

# Springfields First School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124141
<b>Local Authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	340499
<b>Inspection dates</b>	19–20 November 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Helen Morrison

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

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	First
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	152
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ann Price
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tracey Jackson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 May 2008
<b>School address</b>	Yarnfield Stone Staffordshire
<b>Telephone number</b>	01785 760249
<b>Fax number</b>	01785 761674
<b>Email address</b>	headteacher@springfields-first.staffs.sch.uk

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<b>Registered childcare provision</b>	Little Springers Wraparound Care Club
<b>Number of children on roll in the registered childcare provision</b>	30
<b>Date of last inspection of registered childcare provision</b>	Not previously inspected

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 13 lessons, and held meetings with governors, members of staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at samples of pupils' books, the school's self-evaluation, information about pupils' progress, the improvement plan, information on safeguarding and other policies and procedures. Inspectors received 72 parental questionnaires and spoke with parents and carers in the playground. They looked at 91 questionnaires completed by pupils and 22 by staff.

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

- current achievement and the quality of learning, particularly in writing in Key Stage 1 and mathematics in Key Stage 2
- pupils' awareness of diversity and how well the school is promoting understanding of groups beyond the school and its immediate community
- the progress of learners and quality of care in the full-time wraparound care club (Little Springers)
- how well pupils behave around school and in the playground.

## Information about the school

The school is smaller than average and almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is exceptionally low and the number with special educational needs and/or disabilities is also much lower than average.

The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a nursery class which operates in the mornings only and a full-time reception class. In addition governors manage a full-time wraparound care club (Little Springers) for children from the age of two to four. Some children from the nursery class join Little Springers in the afternoon. Accommodation for the Early Years Foundation Stage is in three adjoining rooms with continuous access to open play areas.

Independently managed before- and after-school care for pupils aged from three to 11 operates each day. This is subject to a separate inspection and report.

The school has gained a number of awards including Activemark, the Healthy Schools award and Extended School status.

**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?**

**1**

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

**1**

## Main findings

Springfields is an outstanding school in which all staff have very high expectations for the pupils, monitor their progress carefully and ensure that excellent teaching and an exciting curriculum enable them to reach very high standards. Support for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities is exemplary. One parent, typical of many, commented, 'This is an excellent school with fantastic teachers who provide a happy, safe and supportive environment for the children to learn.'

Children make an exceptionally good start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where they rapidly gain confidence and independence. Adults carefully record their observations of children's progress and plan very effectively for their next stages of learning. As a result children are given interesting and exciting activities which, together with consistently outstanding teaching, absorb the children so that they enjoy learning and make excellent progress. This is built upon in Key Stage 1, where varied learning activities and teachers' excellent knowledge of each pupil ensure that provision closely meets their needs. As one pupil said, 'I like my school because teachers help me to learn and look after me.' In Key Stage 2 consistently outstanding teaching challenges and motivates pupils so that they continue to make excellent progress and reach standards much higher than normally expected for their age.

Pupils have a great sense of belonging to the school and local community and learn to be tolerant and care for one another. They are eager to take on responsibilities such as acting as monitors or membership of the school council. Behaviour observed during the inspection was consistently excellent. All staff work together to ensure pupils are safe in school and become well-rounded individuals who are prepared exceptionally well for the next stage of their education and later life. Pupils consider the experiences of others, but the school recognises that it provides only limited opportunities for them to learn about the diversity of cultures in Britain and the wider world.

Accurate self-evaluation provides senior leaders and governors with a clear view of the school's strengths and future areas to develop. Senior leaders are skilled in assessing pupils' progress rigorously and using the information to improve learning. As a result the school has fully addressed the one area for improvement in its last inspection report and this, together with sustained high attainment and high level of care for pupils, demonstrates its outstanding capacity for continued improvement.

