

Springside Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105316
Local Authority	Bury
Inspection number	336472
Inspection dates	8–9 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Angela Westington HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	209
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr J Clegg
Headteacher	Mrs Karen Murphy
Date of previous school inspection	5 October 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 16 lessons, including extended observations of the Early Years Foundation Stage; visited additional part lessons, an assembly, play times, lunchtimes and a show for Nursery parents and carers; and met with pupils, staff, governors, a representative from the local authority and a small number of parents and carers. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation including policies, pupils' books, the school's records on pupils' progress, the school's development plans, the single central record of information held on staff and other safeguarding documentation, and the school's records for looked after children and other potentially vulnerable pupils. They also considered 76 questionnaires returned from parents and carers, 18 questionnaires from staff and 87 questionnaires from pupils.

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

- how well the school has tackled the issues identified at the previous inspection
- how well the school knows the groups in its population and how well those groups are doing
- the impact of the work of the Greater Manchester Challenge.

Information about the school

Springside Primary School is slightly smaller than average. Its pupils come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds although, overall, the intake is broadly average. The great majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. A few pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, including the Traveller community, and a small number are learning English as an additional language. A very small number of pupils are cared for by the local authority. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is similar to the national picture. There are more boys than girls in the school; in some classes, the imbalance in boys and girls is marked. A below average proportion of pupils has special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school has successfully achieved the Healthy Schools and Sport Active awards. It has Early Years Foundation Stage provision consisting of one Nursery and one Reception class. The school provides a before- and after-school club, 'Oscars', which is managed by the governing body. It was inspected as part of this inspection.

At the time of this inspection, major building work was taking place at the school and substantial parts of the building were sealed off.

The school has been subject to changes in staffing recently. In its last inspection in 2008, the school was given a notice to improve.

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?**3****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****3**

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

At the time of the inspection in 2008, the school was required to raise standards and improve pupils' achievement in Key Stage 2; to improve the quality and consistency of teaching, particularly in Years 5 and 6; to make better use of assessment information; and to improve teachers' understanding of the school's improvement processes.

Standards are now rising and pupils' progress over time is broadly satisfactory. In the 2009 national tests for 11-year-olds, the school's results were in line with national average figures for the first time in some years. Work in pupils' books is of a broadly average standard but standards in writing remain lower than in mathematics or science. Despite the improvements, pupils could do even better and the school has now recognised that it should be achieving higher standards, overall, and stretching pupils further, especially the more able.

The school's focus, until now, has been on meeting the needs of pupils who are at risk of not reaching Level 4 in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. This has ensured that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, the less able and potentially vulnerable pupils, have been well supported and often make good progress. Pupils' progress overall though remains inconsistent. They make more consistent progress in Years 5 and 6, where teaching is stronger, and in mathematics and science generally, because teachers' knowledge and skills in these subjects are better than they are in aspects of English, especially the teaching of writing. Boys make less progress in writing than they should given the excellent start they receive in the Early Years Foundation Stage. In all other respects, pupils' outcomes are good or satisfactory.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory but variable, because teachers' skill in assessing pupils' progress is underdeveloped, despite recent work to improve this. The curriculum is adequate but it lacks verve and depth. The school has made recent staff changes, including new appointments, to strengthen middle management and to lead on developments, such as curriculum improvement. There is much to do to provide a curriculum that will stimulate and challenge a boy-heavy school population. The school's provision for the care, guidance and support of pupils is good. All safeguarding requirements are met. Oscars before- and after-school club is well managed and provides a satisfactory range of activities. The school takes its responsibilities in respect of its most vulnerable pupils seriously. It works well with various agencies to support these pupils.

