

Springdale Primary School

Warstones Drive, Penn, Wolverhampton, West Midlands WV4 4NJ

Inspection dates

14–15 May 2019

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

- Following a merger between two schools, leaders and governors have worked tirelessly to create a successful primary school that aims to help every pupil reach their potential.
- The leadership team has been expanded and is continuing to develop. Leaders provide strong support across the school. This is helping to improve outcomes for pupils.
- Historically, outcomes have been below those seen nationally, especially at the end of key stage 1. However, the progress and attainment of current pupils are stronger. More pupils are working at the standards expected for their age.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are very well supported and make at least good progress from their individual starting points.
- The teaching of reading has a high priority across the school. Pupils read regularly and with increasing fluency. Stronger comprehension skills, especially among the younger pupils, are reflected in the improving quality of pupils' writing.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved and pupils are making stronger progress than in the past. However, sometimes teachers do not pick up pupils' misconceptions and pupils continue to make the same mistakes.
- The curriculum ensures that pupils access a breadth of experiences and opportunities. It develops their knowledge and interest across a wide range of subjects.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and increasingly high expectations of what pupils can achieve. However, sometimes work is not well matched to pupils' needs and this can slow the progress that they make.
- On occasions, approaches to teaching are not consistent; for example, standards of presentation are too variable.
- Pupils rarely miss a day at school. They are proud of their school and show good attitudes to learning. Pupils generally behave well.
- Most parents are positive about the school and the education that their child receives. However, some parents perceive a lack of opportunities to be involved in their child's education.
- Children in the early years now benefit from high-quality teaching and a wealth of engaging activities. This helps them to make a positive start to their school life.
- Safeguarding is effective. Pupils feel safe and know that adults are there to look after them.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of leadership and management, by embedding developments in leadership to secure consistently strong outcomes for pupils across all year groups.
- Further improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - teaching is consistently well matched to pupils’ needs and that pupils are challenged effectively
 - teachers tackle pupils’ misconceptions and address pupils’ errors, especially in mathematics
 - teachers have consistently high expectations of presentation, including handwriting.
- Increase parental awareness of opportunities to be involved in the life of the school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- In January 2018, the school underwent a significant change as a result of merging with the adjoining infant school to create a two-form entry primary school. Historically, the two schools were entirely separate. Leaders and governors have worked hard to create 'one school'.
- The leadership team has been expanded and strengthened. This has increased leaders' capacity to help all pupils reach their potential regardless of their starting point. Leaders have high expectations of all staff and pupils. Since the merger, there have been several changes of staff. This initially caused disruption to the education of some classes, but staffing is now more stable and the pupils in those classes are making much-improved progress.
- Almost all staff are positive about the changes that have taken place since the merger. They are proud to work in the school. Leaders have ensured that all staff have benefited from a wide range of training opportunities, particularly in phonics and mathematics. As a result, staff have good subject knowledge. They feel confident in the lessons they are teaching and report feeling well supported by leaders. There has been a strong focus on improving pupils' outcomes in all year groups and the impact of this work can be seen in pupils' books.
- Leaders have developed a curriculum, based on the national curriculum, to meet pupils' needs. The curriculum ensures that pupils in each year group access a broad range of subjects and activities, which are appropriate for their age and build on previous experiences. Pupils talk positively about the topics that they cover and what they have learned. Pupils across key stage 2 learn Spanish. All pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn to play a musical instrument.
- The curriculum is enhanced through a range of trips and visitors to school. For example, Year 5 pupils spoke enthusiastically about a history trip to Blist Hill Victorian Town, and a planned trip to Carding Mill Valley linked to a project about rivers. During the inspection, Northern Ballet and West Midlands Fire Service visited the school to work with pupils in Years 2 and 4 respectively.
- Leaders ensure that pupils access a wide range of opportunities to support their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. For example, in recent months, pupils have celebrated Black History Month and World Book Day. Effective religious education and personal, social, health and economic education develop pupils' understanding of a range of world faiths, tolerance and respect for others. Together, all these opportunities help to ensure that pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education and life in modern Britain.
- Leaders, including those new in post, are knowledgeable about their areas of responsibility. They are clear on the strengths and next steps required to make further improvements. The quality of teaching and learning is monitored regularly. Information from monitoring is then used to inform further developments and identify any training needs.
- Provision for pupils with SEND, including those in the specialist resource base, is

strong. Pupils' needs are accurately identified and appropriately addressed. This is having a positive impact on pupils' progress, and pupils with SEND are making good progress from their starting points. The proportion of pupils on the school's SEND register is reducing because more pupils are catching up with their peers.

