

Inspection of Springwood Heath Primary School

Danefield Road, Liverpool, Merseyside L19 4TL

Inspection dates:	1 and 2 October 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Springwood Heath is a very distinctive school. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), thrive. Pupils in the specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND (specially resourced provision) receive well-tailored support from staff who know them exceptionally well.

Pupils are proud of the diverse nature of their school. They make sure that everyone is welcome. Pupils' positive attitudes help make the school a happy place to learn and play.

Children in the early years learn quickly how they are expected to behave. They listen, take turns and follow well-established routines. Older pupils build on this positive start. They typically behave well. Pupils who find it more challenging to manage their own behaviour are supported gently and sensitively.

The school wants pupils to succeed academically. Recent improvements to the curriculum mean that many achieve well across a range of different subjects. More and more, pupils achieve the school's vision of 'success through caring and learning'.

Pupils readily take on roles of responsibility, for example, by acting as school councillors or digital leaders. In doing so, pupils develop a keen sense of responsibility. A wide range of clubs allows pupils to discover and nurture their interests and talents.

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

The school has been on a rapid journey of improvement. It has acted decisively to address the shortcomings identified at the time of the previous inspection. This includes significantly improving the way that the curriculum is designed. The result is a well-organised curriculum that meets the different needs of pupils successfully, including pupils in the specially resourced provision.

The new leadership has quickly won the confidence of staff, pupils and governors. Morale is high. The school has considered the impact of change on staff's workload and well-being with genuine care. Staff have received training to help them to deliver the new curriculum. They have access to high-quality curriculum resources. This means that, despite brisk change, staff have adopted new curriculums expertly and enthusiastically.

Pupils with SEND, including those in the specially resourced provision, achieve well. They benefit from the expertise of staff in identifying and meeting their varying and often complex needs. The school communicates well with a wide range of professionals to secure prompt and expert help for these pupils should they need it.

The quality of education that current pupils enjoy is not reflected in the most recently published data. In 2023, too many pupils left Year 2 and Year 6 poorly prepared for their next stage in education. These pupils had gaps in their knowledge owing to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, weaknesses in the previous curriculum and high absence rates.

The school has strengthened its approach to improving pupils' attendance. It works in close partnership with parents and carers to reduce absence levels. As a result, more pupils now attend school regularly and benefit from the school's ambitious curriculum.

Teachers in the early years skilfully design activities to help children to strengthen their learning. For example, children practise letter recognition while playing in the 'tuff tray.' Changes to the school's curriculum mean that, at times, some staff are unsure what knowledge they should emphasise and rehearse until it is secure in pupils' memories. Consequently, while pupils spoke with assurance about their new learning in most subjects, some were less secure in remembering their key learning, including important vocabulary, over time.

In contrast to the rest of the curriculum, the school's phonics programme is well established. Children in the Reception class are building their phonics knowledge well. However, some older pupils have large gaps in their reading knowledge. These pupils benefit from regular support. In a few instances, staff lack sufficient expertise to deliver this extra support consistently well. This means that some pupils continue to struggle to read with fluency or confidence.

Pupils play together happily at social times. They benefit from kind and caring relationships with staff and with each other. Pupils' positive attitudes mean that they can typically learn without disruption.

The school places a strong focus on pupils' wider development. Pupils learn how to be healthy in mind and body, and how to stay safe online. They show considerable compassion when discussing sensitive issues, including the differences that exist among people. Pupils are well prepared to grow up in a modern and diverse Britain.

The governing body has improved its oversight of the school's work. It has developed an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. For example, governors now ask leaders plenty of probing questions to hold them to account for their work to improve the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some staff lack the expertise to support pupils with gaps in their reading knowledge. This means that some of these pupils struggle to become fluent readers. The school should make sure that staff get the support that they need to deliver the reading curriculum equally well so that they remedy the gaps in these pupils' reading knowledge swiftly.

- At times, teachers do not focus on helping pupils to retain the most important knowledge that they have learned, including subject-specific vocabulary. As a result, some pupils are less confident in recalling learning over time. The school should ensure that teachers design learning that focuses on the key knowledge and vocabulary that pupils need to build a secure understanding across the curriculum.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

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

Further information

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

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	104545
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	10321243
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	209
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Richard Lovegrove
Headteacher	Joanne Costello
Website	www.springwoodheath.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	17 and 18 May 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new headteacher has been appointed since the school was last inspected. There have also been a number of changes to other leadership roles during this time.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for 46 pupils with SEND aged between 4 and 11 years old. Places at this specially resourced provision are commissioned by the local authority. The main area of need for children and pupils in this provision is physical disability.
- At the time of the inspection, there were 46 pupils on roll in the specially resourced provision. Each of these pupils has an education, health and care plan. For some of these pupils, including children in the early years, the specially resourced provision was being used as a special educational needs unit. These pupils spend most of their time there. They follow a curriculum that is different to the curriculum followed by other pupils in the school.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision for pupils.
- The school provides a breakfast club for pupils.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's educational provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other leaders in the school. An inspector also spoke with a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- An inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff, and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- An inspector observed pupils from Years 1 to 3 reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. They spoke with the leaders of these areas of the curriculum. Inspectors also visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work, held discussions with teachers and talked with pupils.
- Inspectors considered the curriculum in some other subjects. They spoke with the leaders of these subjects, talked with pupils about their learning and reviewed a sample of pupils' work.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes and when they moved around the school. Inspectors also spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school.
- An inspector scrutinised leaders' records of pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors spoke with parents and carers as they dropped their children off at school. Inspectors also considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.
- There were no responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff or pupils to consider.
- An inspector visited the school's breakfast club.

Inspection team

Jackie Stillings, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Liz Davidson

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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