

Springfield Primary School

Dudley Road, Rowley Regis, West Midlands B65 8JY

Inspection dates	12–13 July 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher has been resolute in ensuring that the areas for improvement in the 2014 inspection have been successfully addressed. As a result, teaching, learning and assessment, and outcomes for pupils are now good.
- Pupils now make good progress, often from low starting points, as they move through the school. This results in them leaving school in Year 6 having attained standards that are at least in line with all pupils nationally, and in 2015 in mathematics, well above the national average.
- Children make a highly positive start in early years, both in Nursery and in the Reception classes. This is as a result of good teaching and a warm and caring environment that enables children to thrive and feel safe.
- Additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils is used well and as a result these pupils make progress that is often better than that of others pupils, both in the school and nationally.
- Governance has improved significantly since the last inspections. Governors are now a highly effective force who provide both support and challenge to school leaders.
- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils are provided with a wide and innovative range of opportunities to take responsibility for involvement in the running of the school. Because of this, pupils feel extremely safe, well cared for and valued in school.
- Pupils behave well and show care and consideration for others. As a result, the school is a harmonious and happy place where pupils thrive.
- The school's work to support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong and effective. They demonstrate through their actions a depth of understanding of core British values of democracy, respect and tolerance.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Younger pupils are not given enough opportunities to apply their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make when they are reading.
- Leaders have not ensured that feedback from teachers to pupils is sharply focused on how pupils can improve their work.
- Not all middle leaders have the necessary skills to effectively evaluate improvements in their areas of responsibility.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve leadership and management in school by:
 - developing the skills of middle leaders in monitoring and evaluating provision within their areas of responsibility
 - ensuring that feedback from teachers focuses on providing pupils with clear and concise indications of how they can improve their learning.

- Further improve the quality of teaching so that all matches the most challenging and inspiring in school, so that outcomes for pupils continue to rise, especially in key stage 1, by:
 - ensuring that teachers extend pupils' opportunities to use their phonics (letters and the sounds that make) knowledge in reading to develop greater fluency and understanding.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher has been the driving force in bringing about improvements since the last inspection. She puts the best interests of the pupils of Springfield Primary at the centre of everything that she does. Staff and pupils share her pride and passion for the school and this has resulted in a highly cohesive community where expectations are high.
- The headteacher has established a culture where all members of the school are valued and where good standards of behaviour are expected and achieved. She involves pupils in the decision-making processes within the school and encourages them to have high aspirations for their future lives.
- The headteacher and other senior leaders have worked with, and taken advice from, the local authority and other schools to identify where and how teaching can be improved. School leaders' evaluations of what needs to improve and how this can be achieved are thorough. Evidence gathered during monitoring is drawn together to identify clear plans and actions for improvement. This has led to improved teaching in the early years, implementation of a systematic approach to the teaching of phonics and development of an assessment system that provides detailed information on pupils' progress and attainment.
- Senior leaders have been effective in bringing about improvements within their areas of responsibility. For example, improvements to the teaching of phonics have been led by one of the assistant headteachers, who has ensured that all staff are regularly trained in how to demonstrate sounds to pupils and to then teach them how to blend them together to make words.
- School leaders regularly monitor the quality of teaching in classrooms and provide well-focused feedback on the impact that teaching is having on pupils' learning. Opportunities for teachers to observe outstanding teaching, either within school or at other schools, are well planned and have a positive effect on developing teachers' skills and knowledge. The systems that are in place for monitoring teachers' performance are rigorous and there are clear links in place between the quality of teaching and pay progression.
- Middle leaders, including the leader with responsibility for special educational needs and/or disabilities, are providing guidance to other staff and developing their skills in leading provision within their specific areas of responsibilities. However, they are not yet sufficiently skilled in monitoring provision and measuring the impact of their actions on pupils' outcomes.
- Teachers and other staff accurately follow the policies and procedures that leaders have established. While teachers know and apply the school policy on providing feedback to pupils through marking, this is not fully effective. This is because leaders have not ensured that that teachers' marking clearly identifies the most important aspects of pupils' work that require action and improvement.
- The assessment system that has been introduced following the removal of national curriculum levels has been developed together with other local schools. Senior leaders thoroughly analyse the assessment information. This allows them to identify if any groups of pupils are not making sufficient progress and to put in additional support as appropriate.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. School leaders ensure that pupils are provided with very good opportunities to learn about and appreciate the faiths and beliefs of other people. Pupils are encouraged to identify charities that they wish to support and to raise funds for them. The promotion of fundamental British values of tolerance, respect and democracy is effective in preparing pupils for their roles as citizens of this country. An example of this was the interest that the pupils took in the recent European Union debate, which culminated in a group of pupils organising a referendum vote within the school.
- The school curriculum is broad and balanced, and planned in such a way that it has a very positive impact on pupils' personal development. Opportunities for pupils to consider current affairs and issues that affect them are planned carefully and skilfully. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils discussed the feelings of senior politicians as they prepared both to leave and to take up the post of Prime Minister. Pupils' thoughtful and well-considered responses indicated the positive impact that the curriculum was having on their development as mature and well-rounded individuals. The school provides a good range of opportunities for pupils to extend their learning through extra-curricular activities, including dance clubs, choir and 'mini-movers'. Pupils are encouraged to develop their cultural skills and appreciation through musical instrument tuition with staff from Sandwell's peripatetic music service.
- The additional sports funding is used to good effect by school leaders. Increased opportunities for pupils to participate in a wider range of sporting activities have resulted in more pupils taking part in sporting clubs, such as rugby, dance and netball. All pupils in school now participate in competitive sports, either

