

# Spring Vale Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	104330
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wolverhampton
<b>Inspection number</b>	336287
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 March 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Gerald Griffin

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	245
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Matthew West
<b>Headteacher</b>	Pauline Hill
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 April 2007
<b>School address</b>	Kenilworth Crescent Parkfield Wolverhampton
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Most of the available time was spent looking at learning; inspectors visited 18 lessons taught by ten teachers. They joined an assembly, observed break times, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and a carer. Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work, progress records, teachers' lesson plans, school improvement plans, policies and reports. They analysed 113 pupils' questionnaires, 22 staff questionnaires and 69 parents' and carers' questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the progress made by boys at Key Stage 1 and higher attaining pupils in mathematics across the school
- the quality of the challenge that teachers provide to secure good progress at Key Stage 1
- the effectiveness of improvement planning to accelerate and sustain good progress across the school.

## Information about the school

Spring Vale is an average size primary school. Half of the pupils come from White British families. The others come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds in which many do not speak English as their home language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Most of these have moderate learning or speech and language difficulties. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision comprises two part-time Nursery classes and a Reception class. The school has recently gained a number of awards including Healthy Schools and Activemark. The A.C.E.S care club on the site is managed privately and inspected separately.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Spring Vale Primary is a good school. It provides a very safe, caring and happy atmosphere in which pupils grow into mature young people. Parents and carers are very pleased with the standard of education the school provides. Typically, one parent wrote, 'My child really enjoys school and is working way above his targets. The very professional leadership and staff have high expectations of the pupils and work really hard to help them succeed.'

Pupils' learning and their achievement are good. Pupils make a good start to school in the Nursery and Reception classes, where they progress well in all areas of learning. This good progress continues in all year groups and, by the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 6, attainment is above average.

When the school was last inspected, attainment was average and its rise is just one example of the significant improvements which have been made. The progress of pupils at Key Stage 1 and higher attaining pupils in mathematics, which had been satisfactory in recent years, is now good. The school's very well targeted support for its all pupils means that care, guidance and support are now outstanding. Teaching has improved. The school's leadership is good and its unwavering drive to improve the school is clearly articulated and embraced by the staff. This record, together with the school's largely accurate assessment of its strengths and areas for development shows a good capacity for continued improvement.

Pupils are very polite to adults and to each other. They behave well. Their above average attendance reflects their thorough enjoyment of all that the school has to offer. Pupils feel extremely safe in school and have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves and others free from harm. They do their best to maintain a healthy lifestyle, which is reflected in the school's national awards. They reflect maturely on their actions and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

There are clear signs that teaching is improving. While teaching is good overall, one third of lessons seen during the inspection were judged outstanding. Pupils really enjoy their work because teachers plan interesting and relevant tasks for them to do. As a result, pupils have positive attitudes to learning and try hard. Pupils make good progress because their work challenges them well. Occasionally, the pace of learning slows. This typically happens when teachers talk for too long and learning becomes too passive or when teachers' instructions are not clear enough to ensure pupils make a quick start to new work. The lively curriculum supports all the aspects of pupils' personal development well and adds to their enjoyment of school.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Sustain a good pace to learning throughout lessons by ensuring:
  - learning is active because teachers do not talk for too long
  - teachers' instructions are clear so that pupils can make a prompt start to their work.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**2**

The learning observed in lessons was good and sometimes outstanding throughout the school. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 4, pupils were thoroughly engrossed in finding the weight of different boxes and calculating the cost of sending them through the post. They enjoyed checking the accuracy of each other's measurements and discussing their calculations in groups, which sharpened their understanding of problem solving and promoted their independence. Each pupil found their own work very challenging because their particular task matched their capability closely. At the end of the lesson, pupils thought carefully about their progress, which helped them plan what they needed to do next to make their solving of mathematical problems even better. In a Year 5 English lesson, pupils were completely focused on producing a diary entry for a day in the life of a fictional character. They enjoyed predicting what their character would do next in the story they were reading and carefully explained the reasons for their choice to a partner. This helped them clarify their ideas and empathise with their character. Later, they wrote the diary, which mirrored closely their character's feelings, showing their good progress in creative writing.

All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language, enjoy learning and their achievement is good. Boys' progress at Key Stage 1, which was slower than the girls' last year, has accelerated because teachers provide resources, such as games that especially appeal to boys. It now matches that of the girls in reading and writing and the gap between them in mathematics is starting to close. The good progress of higher attaining pupils in mathematics is the result of the success of plans that ensure all pupils, especially those who do not speak English at home, understand fully the technical vocabulary that they will meet in lessons. Pupils' calculating skills have also been improved.

The very rare cases of bullying are quickly resolved by the school. Pupils have an excellent perception of what constitutes unsafe situations and how to keep themselves safe. For example, younger pupils have a crystal clear understanding of how to cross the road safely and older ones know how to keep themselves safe on the internet. They look after each others' safety very well and are confident that the school will resolve promptly any worries they have. Pupils do their best to eat a healthy diet and take plenty of exercise. They are keen to take responsibility as monitors and as members of the school council. They take a real interest in local affairs. For example they have led a

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poster campaign to keep a neighbourhood park litter free. Pupils' positive attitudes, their above average standards in basic skills and attendance means their preparation for secondary school and future work is good.