- The primary physical education (PE) and sport premium is used effectively to improve the quality of PE teaching. Pupils have increased opportunities to take part in a range of sports, out-of-school activities and competitions.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils across the school. Pupils' progress is carefully tracked and the funding is used well to support pupils' social and academic needs. More disadvantaged pupils are now working at the standards expected for their age and their attendance has improved.
- Leaders have worked successfully with the local authority throughout the merger process to strengthen provision, especially in the early years and key stage 1. This, along with working closely with a range of other external agencies, has been effective and contributed to improving standards.
- Most parents spoken to during the inspection, or who completed Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, are positive about the work of the school. They are happy about the progress their child is making, the approachability of staff and improvements made since the two schools merged. However, a minority of parents raised concerns about the changes that have occurred and feel that there are fewer opportunities to be involved in school life. Evidence gathered during the inspection does not substantiate these concerns. Nevertheless, leaders and governors could do more to raise parents' awareness about the range of activities and experiences that are on offer.

Governance of the school

- When the infant and junior schools merged, a new governing body was formed, drawing members from the governing bodies of both schools. The governing body has worked alongside leaders to create a cohesive school with one set of systems and processes. Governors are rightly proud of the work that has been undertaken and the positive impact that it is having on the quality of education provided for pupils.
- The governing body comprises a mix of experienced and more recently appointed governors. Governors bring a broad range of skills and expertise to the role. They access advice and training from the local authority to support them in their work.
- The governing body demonstrates a good awareness of the school's strengths, the developments that have taken place since the merger and the areas requiring further improvement. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities effectively. They have an overview of how additional funding is spent and its impact.
- Governors offer an appropriate balance of challenge and support to leaders. They use information from different sources to confirm that the information they are given is accurate.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All staff understand their responsibilities to keep pupils safe, and they have regular child protection and 'Prevent' duty training. Staff spoken to are clear on the signs and symptoms of abuse or radicalisation that they need to be alert to. The school is a safe environment for pupils and they are well cared for at all times.
- The safeguarding team maintains the required confidential records and, when appropriate, works closely with relevant external agencies. Leaders follow up concerns with these agencies as necessary.
- Leaders ensure that appropriate checks are carried out on all adults appointed to work at the school. A lapse in the induction process for a small group of staff was addressed during the inspection. Steps were taken to ensure that this could not happen again.
- Pupils spoken to said that they feel safe in school and know that the staff are there to look after them. Pupils learn how to keep safe, for example when crossing the road, riding their bikes or using the internet.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- As a result of staff training and revised approaches to teaching, for example in phonics and mathematics, teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. There is a clear focus on making sure that pupils have a strong understanding of basic concepts, such as multiplication tables and spelling, to support their progress across a broad range of subjects.
- Additional adults are deployed effectively to support pupils' understanding and help them make good progress. Adults know pupils well and their careful interventions help to keep the pupils focused on their work. Adults use questioning effectively to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding, expecting pupils to explain their ideas and respond in full sentences. Sometimes, however, teachers ask only a few pupils to respond to questions. This means that pupils with misconceptions may not be picked up quickly.
- Since the merger, leaders and teachers have worked hard to ensure that there are consistent approaches to teaching, learning and assessment across the school. These are increasingly effective, but some inconsistencies remain that can impact on pupils' progress. These include variation in the standards of presentation expected, quality of handwriting and the way in which pupils respond to errors in their work.
- Most lessons are carefully planned to engage pupils' interests and develop their understanding. However, sometimes activities not well matched to pupils' needs, being either too easy or too challenging. Sometimes pupils, particularly the most able, complete tasks quickly but they do not have any follow-on activities to complete. As a result, learning time in some lessons is lost.
- Reading has a high priority across the school. The teaching of phonics has been strengthened and, as a result, younger pupils are reading with greater fluency. A library has been opened in key stage 1. Pupils have opportunities to read daily and there is a strong focus on developing pupils' comprehension skills.