against pupils from within the school or in competitions against other local schools. External sports coaches are employed to lead activities at lunchtimes, which are valued and appreciated by pupils.

- The school uses pupil premium funding effectively to narrow the gap between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and that of other pupils nationally. The funding is used to provide small-group support from additional teachers and for one-to-one support from trained teaching assistants. Funding is also used to ensure that disadvantaged pupils are able to fully participate in all aspects of school life. Leaders monitor the progress of disadvantaged pupils closely and compare it with that of other pupils in school and all pupils nationally.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors are an extremely effective force within the leadership and management of the school. They provide high levels of challenge and support to school leaders.
 - Following the last inspection, the governors commissioned an external review of governance and acted upon the recommendations. As a result, they reorganised the committee structure and developed rigorous systems for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. Governors have undertaken training so that they now fully understand what external data tells them about how well the pupils in school are attaining and progressing against other pupils nationally.
 - Governors receive regular and detailed reports from school leaders about the outcomes of different groups of pupils in school. They ask challenging and searching questions about the quality of teaching and understand the school's processes for managing the performance of teachers.
 - Governors are regular visitors to school and meet with school leaders to discuss specific aspects of the school's work. This allows them to make sensible and informed decisions about how the resources available to the school, including the pupil premium funding, are used to have a positive impact on the well-being and outcomes of all pupils. They fully understand the importance of ensuring that pupils are safe and secure in school and have undertaken training in safeguarding.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The strong emphasis that is placed on protecting pupils from harm and ensuring that they feel safe and secure permeates all aspects of the school's work. The headteacher has ensured that all staff are well trained and vigilant in identifying when pupils might be at risk. Systems for reporting concerns are thorough and fully understood by staff. Links with outside agencies are well established and as a result vulnerable pupils and their families are very well supported.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teaching, learning and assessment have improved since the previous inspection. This is a result of the work that school leaders have undertaken to ensure that all teachers have sufficiently high expectations of what pupils can and should achieve. Teachers have been provided with valuable opportunities to observe high-quality teaching, both within the school and at other local schools. There is now much greater consistency in the quality of teaching and as a result, pupils across the school make good progress.
- Teachers use questions effectively to probe pupils' understanding and to prompt them to think deeply. For example, in a Year 2 mathematics lesson on money, the teacher used questioning skilfully to assess how well the pupils had used their calculation skills to work out the problems. She then raised the level of challenge through some additional, more-difficult questions that were directed at the most able pupils.
- Assessment is used very effectively by all teachers. The whole-school approach that has been introduced for assessing pupils' progress without levels is understood and followed diligently by all teachers. Teachers work together with colleagues from within the school and with teachers from other local schools to ensure that there is a consistency of approach and understanding in assessing pupils' outcomes. Teachers meet regularly with senior leaders to discuss the progress that pupils are making and to then plan and put into place interventions for any pupils whose progress is not strong enough.
- The teaching of writing has improved and is now taught well across the school. Teachers make sure that there is a systematic and well-planned approach to the teaching of the core skills of spelling, punctuation and grammar and then provide pupils with interesting opportunities to write extended individual pieces of work. Pupils comment that they find their lessons interesting and exciting and as a result they produce high-quality work that demonstrates their understanding of how to adjust the style of writing for different readers.
- Since the last inspection, school leaders have revised the way that phonics is taught in school. Regular training has been provided for all teachers and other staff to ensure that they accurately demonstrate sounds to pupils. The daily phonics lessons that take place are well taught and provide a clear structure