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Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding and, consequently, the outcomes that children achieve are excellent. They make particularly rapid progress in their acquisition of early reading and writing skills. Children are very happy, settled and very well looked after. Parents and carers speak very highly of the provision and appreciate the work of staff.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The headteacher and governors have worked hard to move the school forward since the last inspection. They have not been afraid to make difficult staffing decisions to bring about improvements in teaching and management at other levels. They have used the additional resources from the Greater Manchester Challenge well to support small groups of potentially underachieving pupils and governors have forged closer links with teachers and classes to gain greater insight into the quality of teaching. Given the rise in standards at Key Stage 2 and the improvements evident in the quality of teaching, the school has satisfactory capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels in teachers' assessments and national tests at age seven and 11 so that the school achieves above average results, overall, by:
 - increasing the proportion of good and better teaching
 - improving teachers' skill in assessing pupils' development against National Curriculum levels, especially in the assessment of writing.
- Develop a vibrant and balanced curriculum to challenge and engage pupils more, especially boys and the more able.
 - Develop the role of middle managers to lead, monitor and evaluate the subjects taught to ensure that standards continue to rise.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Evidence from pupils' books and lessons confirms that pupils make satisfactory, but variable, progress from Year 1 to Year 6. However, the work in books does not reflect the general ability of pupils, as observed in discussion with them and in their responses to questions in lessons. More-able pupils could achieve more. Too many pupils are not aware of how well they are doing and, consequently, do not know how well they could do. For example, in an upper Key Stage 2 class, one girl did not know that her most recent piece of writing was already some way ahead of expectations and had no idea what might be a reasonable level for her to aim for in her writing. In this way, pupils' own expectations of what they can achieve are capped unnecessarily. In contrast, for some pupils, progress in writing is capped because the marking of their work focuses

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only on one particular objective and does not routinely highlight persistent errors and misunderstandings. For example, in too many exercise books the miscopying and incorrect spelling of dates, titles and key vocabulary persist over time, sometimes over several weeks, without being corrected. The same is true for weak handwriting and poor presentation. Few older pupils write using a neat, well-formed cursive script nor do they lay out their work in an ordered and presentable format. In other subjects progress is more consistent but the recorded work is mundane and heavily reliant on worksheets thus limiting pupils' opportunity to display any flair or pride in what they are producing. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and less-able pupils are well supported and often make good progress.

Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils behave considerately towards each other, and around the school they are welcoming and positive. They behave appropriately in lessons. Where lessons are good their behaviour contributes to good learning. Incidents of poor behaviour are uncommon. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles. Most take advantage of the opportunities to participate in sports and the school's clubs. There is good response to the school's healthy tuck shop and pupils show a good understanding of various dangers. Pupils' social and moral development are good. They show high levels of respect to each other through the development of cooperative learning activities and engage well with their school mates across the age groups, especially through their house teams. Their spiritual and cultural awareness are less well developed. Attendance is satisfactory, the result of concerted work by the school to reduce the persistent absence of a small minority of pupils.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3

¹ 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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The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is satisfactory but variable. The strongest teaching was observed in Years 5 and 6. Weak marking and assessment of pupils' work remain barriers to raising the quality of teaching further.

The curriculum is adequate: it meets the statutory requirements and includes the teaching of French and two hours of physical education. However it is not a robust or engaging curriculum, designed and adapted for the pupils in this school. It provides neither depth of study nor vibrancy and challenge. Class timetables are not balanced and too much time is devoted to English, with no obvious benefit in standards or test results. Consequently, too little time is allocated to foundation subjects and they are covered in a superficial manner. The coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum are priorities. Provision for potentially vulnerable pupils is good.

Extra-curricular provision is satisfactory.

Care, guidance and support are good, reflecting the high priority the school places on this aspect of its work. The school knows its pupils and families well and it works closely with a range of agencies to support the most vulnerable youngsters in its care.

Oscars, the before- and after-school club, is well led and managed and provides a satisfactory range of activities for the children who use it. Strengths of this provision include the home–school contact at drop-off time, the maintenance of records and the resources for the youngest children.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

All aspects of leadership and management are satisfactory except for the school's links with parents and carers, which are good. Since the inspection in 2008 the headteacher and governors have focused on a package of measures to eliminate inadequate teaching and simultaneously to support teachers to improve teaching further. This has involved

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teamed teaching, the use of additional staff from the Greater Manchester Challenge, and links with other schools and visiting them to see what good teaching looks like elsewhere. Performance management procedures for teachers have been tightened, with a sharper focus on pupils' progress, and similar procedures have been introduced for support staff. Following the departure of some staff, the structure of the leadership and management team is under review and new appointments have recently been made. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has been appointed as acting assistant headteacher to strengthen the team.

The recently introduced software program is enabling leaders to track more thoroughly the progress made by pupils and to discuss this with teachers at regular meetings.

