

# Speedwell Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112629
<b>Local Authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	337977
<b>Inspection dates</b>	6–7 May 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Susan Walsh

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	139
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Julie Bacon
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Rowena Teather
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 January 2007
<b>School address</b>	College Avenue Staveley Chesterfield
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors saw five teachers deliver 10 lessons and held meetings with governors and staff from the school. They observed the school's work including looking at the school improvement plan, the school's records of the monitoring of teaching, the minutes from governors' meetings, spoke to pupils during lessons and breaktimes and looked at 21 parental questionnaires.

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

- the impact of the school's strategies to improve attendance
- the progress that children make in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the differences between the progress made by boys and girls
- why attainment in writing appears to be improving at a faster rate than attainment in mathematics.

## Information about the school

This is a small school. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The school provides for the Early Years Foundation Stage through morning and afternoon Nursery sessions and a full-time Reception class. The School has gained a range of awards including the Basic Skills Quality Mark and the Eco School Bronze Award. It has Healthy School's status.

**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?**

**2**

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

**2**

## Main findings

This is a good school. It works extremely hard to overcome the considerable barriers to learning that are faced by many of its pupils. Teaching is good and the curriculum is carefully tailored to the needs of these pupils. The excellent care, guidance and support provided for pupils and families is at the heart of the school's work and is underpinned by the very close links between the school and external agencies. Parents typically say that staff are 'caring, very approachable and very supportive'. They know that their children feel exceptionally safe.

Children get off to a satisfactory start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children make good progress in the Reception class but their progress is slower in the Nursery as it does not provide such a vibrant and stimulating learning environment. Children are not so well supported when they are working independently and assessments of children's progress are not regular or rigorous enough in the Nursery. By the time pupils reach the end of Year 2, their attainment is average. They have made good progress through Key Stage 1 and their achievement is good. The school's commitment to ensuring that all children read to an adult on a regular basis is very successful at boosting pupils' progress in reading. Regular trips that are closely linked to interesting topic areas ensure that pupils have exciting first-hand experiences to write about and, as a result, pupils make particularly good progress in their writing. Teachers use strategies that interest and engage children. However, occasionally the work set is not finely matched to pupil's abilities and teachers' marking is sometimes congratulatory and does not tell pupils exactly how to improve their work.

Support staff make a very important contribution to extending pupils' opportunities and ensuring their well-being. They run a wide variety of clubs, for example, a gardening club and clubs that help pupils who need to develop their social skills. In the classroom, not only do they support those who find learning difficult, they also successfully provide more able pupils with extra challenge. The pupils themselves make an outstanding contribution to the school community and the local community. Not only do they participate in the active school council and the Eco Committee in school they take this valuable work beyond school. Together with other local schools they have worked on developing an acceptable communication policy which has been adopted by schools throughout the neighbourhood.

The headteacher's excellent leadership, which includes an ambitious vision and high expectations of both staff and pupils, has been pivotal in driving improvement. The school has gone from strength to strength since the previous inspection and has successfully tackled all the issues that were identified. Attainment has risen; the progress of boys and girls has accelerated, and provision has been strengthened. A

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robust approach to tackling persistent absence has resulted in improvements in attendance rates. All this demonstrates the school's good capacity for further improvement.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage by
  - making certain that assessments in the Nursery are regular and rigorous and the information obtained is used to plan work for individuals
  - developing the environment and the curriculum in the Nursery so that it is more exciting and better reflects children's needs and interests
  - making sure that children in the Nursery access sufficient adult support when they are working independently.
- Improve the way that assessment is used to support learning by
  - making certain that teachers' marking always tells pupils how to improve their work
  - ensuring that work is finely matched to pupils' needs.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**2**

The strong focus on reading and writing means that attainment in reading and writing has improved at a faster rate than attainment in mathematics. Nevertheless, pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress in mathematics lessons and over time. Although attainment is broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics, more children reach the higher levels in writing. Teachers provide clear frameworks for writing which ensure that pupils learn to record their thoughts and experiences in a coherent way. Pupils make good use of words that join sentences and use a wide range of describing words. Consequently, they produce lively interesting pieces of writing, of which they are justifiably proud. Many pupils said that they really enjoyed writing and the regular opportunities to read to staff and volunteers. Although boys made better progress than girls last year, currently boys and girls are making equally good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make good progress, especially in their personal development, because their additional needs are quickly identified and they are given carefully considered support that matches their individual requirements.

Pupils feel exceptionally safe in school. Bullying is actively discouraged and pupils are confident to report any issues to staff because they know that their concerns will be promptly dealt with. The school makes certain that children understand the risks that are associated with the internet as well as other risks they may come across in their lives. Pupils also undertake a useful first aid course. The school teaches pupils how to behave appropriately and, as a result, behaviour is good, both in the classroom and around school. Pupils are aware of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and learn about healthy eating in the cookery club. Social and moral development is particularly strong and pupils learn to work well together and to respect one another. They are proud to take

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on responsibilities. Although the school has worked hard to raise the aspirations of pupils and parents and to improve attendance and punctuality, there are still a few pupils whose erratic attendance and poor punctuality holds back their progress.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Relationships between teachers and pupils are warm and supportive. Pupils are not afraid to make mistakes and know that their efforts are valued by all staff. This gives them great confidence. As one child said in assembly, 'We learn from mistakes.' A range of different activities and resources, including new technology, are used to make sure that pupils stay interested and involved. Questioning is used particularly well in Key Stage 1, both to challenge pupils and to extend their learning. Teachers are skilled at managing behaviour and pupils respond well to their high expectations. Occasionally, work is not sufficiently finely matched to pupils' needs, and there are examples of pupils of different abilities completing the same work in both English and mathematics. This holds back the progress of the most able pupils. There are inconsistencies in the quality of marking. Sometimes, marking only offers praise and does not tell pupils how to

<sup>1</sup> 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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improve their work. This is particularly true for older and more able writers.