for pupils to develop their understanding of how sounds are blended together to make words. This has resulted in younger pupils making rapid progress in their acquisition of phonics as part of reading. However, less focus has been provided for pupils to apply their reading knowledge to developing a deep understanding of the books that they are reading. This means that some less-able pupils struggle to develop fluency and confidence in their reading.

- Teachers are very aware of the needs of the different abilities of the pupils in school and carefully plan and adjust activities so that they are of an appropriate level of difficulty. The most able pupils in school are set tasks in reading, writing and mathematics that require them to think deeply and independently and to make decisions about how they should undertake an activity. This results in pupils being highly motivated and showing positive attitudes towards their learning.
- Teaching assistants provide valuable support, both within lessons and when working alongside individual pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They ensure that pupils fully understand the task that they are undertaking through careful and detailed explanations. They encourage pupils to respond to questions using full sentences, which helps them to develop their speaking and listening skills. High-quality support is provided in the classrooms by teachers and teaching assistants to the pupils who attend the additional resourced provision.
- Good use is made in school of teachers' subject specialism and subject knowledge. During the inspection, Year 6 pupils were rehearsing for their end-of-year production of 'Mary Poppins'. The teacher's musical expertise was used very effectively to encourage pupils to sing with enjoyment, clarity and accuracy. All pupils were able to participate and to use their particular abilities to perform with confidence and obvious pride in their accomplishments.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is woven very effectively into their learning. Teachers ensure that they provide good opportunities for the pupils to extend their understanding of how people in different societies live, and to build an empathy with the beliefs of other people. This helps to ensure that the pupils are well prepared for their roles as citizens of modern Britain.
- Teachers accurately follow the school's marking policy and identify and correct errors in pupils' work. However, marking is not always as effective as it could be because teachers do not consistently provide pupils with clear, next steps in how they can extend their learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are provided with exceptionally good opportunities to take responsibility for helping Springfield Primary School to develop, improve and be a place where pupils are at the heart of everything that the school does. Members of the school's pupil leadership team welcomed inspectors to the school and spoke with pride of their work in shaping the culture and ethos of the school. Governors identified how a group of pupils had organised an articulate and confident presentation for a governors' meeting that helped inform them in their performance management decision-making process.
- Pupils commented to inspectors about how the school helped them to feel safe and secure. They appreciate that there is a specific member of staff who is available to them to talk to if they have any particular worries or concerns. Pupils strongly feel that their views are listened to and acted upon. This reflects the school's stated commitment to ensure that pupils have 'healthy minds and healthy bodies'.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations. They know about the potential risks that using the internet could pose and understand what their responsibilities are when using activities such as social media. They know about cyber bullying and know what to do if it occurs.
- Older pupils provide very good support for younger children. 'Learning buddies' are used very effectively to enable pupils to provide support and advice to their peers and classmates in school and are another way that leaders, teachers and other adults recognise the valuable contribution of the pupils to the wellbeing of the school community.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the different types of bullying and know the impact that any form of bullying can have on other people. They say that on the rare occasions that bullying occurs it is dealt with rapidly and effectively by teachers. Parents share their views and the very large majority who responded to the online survey, Parent View, said that they felt that their children were safe in school.
- The lively and well-run before- and after-school clubs that the school provides help to enhance pupils' personal development and are valued by parents.