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

- Develop pupils' understanding of diversity in Britain and in communities across the world by implementing a programme of activities to share experiences with schools

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whose pupils come from different cultural backgrounds.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils' work in lessons confirmed that the quality of learning is very high in all year groups, and as a result standards in Year 4 are consistently well above those expected for pupils of their age. For example, in mathematics pupils demonstrated very good understanding of the use of coordinates. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities do so well because the school is very quick to identify their individual needs and provide personalised support in lessons. Pupils enjoy coming to school because teachers know them very well and provide the right level of challenge so they are actively involved in lessons. For example, in one lesson all groups of pupils enjoyed the 'cheeky challenge' of moving round the room joining parts of words together to make longer ones.

Pupils successfully develop the skills they need for future economic well-being as they apply their reading, writing and number skills to solve problems. For example, pupils were able to calculate mentally the change due from purchasing three items from their shop. Attendance is above average. Pupils are polite and helpful to one another and to adults. They are confident that they feel safe in school and that bullying is not a concern. They use the internet responsibly and recognise potential dangers well. For example, they designed banners highlighting the need for road safety and safe parking around the school. Pupils use their extensive knowledge of how to live a healthy life by enthusiastically taking part in exercise and by eating a healthy diet.

Lessons and assemblies are highly effective in exploiting pupils' curiosity and sense of wonder, and help pupils to develop a clear sense of right and wrong. Pupils have excellent social skills and enjoy taking responsibility such as acting as playground buddies. They also participate in community events such as Stone in Bloom and raise money for local and international charities. They enjoy a range of experiences in the arts but are not given enough first-hand experience of different cultures in Britain and around the world.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

**How effective is the provision?**

Teachers display excellent subject knowledge and very high expectations of pupils. As a result they plan exciting lessons that are tailored to pupils' interests and abilities. For example, one French lesson was taught almost entirely in French, at a very swift pace with varied resources so that all pupils made very good progress. More able pupils are challenged by expert, targeted questioning and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive very well focused attention, often from skilful teaching support assistants. Even the youngest children are encouraged to work independently and opportunities to share their thinking with 'talk partners' further develop their confidence as they move through the school. The structured programme for teaching letters and sounds provides a very effective basis for the development of pupils' reading and writing skills.

Teachers use assessment well to group pupils and plan their next steps. In the Early Years Foundation Stage adults carefully record their observations to ensure children are given opportunities to progress in each of the areas of learning. In Years 1 to 4 pupils know their targets and are taught to assess their own work and this, as well as peer assessment, helps them to identify how well they are doing. Pupils' work is marked conscientiously by adults but pupils are always not given enough time to consider and act on the teacher's comments.

The outstanding curriculum is enriched by memorable visits, such as Year 3's experience of an 'air raid' during their visit to a Second World War museum, and by visitors to the school. Information and communication technology is used well to enhance learning, for example pupils take part in video conferences with pupils from local schools. Pupils

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enjoy opportunities to solve problems such as developing their own fair tests in science to check absorbency and they use their learning to produce very high quality writing, such as the 'diaries' they wrote describing a day in the life of Henry VIII.

Pupils and their families are well known to staff and are very well cared for, supported and guided. They are welcomed into Little Springers and the nursery and helped to settle in quickly. As they move through the school pupils are very well supported in terms of their social and emotional development and there is excellent support for Year 4 pupils as they prepare to move to middle school.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides clear leadership that is focused sharply on ensuring that the needs of the pupils are met. Leaders and managers have an excellent understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and have secured a strong commitment to maintaining outstanding achievement from every member of the school community. Pupils' attainment is checked regularly and their progress towards challenging targets carefully monitored. Leaders and managers carefully consider the priorities included in the school development plan and the impact of actions is rigorously evaluated so that the school continues to improve whilst sustaining its successes.

Governors provide a good level of challenge for senior leaders and help the school to monitor its effectiveness well. They are well informed about the life of the school, are rigorous in ensuring that pupils and staff are safe, and support staff well so that high standards are maintained.

Partnerships with local schools provide excellent professional development for staff and exciting learning opportunities for pupils. Relationships with parents, carers and members of the local community are very positive and parents and carers say they are very well informed about their children's learning. The school has a good understanding of the needs of its own and neighbouring communities. In order to broaden pupils' understanding of the different communities in Britain and globally it has begun to establish links with a school in Birmingham, but these are at an early stage.

