

Springwood Heath Primary School

Danefield Road, Liverpool, Merseyside L19 4TL

Inspection dates

20–21 March 2018

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|----------------------------------------------|-------------|
| 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 | Good |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The recently appointed headteacher has raised expectations and set out an ambitious programme of improvements that is having a positive impact for all pupils.
- The school's high-quality, nurturing provision supports pupils who have additional needs very well. Pupils are expertly supported with a wide and varied range of specialist therapies.
- Members of the governing body have an extensive range of expertise and a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They are able to provide effective leadership and the necessary support and challenge to move the school forward.
- Pupils' personal development and welfare, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are a strength of the school. The school's ethos helps develop a deep understanding of diversity and how to overcome barriers to learning.
- The curriculum is enriched with numerous opportunities for the pupils to experience learning beyond the classroom. This helps to build pupils' confidence and self-esteem.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are warm and friendly. Adults are good role models for the positive attitudes they expect of pupils.
- Leaders ensure that the school is a safe haven by exercising vigilance in the safeguarding of pupils.
- Children in early years make a good start to school life. Exciting opportunities to learn are well supported by motivated and caring staff.
- Although most pupils make good progress, the most able are not always challenged as much as they could be in lessons. Progress for this group is not as fast as it should be.
- Revisions to the school's assessment system are having a positive impact, but this is not always used well enough to help pupils improve their written work.
- Opportunities for pupils to apply their reasoning skills in mathematical problems are not consistent across the school.
- Leadership in some subjects, including history and modern foreign languages, is not fully developed and this restricts the progress pupils make in these areas.
- Attendance is improving. However, the persistent absence of a small group of disadvantaged pupils is too high.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - ensuring that assessment is used to inform teaching so that pupils are supported to improve basic errors in their writing, especially in grammar, punctuation, spelling and presentation
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to use reasoning to solve mathematical problems so that they deepen their learning and reach the higher standards of which they are capable
 - increasing the level of challenge for pupils in lessons and accelerating their progress, including for the most able, by continuing to raise teachers' expectations of pupils' achievement.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - improving training and support for middle leaders to enable them to deliver a well-planned curriculum that is carefully monitored and meets the needs of all pupils
 - improving rates of attendance and reducing the number of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, who are persistently absent.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since his appointment less than a year ago, the headteacher has injected renewed ambition into the direction of the school. His determined leadership, supported by a committed team of leaders, is quickly restoring high standards. Following a significant staffing restructure, leaders have rightly focused their time and resources on improving the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes, which are now good.
- The headteacher has an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and what it needs to do to be even more successful. He recognised the reasons for the lower standards and progress experienced by the school in 2017. The high-quality support and provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities were not similarly strong for all pupils. He introduced new systems for monitoring the progress pupils make to provide more timely information. He ensures that prompt action is taken if a pupil falls behind. Consequently, most pupils are making good progress now and achieving well, irrespective of their starting points.
- Clear processes for managing the performance of teachers have been put in place to help teachers to account for the progress of pupils in their classes. This has been effective in communicating high expectations to staff, who are motivated to achieve more challenging targets. Staff are positive about the changes and the opportunities to improve their knowledge and skills.
- The associate headteacher, who leads SEN provision throughout the school, provides strong leadership in this area. A key to the school's success is the detailed and knowledgeable understanding of pupils' specific needs and interests. Adults are skilled in building strong relationships with pupils and their parents and carers. They carefully plan for the needs of each pupil and monitor their progress rigorously. Additional funding to support pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is used appropriately and they make good progress as a result. For example, the appointment of a speech and language therapist to the school has had a positive impact on progress. Assessment information shows that most pupils make good progress towards their specific speech targets.
- Partnerships with other providers are strong. The school makes full use of the expertise of the therapeutic and paediatric practitioners on the school site, as well as other services from the local authority, to support all of its pupils.
- The school uses the funding for disadvantaged pupils effectively. This includes employing a learning mentor to improve attendance and support pupils' emotional development. The renewed focus on pupils' outcomes means that staff have a much sharper focus on the progress of disadvantaged pupils. Leaders have set high expectations for this group and the difference between their progress and that of other pupils is starting to diminish.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development seamlessly throughout the curriculum and through the ethos of the school. There are many examples of the school's success, of which both pupils and staff are very proud. These include the International Schools Award, which celebrates the school's work in helping

pupils understand how to protect the environment and what it means to be a global citizen.