- Pupils are encouraged and supported in developing healthy lifestyles. Regular before-school 'wake and shake' dance sessions help pupils to start the day with a lively and energetic activity that they obviously enjoy. Inspectors were impressed with how, following one of these sessions, the pupils sensibly and calmly made their way to their classrooms, ready to start their learning.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils behave well, both in classrooms and when on the playgrounds at lunchtime or dinnertime. They show consideration for others, listen to their views and are aware of the need to take responsibility for their own actions.
- Pupils are polite and well-mannered. They hold doors open for adults and for other pupils and say please and thank you in appropriate situations.
- Pupils show positive attitudes to learning. They quickly settle to tasks in lessons and demonstrate enjoyment in their work. Relationships between pupils and with adults are a strength of the school and this shows through in the happy smiles that are a feature of so many of the pupils.
- Attendance has improved over the last two years and is now in line with the national average. The school makes good use of support from the local authority to promote good attendance. A school welfare officer has been mainly successful in supporting the small minority of parents that in the past have not ensured that their children have attended regularly and on time and this has helped to improve attendance. However, attendance has not been consistently above the national average over time and this is why behaviour is not outstanding.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Outcomes for pupils have improved since the last inspection, owing to better teaching and higher expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Pupils now make good progress from their starting points. In 2015 the proportion of Year 6 pupils who made expected progress was above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics, with all pupils making expected progress in mathematics. The proportion who made better than expected progress was above the national average in both writing and mathematics. Standards of attainment for these pupils were above the national average in mathematics and broadly in line in reading and writing.
- Standards of attainment for pupils in Year 2 in 2015 were below the national average in reading and broadly in line in mathematics and writing. This was the result of teaching in the past that had not been effective, particularly in key stage 1. Teaching is now good and as a result the large majority of pupils across key stage 1 are now making much better progress. Standards of attainment for pupils who are currently in Year 2 are still not high enough. However, the impact of the better teaching that is now evident across the school means that pupils are making more consistent progress as they move through the school.
- Evidence gathered during the inspection, including the school's own assessment records, scrutiny of pupils' work and observation in lessons, indicates that pupils who are currently in school are making at least the progress that is expected of them.
- Outcomes for pupils in the national Year 1 phonics screening check have improved significantly since the last inspection. In 2015 the proportion who achieved the expected standard was just below the national average and this improvement appears to be continuing, with a higher proportion again achieving the expected standard this year. This is a result of the structured and more effective approach that the school now has in place for teaching phonics.
- The most able pupils in school make good progress owing to a focus on their particular needs from teachers, and tasks that are suitably challenging. In 2015, the proportions attaining the higher Level 5 grades in mathematics, reading and writing were broadly in line with the national averages.
- Disadvantaged pupils make similar good progress to their classmates. This is because school leaders ensure that the pupil premium funding is used effectively. Disadvantaged pupils receive additional support that is matched accurately to their specific needs, from trained teachers and teaching assistants. School leaders closely monitor their progress and as a result, by the time they leave the school in Year 6 any gaps in their attainment have been removed and their outcomes are at least as good as other pupils in school and other pupils nationally.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has improved and this has resulted in these pupils now making better progress. More pupils are now making the progress that is expected of them and attaining standards that are appropriate for their age. Individual support is now more closely matched to each pupil's specific needs and their progress is monitored by the school leader

with responsibility for this aspect of the school's work. The small number of pupils who attend the additional resourced provision all receive one-to-one support and this enables them to participate fully in their learning in classrooms alongside their classmates. While their attainment is usually below that of other pupils in school, they grow in self-confidence and improve their communication and language skills.