- Pupils have very regular opportunities to write at length and in a variety of styles and genres. Pupils apply their writing skills effectively across a wide range of subjects. Teachers model their expectations effectively. In most lessons, pupils are well supported and clear on what they are expected to achieve.
- The teaching of mathematics has been strengthened. A new calculation policy is in place and pupils frequently revise and revisit topics to consolidate their learning. All pupils have regular opportunities to apply their mathematics knowledge to solve problems and to explain their mathematical thinking. Planning is now more consistent and the progress of groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, is closely tracked. However, sometimes, when pupils do not fully understand a concept or make the same error several times, these are not picked up quickly enough by the teacher. This means that some learning time is lost.
- Systems to assess and track pupils' progress have been extended across the school. There is a focus on checking the accuracy of assessments by comparing examples of pupils' work both in school and with teachers in other schools. Leaders and teachers use this information to identify any additional support required and to ensure that the curriculum is taught at the appropriate level.
- Teaching for pupils with SEND is particularly strong. Staff are clear on the next steps pupils need to make and specific interventions are put in place to address these.
- Pupils' science books reflect a mix of practical and written work. Pupils develop age-appropriate, scientific skills, for example making predictions and fair testing.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are polite, happy and confident. They generally show positive attitudes to learning and they are proud of their school.
- Classrooms are spacious, welcoming environments. There are strong relationships across the school. A wide range of displays support pupils' learning and celebrate their achievements. Celebration assemblies acknowledge pupils' successes, whether they are in academic achievement, effort or behaviour.
- The pastoral support available to pupils and their families is a strength of the school. Examples include counselling sessions and working with a range of external agencies to provide practical day-to-day help.
- Pupils have many opportunities to contribute to school life and the wider community, such as raising money for charity. They have the opportunity to take on a range of school-wide responsibilities, for instance lunchtime buddies, house captains and sports councillors. A pupil from each class is elected as a school councillor. Pupils take these roles seriously and are very proud to undertake them.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school's behaviour policy focuses on rewarding positive behaviour. Each class has developed its own class rules and most pupils are clear on how the system works in their classroom.
- Behaviour around school, including in assembly and at lunchtime, is generally of a high standard. Pupils are well supervised at breaktimes. There is generally a calm and purposeful atmosphere during lessons and most pupils are keen to learn. On occasions, some pupils become bored or a little restless. This tends to happen when tasks are not well matched to pupils' needs.
- Pupils understand what bullying is and the various forms that it may take. Incidents of bullying or racism do happen, but they are rare. When incidents occur, these are dealt with appropriately by leaders, often involving parents.
- Ensuring pupils attend school regularly, and on time, is a high priority. Attendance is above the national average and continues to improve. Leaders track attendance carefully and promptly follow up any absence. The attendance team contacts parents if attendance drops below an acceptable level. Actions are stepped up if attendance does not improve. Leaders are alert to the possibility of children going missing from education and work with external agencies to minimise any risk. Leaders reward good attendance, at both class and individual level.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The majority of pupils, across all year groups, are currently making good progress. Most are now working at the standard expected for their age, particularly in reading and writing and increasingly in mathematics. This applies to pupils of all ability ranges, including the most able and those who are disadvantaged.
- In 2017 and 2018, attainment at the end of key stage 1 was particularly low, especially in reading and mathematics. As a result of developments in teaching and raised expectations, considerably more pupils are now achieving well.
- Over time, attainment in mathematics at the end of key stage 2 has been below the national average and too few pupils have reached the higher standards expected. Current pupils, including the most able, are making stronger progress across a wide range of mathematical topics. Pupils are completing more complex calculations, developing a wider range of strategies to solve problems and using more subject-specific vocabulary to explain their mathematical reasoning.
- Historically, teacher assessments at the end of key stage 1 were not wholly reliable. The reliability of assessments is improving due to rigorous monitoring systems and teachers having a better understanding of the expected standards.
- Outcomes in the Year 1 phonics screening check have been variable over time and, despite some improvement in 2018, remain below the national average. However, the standards of current pupils are higher than in the past. The reading ages of pupils across the school are also higher than they have been in the past. They show that many pupils who had fallen behind are quickly catching up with their peers, especially

those in Years 3 and 4.

- The quality and quantity of writing in pupils' books, across a range of subjects, indicates strong progress, including for the most able pupils. Pupils develop age-appropriate skills across a range of subjects including science, history and geography.
- The great majority of pupils who speak English as an additional language are working at the standards expected for their age. The small number of pupils who join the school with little spoken English make strong progress.
- Pupils with SEND make strong progress from their starting points. Leaders track this progress in detail to ensure that interventions are closely matched to pupils' needs.

