

Springwell Village Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 108800 |
| Local Authority | Sunderland |
| Inspection number | 324838 |
| Inspection date | 26 September 2008 |
| Reporting inspector | Graeme Clarke |

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

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3-11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School (total) | 213 |
| Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS | 0 |
| Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years | 0 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mr Nigel Carruthers |
| Headteacher | Mrs Louise Wiegand |
| Date of previous school inspection | 1 March 2006 |
| Date of previous funded early education inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Date of previous childcare inspection | Not previously inspected |
| School address | Westfield Crescent Springwell Village Gateshead Tyne and Wear NE9 7RX |
| Telephone number | 0191 2193790 |
| Fax number | 0191 2193793 |

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| Age group | 3-11 |
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector gathered evidence from lesson observations, looking at pupils' work, assessment information, documents, interviews and discussions with the headteacher, staff, pupils and a governor. He evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following aspects:

- the quality of provision in the Foundation Stage
- pupils' progress, particularly by those presently in Years 3 to 6
- the way the school uses marking and other assessments to support pupils' learning
- the progress the new leadership team has made in setting and achieving challenging targets.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Springwell Village is an average sized primary school with a nursery, and serves families from a village community to the north west of Washington, a locality where socio-economic characteristics are average. A below average proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. Almost all pupils are from White British families and none are learning to speak English as an additional language. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below 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

Springwell Village Primary School gives a satisfactory education to its pupils. Standards at the end of Year 6 are broadly average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Some aspects of provision are good. Pupils' good personal development and well-being stems from a rich curriculum and good pastoral care, guidance and support. Here, all staff successfully foster the principle that every child does matter. The school gives satisfactory value for money. The newly appointed headteacher provides clear educational direction to the school's work, and has set to with great resolve to foster improvement. The school forges effective partnerships with the local authority, the church and the village to support pupils' well being. This is a very inclusive school which makes a positive contribution to foster cohesion in the community. Many parents have full confidence in the school. Several parents commented on how well their children had settled into school routines. One parent sums up their views, 'During pre-school visits the children appeared well behaved and were always polite to visitors. My son has settled well at school and seems enthusiastic about what he is doing'.

Children begin Nursery with skills and abilities a little higher than typical for their age. They make excellent progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and good progress through Years 1 and 2. Results in the Year 2 statutory assessments for 2008 improved considerably and pupils achieved well in reading, writing and mathematics. Particularly noteworthy is the improvement in writing, reflected in the number of children attaining the higher Level 3, as a result of the school's new initiative developed since the last inspection. Conversely, in 2008 pupils in Year 6 performed less well in writing and fewer achieved the higher Level 5. The proportions gaining the expected Level 4 in English and mathematics fell whereas last year they were above average. Science standards continue to be above average. Most Year 6 pupils made better progress in reading than in writing and mathematics compared to their performance when they were in Year 2. Importantly, the school's track record of progress for pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 shows pupils made good progress in reading, satisfactory progress in mathematics but a sizeable minority did not make sufficient progress in writing and do not meet their targets. Teachers' expectations were not consistent or high enough. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do better than expected as a result of the close and effective support they receive. When taking all pupils' backgrounds and starting points into account, many make satisfactory achievement.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils enjoy school, are delighted when they do well and happily share in the success of others. Their attendance is above average. They behave well in lessons and assemblies and usually act safely out-of-doors, although some boys can be over-exuberant and inconsiderate at playtimes. They are polite and at ease talking with adults. Pupils have a good grasp of the need for healthy eating and the importance of physical activities. They contribute well in many ways to their school and wider community. Effective partnership with local secondary schools, sound basic skills and well developed social skills ensure pupils are prepared adequately for their future.

Teaching is satisfactory overall but the quality is inconsistent, especially in Years 3 to 6. Nevertheless there are strengths upon which to build. Relationships between adults and pupils are exemplary. Teachers and assistants work well together to give support which ensures that all pupils, particularly those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, fully participate in lessons and make satisfactory, and often good progress. Effective use of phonics clearly helps pupils develop reading skills. Occasionally pupils make less progress than they should when

questioning lacks stimulation, expectations are too low and the pace is slow. Teachers' marking congratulates pupils on their accomplishments but it does not always identify strengths and weaknesses in their work. Importantly, marking does not consistently give pupils clear expectations and specific guidance about how they can improve their work and check on their progress. This was an issue identified by the last inspection. Many visitors and a wide range of visits to museums, sporting venues and outdoor centres enhance the curriculum and make a vital contribution to pupils' well-being, physical, social and cultural development. All pupils benefit from the good pastoral care, guidance and support the school provides. Information about pupils' performance is analysed carefully and used to give effective support to those with particular learning needs. Arrangements to safeguard the welfare of pupils meet government requirements.