Pupils' good behaviour is based on a strong moral code. They work productively together in teams. They enjoy sharing each other's customs and festivals and, as a result, have a good understanding of the diversity of British culture.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective is the provision?**

Teachers use resources such a computers well to engage pupils and develop their learning. They regularly assess pupils' progress and use this information skilfully to plan challenging next steps for each individual. Teachers' questions really make pupils think, which promotes their good understanding and accelerates their progress. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to learning, especially for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. Marking and other feedback provide pupils with a clear understanding of how they can make their work better.

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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Lively assemblies provide many good opportunities for pupils to think about their feelings and those of others. Specialist teaching in such subjects as music and German enhance learning in these subjects and add to pupils' enjoyment of school. The school recognises that the curriculum is not meeting fully the needs of all the boys in mathematics at Key Stage 1 and has plans in place to address this. The many educational visits broaden pupils' horizons and the popular sports and other clubs raise aspirations.

Pastoral care is outstanding. Staff use their detailed knowledge of each pupil very well, for example by knowing when to provide one of its many staff who speak home languages to act as translators for pupils and parents who are at the early stages of acquiring English. Vulnerable pupils are especially well cared for. One carer could not speak highly enough about the support the school provided for her and the child, who is very happy at school and making excellent progress. The school liaises extremely well with a very wide range of external agencies to support pupils' academic and personal development. For example, together with the education welfare officer, it is providing first class support for families in challenging circumstances that secures their children's good attendance.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Leaders articulate clearly to staff their ambitious targets and their plans to make the school better. The governors work hard on behalf of the school and challenge it robustly over its performance. Leaders' checks on pupils' progress towards their challenging targets are effective. This means any slowing of progress is quickly spotted and remedied. The checks the school makes on progress in subjects, by classes and by groups are also good. In its quest to make the school outstanding, leaders are correctly working hard to fine tune this aspect of its work to make its judgements on where further improvements can be made even better. Leaders have provided successful training that has sharpened teachers' lesson planning, for example, to improve pupils' skills in solving mathematical problems.

The school successfully places a high priority on safety and safeguarding. Child protection procedures are robust, regularly updated and fully meet current safeguarding requirements. The checks that the school makes on the suitability of adults to work with children are rigorous. The way the school is tackling previous gender inequalities and

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helping pupils who do not speak English at home to make good progress shows its thorough commitment to promoting equal opportunities and eliminating discrimination. The school has evaluated its religious, ethnic and socio-economic context thoroughly, and the school is a happy harmonious society. The school successfully supports many local groups and families in challenging circumstances. Links to communities in Jamaica and in India, to support pupils' understanding of diversity, are developing rapidly.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Boys and girls make similarly good progress in all areas of learning because teaching is good. Most children enter the school with levels of attainment well below those expected for their age and many of them reach average levels by the time they start Year 1. Children are well behaved and polite to each other and adults and their personal development is good. Parents feel well informed about their child's progress and are happy with the advice they are given about how to help their child's learning at home. Children are very safe and well cared for in the stimulating classrooms and outdoor learning area.

Learning is good. For example, Reception children were thoroughly enjoying learning to recognise letters and the sound they make by using puzzles, finding pictures and drawing objects with the letters they were learning. Later they looked for words in books with the same letters, which helped them make good gains in their reading. Teachers' good planning ensures there is an appropriate balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. While teachers' plans include work in the outdoor learning area,



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this facility is sometimes underused to promote learning and children's gaining of independence.

Leaders regularly assess children's progress and use this information well to plan their challenging next steps. Training for adults in the area is promoting their teaching skills well. These are features of the good leadership in the setting.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

About one third of parents and carers returned a questionnaire. All of them feel their child is very safe in school. Many parents and carers said how very well the school cares for its pupils. Parents and carers value the good feedback they get on their children's progress. Many made positive comments about the school's good leadership. Inspectors agree with parents' and carers' positive views. A few voiced concerns about their child's preparation for the future. Inspectors found that this area of the school's work is good. For example, older pupils told the inspectors that they feel confident about their move to secondary school and that they are well informed about changes that happen to them as they grow up. Several parents and carers said that they were unhappy about the way the school tackles behaviour problems. Inspectors found behaviour management to be good.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Spring Vale Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 69 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 245 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	41	59	28	41	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	44	64	25	36	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	43	62	25	36	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	41	59	27	39	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	40	58	28	41	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	37	54	31	45	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	48	70	19	28	2	3	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	33	48	29	42	4	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	36	52	31	45	2	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	32	46	31	45	3	4	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	43	37	54	2	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	39	57	26	38	3	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	43	62	26	38	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



24 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Spring Vale Primary School, Wolverhampton WV4 6SD

Thank you for being so polite and friendly when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our visit and having the opportunity to talk to some of you and to see you in lessons and at play. I especially enjoyed listening to your ideas in assembly. You are rightly proud of the school's happy atmosphere in which you all get on so well together. Spring Vale is a good school. Here are some of the things we found out:

Your teachers ensure that you make good progress in all classes.

You enjoy school and feel extremely safe and secure.

You try your very best to eat a healthy diet and take plenty of exercise.

Your behaviour is good.

You have good relationships with your teachers and you try hard for them.

The curriculum provides you with exciting clubs and visits, which you enjoy.

Adults look after you well and are always ready to help you.

The headteacher and staff are working hard to make the school get better.

We have asked the school to help you do even better in your learning by:

Making sure teachers give you plenty of time to work things out for yourselves and that they give you clear instruction so that you can make a quick start to your work.

You can help the school by continuing to try your best in lessons, behaving well and attending regularly.

Yours sincerely

Gerald Griffin

Lead inspector

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