Early years provision

Good

- Since the last inspection of the infant school, all aspects of early years provision have improved. The new early years leader has developed an effective team, which has a clear understanding of the children's needs and what each child needs to do next to make progress. All adults benefit from shared training and opportunities to plan together. The outdoor learning environment has been improved and children can access a wide range of activities covering all aspects of the early years curriculum.
- A two-year cycle of curriculum topics has been introduced; however, this is flexible enough to take into account children's interests 'in the moment'. For example, during the inspection one child was fascinated by a ladybird and an adult took the time to help her find a book so that she could learn more about it.
- Safeguarding and welfare requirements in the early years are met fully. Risk assessments are undertaken daily. Where practical, these include some children who then report back to their class about any equipment that is not safe to use that day, for example if it is too wet or slippery. As a result, all children have a developing awareness of how to be safe in their environment.
- Teaching is good and adults show strong subject knowledge. They intervene appropriately in activities and ask questions to develop children's understanding and maximise their progress. Activities are well planned to stimulate children's interests and advance their skills. For example, when children were preparing a fruit salad, this included writing a list of fruit, weighing and comparing different fruit and then preparing the fruit.
- Children show sustained levels of concentration. For example, Nursery children listened well to a story read by their key worker. Children are confident learners and respond well to adults. Behaviour is good and relationships between adults and children are strong. Occasionally, some children may spend too long on an activity without an adult intervening.
- Children's learning journals show that all groups have made strong progress from their starting points. Assessments are made regularly and cover all aspects of the early years foundation stage curriculum. Children in both Nursery and Reception are proud of what they can achieve.
- Children across the early years benefit from effective phonics teaching, including consistent expectations and routines. However, errors are sometimes not picked up by

adults, slowing the amount of progress children make. The work of children in Reception shows clear progress from individual letter formation to words and sentences. The most able children can write simple stories.

- Mathematics activities are purposeful and well planned to cater for a wide range of abilities. Morning classroom routines are embedded and include number work. For example, adults use the date and the number of days that the children have been in school together as a basis for activities.
- Early years staff develop strong links with parents and there are good systems in place to help children settle quickly into school life. Staff provide regular opportunities for parents to be involved in their child's education, for example through workshops, stay and play sessions or contributing 'wow' moments to learning journals.
- On average, children come into the early years with knowledge and skills a little below those which are typical for their age. Over the last four years, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development has been below the national average. Children who attend the school's Nursery generally attain more highly than those who join the school at the start of Reception. Leaders actions have addressed the wide attainment gap seen between boys and girls in 2018. Children are well supported on their transition to Year 1 and pupils currently in Year 1 are making good progress.

School details

Unique reference number	104303
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	10058443

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	472
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Craig Felton
Headteacher	Janice Hopkins
Telephone number	01902 558810
Website	http://www.springdaleprimaryschool.co.uk/
Email address	springdaleprimaryschool@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	17–18 June 2014

Information about this school

- Springdale Primary School opened in January 2018 following the merger of Springdale Infant and Springdale Junior Schools. The school's unique reference number applied to the former junior school, which was deemed to be good in June 2014. The infant school was deemed to require improvement when it was inspected in January 2017.
- The headteacher was formally the headteacher of the junior school.
- Springdale Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school. There are two classes in each year group, except in Year 3, where there are three classes.
- Nursery children attend school from the age of three years. Some children attend for 15 hours, and others attend for 30 hours. Children in Reception attend full time.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is in line with the national average, although the proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is well above the national average. This is because the school has a resource base for pupils who have speech,

language and communication difficulties. The base currently supports 25 such pupils.

- Approximately two-thirds of pupils are from White British backgrounds. Other pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average. Very few pupils are at the early stages of learning to speak English.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is a little above the national average.
- Before- and after-school care is available through Springdale After School Club. This provision is privately run and inspected separately.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in approximately 30 lessons or small-group sessions.
- Inspectors met with pupils, looked at many examples of pupils' work and spoke to pupils formally and informally. One inspector listened to some pupils read. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime, lunchtime and around the school, as well as in lessons.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, leaders and members of staff. The lead inspector met with six representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The lead inspector met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation. This included the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, records relating to safeguarding and attendance, minutes of meetings of the governing body, school performance data and the school's website.
- Inspectors considered parents' opinions through 56 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 42 free-text responses. Inspectors spoke to some parents before school on the first day of the inspection.
- As part of the inspection, 22 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire were considered.

Inspection team

Catherine Crooks, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Janet Lewis	Ofsted Inspector
Kirsty Foulkes	Ofsted Inspector

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