- The curriculum, including lunchtime and after-school activities, provides a rich variety of experiences which promote pupils' academic, personal and social skills well. Pupils' work, shown in displays around the school and in their books, is an apt record of pupils' immersion in cultural heritage and diversity. Through this work, pupils are also taught to understand British values. They are given opportunities to explore themes such as democracy, for example when they vote for their representative on the school council. However, some subjects, such as modern foreign languages and history, are not taught in sufficient depth to meet the needs of all pupils.
- Relationships with parents are good. Most parents strongly support the changes being made in school and recognise that they are positive. Typically, they comment on the inclusive nature of the school and the warm and caring staff.
- Procedures to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' progress in English and mathematics are incisive and detailed. The headteacher is aware that the skills of the other subject leaders across the wider curriculum are not well enough developed to enable them to rigorously monitor and evaluate the quality of provision.

Governance of the school

- Governors take great pride in the special qualities that the school has to offer, but are also ambitious to secure continuing improvement. With the appointment of the new headteacher, the governors are excited about the school's future.
- Governors are firmly committed to the school. They offer a broad range of effective expertise to the strategic leadership of the school and use this to help identify areas for improvement and to provide support. For example, they have strengthened reviews of the school's finances, leading to action to stabilise the school's budget and ensure that staffing is fit for purpose.
- Governors have a realistic view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have a good understanding of the data that is published about the school and are kept well informed with regular reports from school leaders and an external school adviser.
- Governors are knowledgeable about the use of additional funding, especially the pupil premium and its impact on disadvantaged pupils. They are fully aware that although it is helping to reduce the persistent absence of pupils, this remains too high.
- Governors use their knowledge to question and challenge leaders about progress in all aspects of the school's work. They regularly undertake training to ensure that they stay abreast of changes locally and nationally and to enable them to provide the most effective support for the school.

Safeguarding

- Staff are vigilant about the safety and welfare of pupils and this is a key priority in the school. They work closely with parents and others to ensure that there is high-quality

care for all pupils, including those whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Parents and pupils agree that the school is safe and the children are happy.

- Leaders have created a nurturing and supportive environment where pupils feel very well supported. Staff use a range of approaches, including technology, to enable pupils to communicate worries or anxieties, and they respond quickly to pupils' individual needs.
- Staff are well trained and use their skills and expertise effectively. Robust systems for discussing and recording concerns mean that issues are addressed promptly and support is provided for both pupils and families to prevent problems escalating.
- The school curriculum deliberately addresses issues of safety for pupils. Programmes of work cover key themes to help pupils to develop their awareness of online safety and bullying and to understand risks, including those associated with drugs and alcohol. Weekly 'key messages' are built into teachers' plans and they respond to current and emerging issues both in school and beyond.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers know their pupils well. The teams of adults in each class work closely together to deliver highly individualised learning plans, as well as whole-class teaching, to meet the interests and diverse needs of pupils.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, many of which are complex, receive effective support. Teachers and teaching assistants have a very clear understanding of their individual needs. Using accurate and detailed information about pupils' achievement, teachers set individually tailored work for pupils in lessons. This leads to accelerated progress for this group of pupils.
- There are good relationships between staff and pupils and between pupils in lessons. Most classrooms are happy places where pupils flourish because they are relaxed in lessons and interested in what they are doing.
- Improving the teaching of reading has been a whole-school focus and the positive impact of training and new resources is beginning to show. The promotion of a love of reading is strong because of the innovative ways used by leaders to encourage pupils to read often. For example, pupils are excited to meet a range of visiting authors, including Stewart Foster and Maz Evans, who talk about their work. Pupils say that they enjoy reading for pleasure and have frequent and varied opportunities to read and listen to stories.
- Pupils are encouraged to write for different purposes and in a range of different styles. They develop stamina to write at length as they progress through the school. Handwriting, grammar, spelling and punctuation are taught regularly, but work in pupils' books shows that skills are applied with varying degrees of accuracy. For example, pupils are encouraged to edit their own work but do not always have the skills to correct their mistakes and are not given sufficient guidance to identify them. Assessment is not always well used to help pupils know precisely what they need to do next to improve their writing. This results in errors being repeated. Consequently, pupils' progress in writing is uneven and their fluency in writing lags behind their language skills.

- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and stick closely to the school's behaviour policy. Very occasional low-level disruption is addressed quickly and effectively. This usually results from the sometimes slower pace of learning when work is not pitched at the right level.
- Generally, pupils enjoy mathematics and the school's own tracking information and work in books show that progress is improving. Pupils typically show sustained levels of concentration and perseverance in mathematics. Some tasks, however, do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge in solving challenging problems. This results in fewer opportunities to deepen their mathematical understanding or develop their reasoning skills.
- In some classes, the progress of most-able pupils is limited because the tasks they are given are not sufficiently challenging and the questions teachers ask do not always support pupils to deepen their understanding.
- Teaching is effective across the curriculum, but it sometimes lacks the same breadth and depth as found in English and mathematics. For example, when learning Spanish, there are few opportunities for older pupils to broaden their Spanish vocabulary or to write in sentences.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good and is a strength of the school. Most parents who responded to the online survey, along with those spoken to, were full of praise for the work of leaders and staff in supporting pupils and helping them to be happy in school.
- This highly inclusive school helps everybody to understand how to overcome adversity and that disability is not a barrier to learning. The most vulnerable pupils are supported exceptionally well. Their personal development, safety and well-being are prioritised by all staff. Close liaison with a range of medical and healthcare professionals ensures that their physical and emotional needs are met successfully.
- Pupils thrive in the positive and caring school environment. Pupils have first-hand experience of adapting to a broad range of personal qualities and skills and show appropriate and sensitive behaviour towards each other. Pupils are taught to value what is special about each individual, including themselves.
- Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility in several areas of the school's work, including as elected members of the school council. They influence decisions about fund-raising and are proud of the work they have done to support different charities.
- Pupils develop confidence and resilience through the many opportunities they have to practise the skills learned in lessons beyond the school gates. For example, after winning the Roy Castle 50–50 enterprise challenge for two consecutive years, pupils from the enterprise team organised an afternoon of fund-raising challenges for the whole school.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying and say that it is rare. School records show that any incidents are dealt with firmly and promptly. Leaders

have appointed a learning mentor who supports pupils to develop resilience and improve their self-esteem.

- Pupils have a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Visitors to the school reinforce important messages and give pupils the opportunity to discuss concerns in a safe environment. Older pupils have first-hand experience of internet safety when contributing to the design of the school's website.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around school and at playtimes. They enjoy the rewards offered through the school's behaviour policy.
- In lessons, most pupils engage with their own learning and incidents of low-level disruption are rare. On the few occasions when pupils switch off from their work, they do not disrupt the learning of others.
- Rates of attendance are improving. Although persistent absence is high, school records demonstrate that medical reasons account for much of the absence. For the remaining pupils, the learning mentor works closely with them and their families and this is having a positive impact on improving attendance for some. However, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils remains lower than that of other pupils. School leaders have plans to make further improvements through the use of pupil premium funding.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Inspectors carefully considered the school's own data, which shows the impact that the high proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities has on the results of national assessments. For example, in 2017, at least a quarter of all pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 had complex SEN and/or disabilities and were unable to access written tests. However, leaders do not allow this to be used as an excuse for lack of progress. The school's own information and work in pupils' books confirm leaders' evaluations that progress is improving. Most pupils who are able to access the national curriculum are reaching the standards expected for their age.
- From their starting points, which are often lower than typical for their age, pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. The recently appointed headteacher has made sure that close attention is given to the needs of all pupils, that their progress is carefully tracked and that additional support is provided for any pupil who falls behind. Timely interventions, especially for reading and mathematics, are having a positive impact.
- A large proportion of children start school in Nursery with skills that are below those typical for their age. This is particularly the case in reading, writing and mathematics. Owing to effective teaching and good support, children make good progress and most are ready to access the Year 1 curriculum by the end of Reception.
- An improvement in the teaching of phonics is having a positive impact. Although the complex nature of each cohort means that the published data does not always reflect

this, the school's own information and work in books show the great strides that younger pupils make when learning their letters and sounds.

