) technicians, give children opportunities to have a role in their school community. With increasing levels of enjoyment, children are keen and ambitious to get more involved in Years 3 and 4 as well. So far, opportunities to take on responsibility and make a difference have been within the school and do not extend to getting involved in local, national or international issues. The growing confidence children have from the better teaching and their improved achievement ensures they are satisfactorily prepared for their next school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

A key improvement that has taken place since the last inspection is the improvement in teaching. Teaching is always at least satisfactory and now often good, with some that is outstanding. Because so many children have gaps in their learning, the teachers have to work hard to overcome these. The higher proportion of good teaching has improved how well children learn and has helped many make up lost ground. However, it is not consistent enough, nor has there been good teaching for long enough to ensure most children are making at least good progress. In all lessons, adults have very positive relationships with children, which often motivate them to do their best. Teachers' lesson plans are good and they identify what children of different abilities should do. Teachers' work together when they plan lessons which enables them to test out ideas and use each other's expertise. In some of the best lessons teachers use good

questioning skills to help children work through new ideas whilst also challenging them to have a go. Teaching assistants in all classes play an important role and are helping to personalise teaching so that it meets individual needs. While all teachers are improving their practice there are times when they miss opportunities to accelerate the progress children make, especially for the more able children. Children really benefit from improvements in the way teachers mark their work. Teachers take time to highlight what children have done well and what they could do to improve. There are also good opportunities for children to reflect on what the teacher has said about their work and then reply by making a correction or having another go at something that needs more practice. Many new teaching strategies are being used but not always as skilfully as could be and senior staff recognise the need to keep the focus on improving teaching further.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. There have been significant improvements to the way English and mathematics are taught. The focus on English and mathematics has meant that there has been less work to develop other subjects and in some, especially religious education, lessons are not as enjoyable for children. Although children go on visits to places of interest and occasionally visitors come into school as part of children's studies, enrichment of the curriculum is limited. The range of extra curricular clubs on offer makes a satisfactory contribution to the extended curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Springfield Junior is a caring school and all staff take on a pastoral role and, provide a good level of care. Children talk about feeling safe and know that there is someone to talk to if needed. All procedures to keep the children safe are in place. Staff notice quickly when children need extra support or care and take action. The school is very inclusive and children with special needs are well cared for and are helped to achieve satisfactorily academically. The school has good working partnerships with other professionals, which help meet any complex needs children have. Good care and support are now matched with good academic guidance. Children talk confidently about the targets they are aiming for and are often delighted to see what their teacher has written about their work. Parents' confidence in the school is growing as they see their children doing well.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher and deputy headteacher have built up and then sustained a robust focus on improving the school. There has been a determination to dig deep, find out what is not working, bring about change and monitor progress. Since September, a newly formed senior leadership team has already shown that improvement is still on the agenda. The work of the other members on the team has shown that they have the skills to make perceptive evaluations, challenge and role model good and at times outstanding practice. It is still early days for this new senior leadership team. Leadership and management have led the school out of special measures. The impact of their work has yet to reach all areas of the curriculum and they still have work to do with some aspects of teaching.

Governors have effective systems in place to find out how well the school is doing. They visit the school, talk with teachers and leaders and ask pertinent questions. The focus of their activity has been on English and mathematics and their involvement in evaluating more fully other aspects of school is next on their list of actions to undertake. There is optimism in governors' expectations and they describe the school as a place with a 'buzz'. The effective work of the senior leadership team and the support and challenge of the governors have been key factors in the school's success and demonstrate the school's good capacity to improve.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| 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

| | |
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| 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 | 2 |

Achievement and standards

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| How well do learners achieve? | 3 |
| The standards ¹ 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 | 3 |

¹Grade 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

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|---|---|
| How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 3 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 3 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 3 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 3 |
| 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

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| 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? | 2 |

Leadership and management

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| 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 | 2 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated | 3 |
| 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**

15 October 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Springfield Junior School, Springfield Road, Swadlincote, Derbyshire DE110BU

I am writing to tell you the good news. Your school no longer requires special measures because of all the improvements that have taken place. When we came to inspect your school, we realised that many of you are enjoying lessons, learning more quickly and your behaviour is good. We found that your school makes sure you are safe and that you always get looked after when you need some extra care. Many of the improvements have been down to the work your headteacher has done with the help of those in her senior leadership team. The senior leadership team have made some important changes and all of the staff have helped them. Because of all of this work, your lessons are getting better. We also saw some of the ways your teachers are helping you to learn including some of the good marking they are doing which is helping you to reflect and improve.

We have told your teachers that there is more to do to improve the work you do, especially if you are someone who needs a more difficult challenge. Lots of work has been done to improve English and mathematics and we have told Mrs Coy that the same thing has to happen with other subjects. We have also told your teachers that you need to learn more about where you live in Derbyshire, Great Britain and other countries in the world as well.

When we spoke with some of you, it was good to hear that you want to learn more using computers and get more involved in taking on responsibilities. Keep being eager to do well.

Yours sincerely

H M Inspector