The curriculum is broad, balanced and closely matched to pupils' needs. Learning is made active and exciting and this has helped to improve boys' achievement. Visits are used extremely well to bring learning alive. Active partnerships with local primary and secondary schools extend opportunities for pupils. Much is done to try to involve parents in their children's learning, for example, through curriculum mornings, reading circles and the weekly celebration assembly. As well as the strong focus on reading and writing, supporting pupils' personal development is high on the school's agenda. There is a good range of clubs, for example, the 'Cool Club' which helps pupils learn how to play together and Tai Chi which encourages them to be calm and to control their actions.

The school provides a very welcoming and happy environment that is valued by parents and pupils. Very well targeted support allows each and every pupil to make the very best of the opportunities provided by the school. Good links with the receiving junior school help pupils to feel confident about moving on. Pupils react very well to awards for good work and good behaviour. They are very proud to receive their certificates in assembly and to sit on the 'Special Friday' table at lunchtime. The school has worked hard to encourage parents to bring their children to school regularly using a range of targets and rewards. This is paying dividends because attendance rates are rising and fewer pupils have gaps in their learning caused by irregular attendance.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The progress of different groups of pupils is carefully analysed by the headteacher and this is used to ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to succeed. All staff are well motivated and committed to a climate of improvement. They make certain that no pupil suffers from discrimination and they are quick to challenge stereotypical views. The robust information obtained from checking pupils' progress and monitoring teaching and learning is used well to inform the school's school development planning. Plans are consistently reviewed and adjusted when appropriate and are very effective in accelerating improvement. The governing body is supportive but also provides challenge. It has ensured that safeguarding procedures fully meet regulatory requirements. Not only does the governing body carefully monitor health and safety but it also includes children in checking for potential hazards. The school is very committed to local partnerships, has strong links with parents and is very involved in raising

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aspirations and supporting its immediate community. However, it is aware that pupils have not had enough opportunities to meet others with different backgrounds than themselves. Nevertheless, international links are developing well through the school's contact with Indian and Canadian schools.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## Early Years Foundation Stage

When children join the Nursery their skills are exceptionally low compared to other children of a similar age. Many have difficulties with speech and language and poorly developed social skills. When they join Year 1, their skills are still below average but they have made satisfactory progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage. They make better progress in the Reception class than in the Nursery because the Reception provides a very rich learning environment where exciting activities are linked to topic areas which seize the children's attention. In the Nursery class, activities do not always interest and engage children and do not always cover all areas of learning. In the Reception class, children's learning is regularly checked and this information is used to inform lesson planning. Although there are checks of children's learning in the Nursery, these are not regular or rigorous enough. There is insufficient up-to-date information to inform planning for individuals and the assessment information that is passed on to the Reception class is not accurate enough. Although adults work hard with groups during lessons some children in the Nursery get insufficient adult support when they are working independently and this limits their language development. Outdoor play space is used appropriately in the Reception class but children in the Nursery class are not able



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to move as freely between the indoors and outdoors. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory and ensures that children are well cared for but not enough is done to make certain that provision in the Nursery class is as good as that offered in the Reception class.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

### **Views of parents and carers**

Although relatively few parents and carers responded to the questionnaire, the majority of those that did are pleased with what the school provides for their children. Many comment positively on the support that staff have given to their children and themselves. They are confident that their children are exceptionally safe and happy in school. Parents and carers also said that they liked the way good behaviour, attendance and punctuality are rewarded, and they appreciate the courses that are provided by the school.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Speedwell Infant 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 inspection team received 21 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 139 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	17	81	2	10	1	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	15	71	6	29	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	10	48	11	52	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	14	67	5	24	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	13	62	7	33	1	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	16	76	5	24	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	81	3	14	0	0	1	5
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)	10	48	8	38	0	0	1	5
The school meets my child's particular needs	15	71	5	24	0	0	1	5
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	16	76	4	19	0	0	1	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	10	48	10	48	0	0	1	5
The school is led and managed effectively	12	57	9	43	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	14	67	6	29	1	5	0	0

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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:	<p>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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Speedwell Infant School, Chesterfield, S43 3JJ

It was a delight and a privilege to visit your good school. I really enjoyed talking to you all and listened very carefully to what you had to say. You say that your teachers are nice and kind and I agree. They do keep you very safe indeed and value each and every one of you. I was very impressed by your good behaviour and the way that you make such an important contribution to the school through the school council, Eco club and by acting as buddies. I also noticed that you often try to help each other in class as well as helping your teachers. It was good to hear about your trip to the tram museum. You certainly learned a lot and produced some wonderful writing with lots of 'wow' words. I was pleased to hear that many of you love to read to your teachers.

Teaching in your school is good and helps you to make good progress. Your standards of attainment are similar than those reached by children at other schools. I have asked your teachers to make sure that you always know exactly what to do to improve your work and to make sure that the work you are set is not too hard or too easy. Children in the Reception class are making faster progress than those in the Nursery, so I have asked your teachers to make sure that the children in the Nursery have more exciting lessons, work that challenges them and lots of help from adults.

The headteacher and those that help her are doing a good job. They are working very hard and trying to make your school into one of the very best. You can help your school to improve further by making sure you come to school every day and on time and by continuing to try very hard in all your lessons

I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Susan Walsh

Lead inspector

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