

Inspection of a good school: Springwell Village Primary School

Westfield Crescent, Springwell, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear NE9 7RX

Inspection dates:

9–10 October 2019

Outcome

Springwell Village Primary School continues to be a good school.

However, inspectors have some concerns that standards may be declining, as set out below.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils say that there is no bullying in the school, and behaviour records show that bullying is rare. They say that there is lots to do at school. Pupils have a range of after-school clubs that they can go to such as performance and film clubs. The oldest pupils like the extra responsibilities that they get as house presidents and school council members.

Pupils are positive and confident and have excellent manners. Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and pupils behave well at all times of the day. Pupils can sometimes lose concentration in lessons. Pupils say that staff keep them safe. They are very confident that staff will sort out any problems or worries should they arise.

Pupils are at the heart of this inclusive, friendly school community. The school promotes pupils' personal, social and emotional development very well. Pupils show high levels of respect for each other, their school and their local community.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Relationships between staff and pupils and between pupils themselves are very positive. Pupils across the school behave well. They try hard in lessons and work well with others. Pupils play happily together at playtimes. They understand the importance of respecting difference.

Most children access the school's Nursery, before transferring into Reception. Children get lots of opportunities to listen to stories and rhymes. This gets them off to a good start with their early reading. In Reception, children grasp initial letter sounds well. They use them to read and spell simple words. Teachers plan activities in the outdoors to support children's learning.

Pupils continue to improve their phonics knowledge as they move into key stage 1. Teachers structure the programme for phonics well. The words in pupils' reading books match the sounds they know. Assessment information is used to make sure that pupils get the right support at the right time. However, some lower-attaining pupils in Year 1 struggle to decode some basic words. Leaders acknowledge this and have put in place support programmes to help them catch up.

Overall, staff help pupils learn to read well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders and staff make reading a high priority. Pupils are enthusiastic about books and reading. Many parents and carers are positive about this part of the school's work. However, leaders have not made sure that all staff have had the same training. Sometimes, pupils do not know more and remember more because teaching does not focus on the right things.

Pupils like school. They attend regularly and enjoy the experiences they have. Pupils attend a wide range of extra-curricular activities and clubs. They carry out leadership roles in school eagerly. For example, the older pupils organise games for younger pupils to play at lunchtime. Leaders are committed to the provision of outdoor play and learning. Children learning outdoors in early years were joyful, enthusiastic and safe. Pupils know that bullying is repeated poor behaviour. They say, and the school's records confirm, that bullying is rare in school.

Teachers do not always build on pupils' prior knowledge and understanding well enough. This is sometimes due to lack of subject knowledge. Pupils lose interest in their work and their learning slows. Teachers do not always use assessment effectively to check what pupils know. Some teachers do not explain clearly enough to help pupils understand their work.

In some subjects, teachers have little guidance about what to teach. Plans do not show what pupils should know at the end of a topic; nor do plans show how each topic will build pupils' knowledge ready for the next one. This means that pupils do not learn enough in history and geography, for example. Leaders are aware of this and a review has been completed of what is taught and when it is taught in these subjects.

The school's curriculum overall is not yet sufficiently coherently planned. It is not sequenced well enough in most subjects. However, it is clear that the new acting headteacher and her leadership team are in the process of bringing this about.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that all staff receive regular training. They know the signs that might raise concerns about a pupil's welfare. Staff know what to do if they have a concern. Leaders record concerns carefully. They work with other organisations when this is relevant. The school's record of the checks it carries out on adults working in the school is detailed.

There are very few reported concerns in the school. When they do happen, the designated leaders for safeguarding are quick to follow up any concerns. Almost all parents say that their children are safe in school. The culture of keeping pupils safe is very evident.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders should ensure that the teaching of phonics is of a consistently high quality. The training that staff have received varies. Sometimes, books are not matched as well as they could be to the sounds pupils know. Improved matching will support pupils to make even better progress and gain greater fluency in their reading.
- Leaders should continue their work to develop the school's curriculum. They should make sure that all leaders have clear oversight of the sequencing of different subjects, including English and mathematics. This will help them to be sure that pupils are learning the right things in the right order and teachers will have more guidance on what to teach. This will also enable leaders to be more effective in checking that pupils' knowledge builds more effectively over time.
- The curriculums for the foundation subjects are not well planned. Leaders should identify what is taught and when it is taught. Teachers have not attended training in the foundation subjects recently. Leaders should make sure that teachers have the knowledge and skills to teach the foundation subjects well.
- Leaders should further improve teachers' subject knowledge so that they are able to use this to help pupils to build on their prior learning and remember more. Stronger subject knowledge will help teachers to respond better to pupils' needs.
- Assessment is not always used effectively to check that pupils understand their work. Teachers should ensure that pupils understand what is expected of them so that misconceptions are addressed and all pupils make the progress of which they are capable.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in July 2015.

How can I feed back my views?

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The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	108800
Local authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	10088985
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Robert Dash
Headteacher	Bryony Parrish (Acting)
Website	www.springwellvillageprimaryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	14–15 July 2015

Information about this school

- Springwell Primary and Nursery School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school receives support from the local authority through regular visits.
- The acting headteacher took up post on 1 September 2019.
- The school offers before- and after-school provision.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils (that is, those eligible for support through pupil premium funding) is well below average.
- The overwhelming majority of pupils are of White British heritage.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector held meetings with the acting headteacher and senior leaders, middle leaders and other staff. The inspector met with members of the governing body and spoke with a representative of the local authority. Discussions explored a wide range of subjects, including safeguarding arrangements.

- The inspector carried out curriculum deep dives into reading, mathematics and history. The deep dives consisted of visits to lessons, review of documents, scrutiny of pupils' work, and discussions with senior leaders, curriculum leaders, teachers and pupils.
- The inspector discussed SEN support plans chosen by the school, scrutinised pupils' work, saw the pupils at work in the school and talked to the special educational needs coordinator.
- Throughout the inspection, the inspectors looked at how well school leaders provide safeguarding training and updates for staff, and create a culture of vigilance. He talked to the designated lead for safeguarding, and reviewed the school's documents and records relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Geoffrey Seagrove, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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