Early years provision

is good

- The improvement of provision for children in the early years has been a major priority for school leaders since the last inspection. As a result, teaching, leadership and opportunities for learning are all good.
- Children enter school with skills and knowledge that are below and often well below those that are typical for their age. They settle quickly into Nursery and as result of good teaching and a clear understanding of their particular needs they make strong progress. This progress continues across Reception. The proportion of pupils who achieve a good level of development has increased each year since 2014 and is now only slightly below the national average. This indicates good progress for these children from their starting points. Children's attainment in mathematical development has been lower than that in other areas but this is improving and is more in line with other areas.
- Teaching in both Nursery and Reception is good. Teachers and other adults make learning enjoyable. For example, during the inspection, children in the Nursery took part in a shape hunt in the outside classrooms. They talked confidently about the properties of the shapes, using words such as 'curved', 'straight' and 'corners'. They accurately counted the number of sides of a cube and discussed the difference between the various shapes they found. The teacher skilfully asked questions and encouraged the children to be accurate in the language and counting.
- The early years leader provides effective and strong leadership. She has sought and made use of external support from the local authority to help identify which aspects of the provision needed improvement. This has resulted in greater opportunities for boys to undertake writing tasks and has helped to narrow gaps in their attainment in this area, compared with that of the girls.
- Early reading skills are taught well, with daily phonics lessons for the children. As the year progresses, teachers and other staff adapt the learning opportunities and provide a greater structure. As a result, children are well prepared for Year 1 by the time they leave the early years provision.
- Children enjoy their learning and develop positive attitudes towards school. They behave well and cooperate well with each other, taking turns and sharing. They listen carefully to what adults and other children say and offer their opinions with increasing fluency of language.
- Arrangements for safeguarding and welfare are strong and effective. Both the indoor and outdoor classrooms are safe and well managed areas that encourage independence and provide children with exciting activities in a safe environment.
- Teachers and other adults use assessment effectively, both to monitor children's progress and to adapt their teaching to match the needs of the children as they develop. Parents are kept well informed about the progress of their children and are encouraged to be involved in their learning, both in school and at home.

School details

Unique reference number	132140
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	10009280

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	467
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	James Williams
Headteacher	Susan Powis
Telephone number	0121 559 1333
Website	www.springfield.sandwell.sch.uk
Email address	enquiry@springfield.sandwell.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13–14 February 2014

Information about this school

- Springfield Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those who are supported by the pupil premium funding, is above average. The pupil premium provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below that in most schools.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- The school provides specialist provision for up to eight pupils with complex communication difficulties on behalf of the local authority.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club for its pupils.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics for pupils in Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in 21 lessons or parts of lessons.
- The inspectors looked at work in pupils' books and listened to pupils read. They met with a group of pupils, including members of the school's pupil leadership team, to gain their views of the school. The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime, lunchtime and at the end of the school day, as well as in lessons.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including assessments and records of pupils' progress, the school's checks and records relating to safeguarding, child protection and attendance, records of how teaching is managed and the school improvement plans.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, an assistant headteacher and three middle leaders. The lead inspector met with three members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body, and with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 39 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, and considered free-text responses from 18 parents. They also considered the responses to the school's recent parental survey and talked to parents at the start of the school day. They also looked at the 47 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Adam Hewett, lead inspector

Deborah Jenkins

Tracy Stone

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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