The school promotes equal opportunity very well and ensures that no pupil experiences discrimination. At the time of the inspection the school's safeguarding procedures were judged to be good, although the policy for dealing with complaints by staff has not yet been fully agreed by governors.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<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>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</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>1</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The needs of the youngest children in Little Springers are exceptionally well met and links with parents are strong. Children settle quickly into the life of the school and make good progress as a result of interesting and enjoyable activities. As they move into the nursery their skills are further developed, especially in speaking and listening. For example, when they made cakes the practitioner skilfully encouraged the children to talk about what they were doing at each stage. In reception the structured programme linking letters and sounds provides a good basis for reading and writing, and children were observed happily 'fishing' for words and then reading them confidently. They enjoy using the computer to extend their literacy skills and one bounced up and down with excitement at getting all the answers right. Throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage children enjoy a stimulating environment, including the garden, with an exciting range of activities which builds on their curiosity so they quickly become absorbed in their learning. Children feel safe because provision for their social and emotional development is outstanding. They enjoy choosing activities and are encouraged to become independent. As a result they make outstanding progress and achieve very well, reaching exceptionally high standards by the time they enter Year 1.

The leadership and management of Little Springers is outstanding. Procedures are in place to ensure that children are safeguarded well, staff are very knowledgeable about early years practice and children's progress is monitored very carefully. All the issues raised in the previous inspection report have been fully dealt with and standards of care and nursery education are now outstanding, fully complying with the requirements for



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registration.

The leadership of the nursery and reception is also outstanding. Assessment is based on detailed observations of children's learning and this is used as the basis for planning activities which promote excellent learning and cater for children's individual well-being. Staff have high aspirations for continued improvement based on careful self-evaluation. The needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are recognised quickly and staff work highly effectively with outside agencies to ensure they make outstanding progress. There is close teamwork between all adults and a strong commitment to helping parents and carers to support children's learning.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

**Views of parents and carers**

Parents and carers have an overwhelmingly positive view of the school, typified by comments such as, 'Springfields is excellent all round.' All parents are happy with the work of the school, including the way their children are taught and helped to make good progress. Many commented on how pleased they were with the additional support provided for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

A very small number of parents expressed concerns about the way in which the school dealt with challenging behaviour. Inspectors found that during the inspection pupils' behaviour was exemplary, although some pupils said there was, on occasions, some boisterous behaviour which was dealt with promptly and effectively by staff.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Springfields First 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 72 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 152 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	53	74	18	25	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	55	76	17	24	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	46	64	25	35	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	51	71	21	29	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	54	75	18	25	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	47	65	23	32	2	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	50	69	21	29	1	1	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)	44	61	22	31	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	53	74	19	26	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	42	58	26	36	2	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	46	64	24	33	2	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	52	72	17	24	3	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	55	76	17	24	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.**



20 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Springfields First School, Stone ST15 0NJ

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and showing us what you are learning. We were very impressed by how hard you all work and the very high standards you reach. We really enjoyed talking to you and sharing your lessons and we think your school is outstanding.

Because you were so friendly, polite and helpful we found out quite a lot about your school. Here are some of the things we found.

The children in Little Springers, nursery and reception get a really good start to their school life.

The school gives you an excellent education so you thoroughly enjoy learning and make fantastic progress.

The headteacher and senior staff lead the school very well.

The teachers and teaching support assistants work extremely hard to make lessons exciting, interesting and fun and provide you with lots of visits, clubs and activities.

You all get on very well together and care for one another.

You know a lot about how to keep healthy and you enjoy sports.

Teachers care for you and look after you and so you feel safe.

Those of you who find work difficult are given lots of support so you too make excellent progress.

To make things even better we have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to give you more opportunities to learn about children from different communities in Britain and around the world. We know they agree and are already planning to do this.

I hope you will play your part by continuing to work hard to achieve your targets.

Yours sincerely

Helen Morrison

Lead inspector

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