- Pupils' solid start in their early reading skills continues as they move through school. Current pupils are making strong progress in their reading from their individual starting points and this supports their acquisition of knowledge and progress in other subjects.
- Progress in writing is also improving: pupils' ability to produce more complex and interesting compositions is evident in their English books as well as in other work. However, presentation and basic errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar affect the quality of work for a small number of pupils.
- More robust monitoring has led to improved teaching of mathematics. Pupils are proficient in using calculations and become increasingly fluent in tackling mathematical tasks with confidence. This is supporting good progress for most pupils. However, leaders are aware of the need for pupils across the school to develop strong reasoning and problem-solving skills more consistently.
- The high proportions of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress. They are supported to overcome barriers to their learning through the excellent use of technology and access to highly skilled staff.
- As a result of the effective use of pupil premium funding, disadvantaged pupils now do much better at the school than in previous years. The school is quick to identify any pupils falling behind and staff make effective provision for these pupils in class, in small groups and individually. Work in pupils' books demonstrates that most disadvantaged pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their starting points.
- The 2017 test results for the end of Year 6 showed that the proportion of pupils working at greater depth of understanding was below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders are aware of the need to accelerate progress for the most able pupils and have recently prioritised this group. Although they are having some success, this is not embedded across the school and expectations of what pupils can achieve are not consistently high enough.

Early years provision

Good

- Passionate and caring leadership of early years makes sure that children and their families are warmly welcomed and have a positive start to school. The carefully designed environment and well-planned curriculum support children to feel happy and safe.
- The proportion of children reaching a good level of development has been below the national average for the last two years but is improving. The school's own information shows that an increasing number of children are expected to reach a good level of development this year. As a result, children will be ready to start Year 1. Children's books accurately chart their progress through a wide range of interesting activities. Their work shows clear progress in all aspects of learning, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- Funding to support the learning of disadvantaged children is well used in early years and many make rapid gains in their learning. Targeted support focuses on developing

speech, communication and language. Adults use every opportunity to promote learning for disadvantaged and all children. For example, while taking turns to wash their hands, children in Reception enjoyed answering simple questions and counting to 10 in Spanish.

- The teaching of phonics is effective. During the inspection, a group of children were able to use their learning from the book 'Stick Man' to identify words with the same sounds. Children make good progress in securing their early reading skills.
- Children who have SEN and/or disabilities are very well supported. Their needs are identified quickly during close contact with parents before children start school. Activities are planned to give them appropriate support straight away. This means that many children catch up quickly.
- Expectations of children's behaviour in early years are high. Children keep to routines and concentrate well. They move from one activity to the next calmly and sensibly, showing good levels of independence.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 104545 |
| Local authority | Liverpool |
| Inspection number | 10042456 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Maintained |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 273 |
| Appropriate authority | Governing body |
| Chair | Robyn Middleton |
| Headteacher | Ian Hunt |
| Telephone number | 0151 427 7759 |
| Website | www.springwoodheath.co.uk |
| Email address | springwood-ao@springwoodheath.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 30 January 2014 |

Information about this school

- The school is average in size compared with other primary schools.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The percentages of pupils from minority ethnic groups and of pupils who speak English as an additional language are below the national averages.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is significantly higher than the national average.
- The school provides enhanced resourced provision for pupils who have complex physical and medical needs. Forty-eight pupils have been allocated a place by Children's Services. These pupils are taught in classes with other pupils in the school. This means that the proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is well above average.
- The school met the government's current floor standards in 2017, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and

mathematics by the end of Year 6. However, the school was defined as 'coasting', meaning that for at least three years, pupils are thought not to be progressing as well as they should. This definition needs to be considered in the context of the school's circumstances.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons in each class of the school, including joint observations with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders, members of staff and representatives of the governing body.
- Inspectors spoke to two representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors examined a wide range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance, school improvement planning, assessment and reports on the quality of teaching.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils informally during the school day and observed them during playtimes and before and after school. They also met formally with one group of pupils to talk about their learning, behaviour and safety.
- Inspectors heard a number of children read.
- Inspectors took note of displays around the school, photographic evidence and information on the school's website.
- A range of pupils' books was checked with school leaders.
- Inspectors spoke to a number of parents at the start of the day and took account of 16 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors also took note of the 45 responses they received to the inspection questionnaire for school staff and the views of pupils.

Inspection team

| | |
|---------------------------------|------------------|
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| Joan Williamson | Ofsted Inspector |
| Christine Howard | Ofsted Inspector |

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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