



Springfield School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116461
LEA Portsmouth LEA
Inspection number 279836
Inspection dates 10 May 2006 to 11 May 2006
Reporting inspector Peter Sanderson

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

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Central Road
School category	Community		Drayton
Age range of pupils	11 to 16		Portsmouth PO6 1QY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02392379119
Number on roll	1140	Fax number	02392388784
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr D W Good
Date of previous inspection	3 April 2000	Headteacher	Mrs L Evans

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11 to 16	10 May 2006 - 11 May 2006	279836

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Springfield School is a large, popular comprehensive school. Most pupils are of white British heritage, with only a small number from minority ethnic groups or whose first language is not English. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is also below average. The school is a specialist technology college.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Springfield is a good school with outstanding features. It is well regarded by its pupils and their parents, with just cause. It has good systems for monitoring its performance and, as a consequence, knows itself very well. The school has a clear sense of its strengths and weaknesses and judges itself to be good. The school provides very good value for money.

Under the outstanding leadership of the headteacher, there is a shared commitment at all levels within the school community to provide an interesting and relevant education for all pupils. The school has implemented an effective range of strategies to improve learning and, as a consequence, standards at the end of Year 11 have risen in recent years and are above the national average. All pupils make good progress. Teaching is good overall although there is some inconsistency in practice across the school. The personal development of pupils is outstanding. They behave extremely well in lessons and show excellent attitudes to learning. Pupils enjoy their work and attendance is above the national average. The school curriculum is outstanding. The school has recently developed the number of vocational courses offered in Years 10 and 11, and a very broad range of after-school clubs and trips are available to pupils. Opportunities for pupils are further enhanced by productive links with local colleges, employers and external groups and agencies. The care, guidance and support of pupils are outstanding. They feel safe and this is contributing to their desire to do well.

The school has clearly demonstrated that it has a very good capacity to improve. It has successfully addressed the issues raised at the last inspection, pupils' achievement and standards have risen and clear priorities for improvement have been identified. The school has also achieved technology college status. This has contributed to improvement by allowing the school to enrich its curriculum, extend its community provision, develop links with industry and feeder primary schools and improve its resources.

What the school should do to improve further

andmiddot; Ensure that the overall quality of teaching matches the best so that pupil learning is optimised in all subject areas.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well and reach high standards by the time they leave school. Pupils enter the school at the national average standard and make very good progress during years 7 to 9. At the end of year 9, standards are above the national average in English, mathematics and science. Good progress is made during years 10 and 11 and standards have improved since the last inspection. The percentage of pupils achieving five good passes at GCSE is above the national average. A high percentage of pupils also attain five or more graded passes, reflecting the inclusive nature of the school. Pupils who

have learning difficulties and disabilities receive strong support and achieve well. The school has good systems for monitoring pupils' achievement and these indicate that there is variability in the performance of pupils in different subjects. Effective support and challenge are being given to those subjects in which pupils do not make the expected progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Spiritual development is good and pupils engage in many opportunities for reflection within both religious and non-religious situations. Their moral and social development is outstanding. There is a strong sense of community and of mutual respect between the pupils themselves and between pupils and staff. There is a strong commitment to promoting racial equality. Pupils engage in a wide range of cultural activity across all the arts and take up the opportunities the school provides for them to see professional productions. Pupils develop a good knowledge of other cultures and ways of life through classroom study and through school visits to other countries.

The pupils' exemplary behaviour means that the school is a very pleasant place within which they feel safe from bullying or discrimination. Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance rates are above average. Their participation in lessons is very positive. Pupils are safety-conscious and adopt healthy lifestyles. There is a large take up of the many opportunities for sport and physical exercise. Pupils' contribution to the school and wider community is outstanding. The school council has an active voice on school matters and has succeeded in changing aspects of school life. A large number of pupils take up positions of responsibility, for example as prefects, tutor group assistants or as anti-bullying counsellors. Their contribution to the wider community is significant through charity fund-raising and links with feeder schools and other institutions. The pupils' maturity, confidence and strong team-working skills will enable them to transfer well to working life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good overall with some classroom practice being outstanding. In the best lessons, there are strengths in lesson planning, high challenge for the range of pupils in the class and an emphasis on the enjoyment of learning. Teachers' knowledge is very secure and lessons allow time for reflection and the consolidation of learning. In a few lessons, pupils' progress is exceptional because of high levels of concentration and participation. In others, paired work and practical activities ensure a high quality of learning. In some lessons, however, progress is only satisfactory because teaching does not fully engage the interest of pupils or is not sufficiently focused on learning outcomes.

Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and for those with identified gifts and talents is very effective. The school has a clear focus on assessment and there are some good opportunities for individuals to assess their own and others' work. It is successful in encouraging pupils towards independence and the development of research skills. The very well managed and resourced Learning Resource Centre makes a major contribution in this context. Assessment and marking are strong in most subject areas and pupils are clear about how they can improve. Homework is monitored carefully and parents and the business community are encouraged to support learning wherever possible.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school has a clear focus on curriculum development, particularly work related learning, technology and provision for the gifted and talented. The curriculum is highly effective in meeting the needs of the pupils, as seen in the good attendance and low exclusion rates. It has clear breadth and balance in Years 7 to 9 with significant enhancement in modern foreign languages, citizenship and drama. The school has planned its upper school curriculum very well and is flexible in meeting the needs of those for whom an academic approach is unsuitable. A wide range of subjects is available to pupils in Years 10 and 11 including business communications, sociology and statistics. There is a developing range of vocational provision, enhanced by the school's specialist status and its excellent links with industry and local colleges. The range and quality of extracurricular activities, trips and visits is outstanding and the level of pupils' participation is high.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The quality of care, guidance and support is outstanding. Members of staff work very hard to ensure the safety and care of pupils. Child protection procedures are very secure and regularly reviewed. Health and safety practices are robust and risk assessments are carefully conducted. The careful monitoring of pupils' academic and general progress means that learners in need of support are identified early and helpful interventions implemented. Excellent links with feeder schools helps the school compile detailed information about most of the pupils entering in Year 7, and to arrange supplementary programmes where required. The school works well with parents and agencies to ensure learners make good progress. The school provides training to help teachers understand and meet the particular needs of specific pupils. The very rare incidents of bullying are dealt with swiftly and effectively and pupils have great confidence in the school's systems and channels of communication. The school provides excellent guidance to enable pupils to access opportunities offered within the curriculum and at post-16.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school evaluates leadership and management as good. The inspection team judges this aspect to be good with outstanding features. The headteacher sets very high expectations and is an inspirational leader who is well supported by a dedicated and talented senior leadership team. She knows the school's strengths and weaknesses very well and this is evident in the high quality of the school's self-evaluation. This is comprehensive and rigorous, clearly identifying strengths and weaknesses. The opinions of parents and pupils are always valued and frequently acted upon. Issues from the last inspection have been resolved successfully.

Team work is of a high quality and everyone plays a part in moving the school forward. A particular strength is the way in which the school supports and expects teachers to develop a wide range of skills and expertise. Lessons are regularly observed by senior managers and heads of department are becoming more involved in this monitoring process. However, monitoring has yet to fully ensure that teaching is of a consistently high standard.

Governors have a strong grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and provide an effective balance of support and challenge to the headteacher and senior managers. The school is keen to improve even further. The recent and successful drive to eliminate under-achievement and improve the quality of teaching in modern foreign languages provides a clear indication of the school's good capacity to do so.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	1	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Pupils

As you know we have recently inspected your school. We met and talked with many of you, sat in on some of your lessons and looked at work you had done. We would like to thank you for the help you gave us. Now that we have finished the inspection I am writing to tell you of our findings. We thought your school provides you with a very good education and the following points are its key strengths.

- Your headteacher wants you all to be very successful. She is an outstanding leader and is very well supported by other senior staff in the school.
- You are taught well and you are making good progress.
- Your behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent. We were impressed by how keen you are to learn and participate in lessons.
- There is strong community feeling in the school and you treat each other with respect.
- Your teachers take outstanding care of you. You told us you feel safe and secure while in school.
- You told us that you enjoyed being at school and we could see this in your lessons and in your good attendance.
- Staff listen to your views through the school council and you have succeeded in changing aspects of school life.
- The school provides you with opportunities to be more responsible and develop leadership skills through becoming prefects, tutor group assistants and anti-bullying counsellors.
- There are a broad range of academic and vocational courses you can choose to follow in years 10 and 11.
- Many of you attend the large range of lunchtime and after school clubs.
- Your school's award of technology college status has helped develop strong links with local business and industry and this is benefiting all of you.

You can see that we think your school has many strengths but to become even better we have asked it to do the following:

- Many of your lessons are interesting and enjoyable and you clearly understand what you are expected to learn. This is not always the case and so we have asked the school to ensure that all your lessons are as good as the best.

Thank you again and I wish you all good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

Peter Sanderson

Her Majesty's Inspector