

Inspection of Spring Meadow Infant School

High Barns, Ely, Cambridgeshire, CB7 4RB

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 March 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending Spring Meadow Infant School. They enjoy learning activities that are fun and interesting. In the past, pupils have not achieved as well as they should. Current pupils are making good progress in core areas such as reading and mathematics. This is due to adults having high expectations of them. Pupils enjoy studying a broad and interesting range of subjects. The curriculum they learn has been carefully planned, so they build their knowledge over time. It includes opportunities for visits and visitors that add to pupils' learning in class.

School leaders and everyone involved with pupils are vigilant and well-trained to keep pupils safe. Staff ensure that pupils are cared for well. Pupils learn to keep safe, including when online. They learn about healthy relationships and how to live healthily.

Pupils behave well. Those who need extra help to manage their behaviour are well supported to make the right choices. Expectations for all are clear and fair. As a result, pupils' learning is rarely disrupted. Their conduct around the school is positive and orderly. Relationships are strong. Adults and pupils show respect and consideration for one another. Pupils are accepting of differences and supportive of their peers.

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

The school has constructed a broad, well-planned curriculum, starting from the early years. Well-trained subject leaders provide effective support and guidance for teachers. Teaching activities are well-planned and resourced. In the early years, adults use the indoor and outdoor areas to support children's learning effectively.

Pupils are knowledgeable, curious and enthusiastic. They learn well in a wide range of subjects. Adults ensure that children in the early years enjoy and engage confidently with activities covering all areas of learning. Adults use play opportunities effectively to develop children's vocabulary and spoken language.

Daily phonics sessions ensure that pupils start learning to read right from the start of Reception. Pupils read books that are well matched to their phonics knowledge. This allows them to practise using their knowledge of sounds and words at home. Pupils become confident, fluent readers. They enjoy choosing from a range of high-quality books available in each class and the library. Children in the early years enthusiastically share stories, poems and non-fiction books.

Pupils enjoy learning mathematics. Teachers are providing more opportunities for pupils to practise and use their mathematical knowledge. This helps pupils remember this important knowledge easily. In the early years, adults plan activities to develop children's mathematical knowledge throughout the day.

The school has identified why pupils have not achieved well in the past. Due to changes to the curriculum and how well it is taught, pupils' performance in national assessments and tests is improving. Pupils are being prepared well for learning at junior school.

The school identifies pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) promptly. Staff support pupils' needs well in class. A separate class for pupils with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs helps pupils to reintegrate successfully into mainstream classes. A specialist unit successfully supports pupils with high-level SEND.

Pupils are beginning to take more pride in their work. However, the quality of pupils' written work is variable. They do not always communicate their ideas and understanding clearly in their writing.

The school has high expectations for behaviour. Pupils usually behave well. If not, they are given support to improve. Pupils are respectful, supportive and tolerant. Breaktimes are orderly and calm, with pupils cooperating well.

Attendance and punctuality are priorities. Leaders are clear in their expectations and work closely with families. Improvement has been made, but this area is still a work in progress. Some pupils, including some disadvantaged pupils and some pupils with SEND, are absent frequently. Therefore, they miss out on important learning.

The school provides a range of opportunities and experiences that promote pupils' personal development well. These include extra-curricular sporting, musical and social activities. A school band provides opportunities for pupils to sing, play guitar, drums and other percussion instruments. Pupils learn to ride a bicycle. A programme of visits and visitors to the school enhances the curriculum and broadens pupils' horizons.

Governors know the school well. They have helped the school make significant improvements to the quality of education. The school has achieved this through extensive staff training and making thoughtful changes to the curriculum. Leaders are considerate of staff well-being and workload when making any changes. Governors ensure this applies to school leaders too. The school has made parental engagement a key focus. Parents and carers enjoy attending school events.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The quality of pupils' written work is variable. Legacy issues remain in handwriting, and pupils do not always show pride in their work. Pupils do not

routinely show the depth of their understanding in written work. The school should continue to develop writing across the curriculum, including in greater depth, so that pupils consistently communicate their ideas clearly and effectively.

- Some pupils do not attend well enough, including some disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND. These pupils miss out on important learning and do not benefit from the quality of education the school provides. The school should continue and develop its work further to improve attendance and punctuality so that these pupils are in school more often and benefit from the good quality of education provided.

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	110760
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10318575
Type of school	Community School
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	137
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	David Barker
Headteacher	Laura Fielding
Website	www.springmeadowschool.cambs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	19 May 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with autism. Nine pupils currently attend this infant assessment unit.
- A class with part-time places offers provision for those with SEMH needs. This supports a small number of pupils with reintegration into their mainstream classes.
- The school has a Nursery class which accepts children from three years of age.
- A range of after-school clubs is provided by the school. Breakfast club is also available for some pupils.
- The school currently uses one unregistered alternative provider for pupils.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector contacted the alternative provider to discuss the provision and safeguarding arrangements.
- The lead inspector spoke to members of the local governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, design technology and computing. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects and visited a range of lessons.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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.
- Inspectors held meetings with a range of leaders, including the special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at other times around school. They met with groups of pupils to discuss behaviour in the school.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of records relating to behaviour and attendance.
- The lead inspector considered the 50 responses and 49 free-text responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, which were received during the inspection. She also considered the 26 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

Jacqueline Bell-Cook, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Caroline Dawes	Ofsted Inspector

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