Governors know that there is still much to be done but are determined to see the school move forward. They have not shied away from taking difficult staffing decisions when this has been necessary to secure better teaching and better outcomes for pupils. The governing body fulfils its statutory requirements in respect of equal opportunities and safeguarding. There is still work to be done to enhance the performance of more-able pupils and to improve aspects of boys' writing.

The school is at the early stages of developing its community links. It has identified what it needs to do, has joined a schools' network and established links with another school locally which serves a very different community. The school's provision to develop national and global awareness is minimal, partly as a result of the limitations of the curriculum. The school recognises this.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

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

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Parents and carers who wrote about the Early Years Foundation Stage had nothing but praise for the staff who work here; and rightly so. Despite the limited space in the Reception classroom and the difficulties faced by the Nursery class working in temporary accommodation, the provision is outstanding. Comments such as, 'The teachers in Nursery are fantastic; they go above and beyond' and, 'I cannot praise the Nursery staff enough on how they settle little ones into their first experiences of school life,' are typical of those made by parents and carers.

From broadly average attainment on entry to the Nursery to the time the children leave Reception their outcomes are excellent. The overwhelming majority of children meet or exceed the goals for this age group. They make rapid progress across the full range of learning but especially so in the acquisition of early reading and writing skills. In the Nursery the dedicated staff concentrate on ensuring that children develop high levels of social and language skills so that by the time children enter Reception they are very well prepared and ready to begin to read and write. There is suitable progression across the two year groups. In Reception the early stages of reading are taught in an exemplary fashion, so that by the end of their first term children are reading very simple texts and enjoying doing so. Meticulous monitoring of children's progress and a very fine balance of adult- and child-led activities mean that children in Early Years Foundation Stage are happy, content and immersed in their activities. Children are very well looked after and cared for.

Care is taken to ensure that the Early Years Foundation Stage children who attend Oscars before- and after-school club are appropriately catered for.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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

Of the 76 questionnaires which were returned from parents and carers, the overwhelming majority were positive about the work of the school. Five parents complained about the state of the mobile classroom that currently accommodates Years 1 and 2. The school understands parents' unhappiness about this and agrees that the prefab is not fit for purpose. The building work currently underway will eventually lead to its demolition or disposal. Three parents believe that opportunities to discuss their children's progress are limited. Inspectors have some sympathy with this view in that they found that pupils themselves are not routinely told how well they are doing. Four parents feel that the poor behaviour of a small number of pupils is not dealt with.

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Inspectors, however, did not observe any bad behaviour during this inspection.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Springside 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 inspector received 76 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 209 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	43	55	30	38	4	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	46	59	31	40	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	28	36	42	54	5	6	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	31	40	36	46	9	12	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	33	42	40	51	1	1	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	27	35	38	49	10	13	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	31	40	44	56	3	4	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)	26	33	35	45	3	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	27	35	36	46	6	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	29	34	44	11	14	5	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	24	31	42	54	6	8	2	3
The school is led and managed effectively	33	42	37	47	4	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	35	45	34	44	3	4	2	3

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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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:	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. ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



10 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Springside Primary School, Bury, BL9 5JB

As you know, inspectors visited your school recently to see how well you are doing and to check whether the school needs any further help. Thank you so much to all of you who spoke to us and told us about the things that you enjoy doing. We really enjoyed meeting you. I am delighted to tell you that we decided that your school no longer needs extra help. These are the important things we found out about your school.

- You behave well. We did not see any bad behaviour while we were in your school.
- You know how to keep healthy and fit. That's good. You know which foods to eat and why exercise is important.
- The adults in school look after you well. They all work hard to make sure that you are safe and well cared for. They make sure that all important papers are kept up to date.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. The adults in the Nursery and Reception classes work exceptionally hard to make sure that the youngest children get a flying start to their education.

We think some of you could do even better! We have asked your headteacher and the other adults to make sure that those of you who can do harder work, do so. We have also asked them to help you get to higher standards in your work, especially in writing. We have asked them to make more of the teaching good and to improve the other lessons, such as history, geography, art, design and technology so that you learn more and find the lessons more exciting. Some of your teachers will have a special job looking at how these subjects can be improved. Perhaps you could talk to them about this?

We know that you will continue to work hard and will help the adults when they make the changes needed so that your school can get even better. Thank you again for sharing the two days with us.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Angela Westington

Her Majesty's Inspector

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