The governors and the recently appointed headteacher show great commitment and determination to develop and improve the school. A particularly strong feature is the high priority they give to promoting excellence. Governors have a clear knowledge of the school, although they have yet to develop their role in gaining a first hand view of its work. Until 2008, targets for pupils were not sufficiently demanding. The school acknowledges the approach has not been sufficiently rigorous to accelerate some pupils' progress and has already revised the process to raise the level of challenge. The acceptable, but somewhat unsteady, track record of progress since the last inspection reflects a satisfactory capacity for further improvement. The school shows great determination to redress this situation. The broadly accurate self-evaluation, and the precedence the new leadership gives to raising standards, is clear in the school's development plan. Well thought through strategies and well laid out activities aim to improve pupils' writing skills but mathematical development deserves greater prominence.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. Parents are very pleased that their children have settled in quickly and are proud of the progress they make. A close and effective partnership with parents, aided by useful documentation, eases the transition to school and continues to support children's learning both in the home and in the Early Years Foundation classes. Staff emphasise courtesy and consideration throughout the day which, with well established routines, enable children to form positive relationships. Children respond extremely well to the exciting opportunities in and out-of-doors. Well equipped facilities for Nursery and Reception are organised so that children begin to learn independently. Effective encouragement helps children make sensible choices and they become engrossed in the activities provided for them. Teaching is outstanding in both Nursery and Reception. When children begin Nursery most have abilities and knowledge a little above those typical for their age, particularly in language skills and personal development. By the end of Reception in 2008 almost all children far exceeded the goals expected of them in all areas of learning. Very effective leadership, consistent approaches to planning and managing activities, careful monitoring of children's abilities, and timely support, ensure they make good and often excellent progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve progress and standards in writing and mathematics in Years 3 to 6.
- Ensure teachers consistently identify strengths and weaknesses when marking pupils' work and set them challenging targets with pointers for improvement.

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.

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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 | 3 |

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

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|---|---|
| How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS? | 1 |
| How well do children in the EYFS achieve? | 1 |
| How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS? | 1 |
| How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop? | 1 |
| How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted? | 1 |
| How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed? | 1 |

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 | 2 |

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**Annex A**

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|---|---|
| How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 2 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 3 |
| The extent to which learners enjoy their education | 2 |
| The attendance of learners | 2 |
| The behaviour of learners | 2 |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community | 2 |
| 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? | 2 |
| 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 | 3 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated | 2 |
| How well does the school contribute to community cohesion? | 3 |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money | 3 |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 3 |
| Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements? | Yes |
| Does this school require special measures? | No |
| Does this school require a notice to improve? | No |

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

29 September 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Springwell Village Primary School, Sunderland, NE9 7RX

I really enjoyed my visit to your school last week. Thank you for helping me when I came into your classrooms and assembly to see you at work. I did enjoy talking with those of you whom I met. You were well behaved, very polite and really helpful. I was pleased to see how much you enjoy coming to school and taking part in all the different activities, and how you value the friendships you make. I was impressed with the many ways you contribute to school life such as through your school council. I know your new headteacher and all the staff are rightly very proud of you.

Your school is warm and welcoming and well organised. I know that you feel safe and happy because all the adults in the school look after you well. Your school gives you a satisfactory education. Your lessons in the Nursery and Reception are excellent and last year you made excellent progress. In the main school some lessons are good and some are satisfactory, especially in Years 3 to 6. Most pupils who were in Year 2 last year did really well in the national tests. In Year 6 not as many pupils did as well as expected in mathematics and especially in writing. The science test results were good. I noticed that many of you in Years 4, 5 and 6 have not yet met your targets for writing but you are close to them in reading and mathematics. I was pleased to see that pupils who get extra help with reading, writing and mathematics make good progress.

I have asked the school to help you to do better in mathematics and especially in writing. I have also asked your teachers to help you further by being more precise when they let you know what they expect each of you to do, and in the way they give you pointers to improve your work.

You have very many opportunities at Springwell Village Primary School to learn about life and these should stand you in good stead for the future. I hope that you all do really well.

Yours sincerely

Graeme Clarke

Lead inspector