

Springwater School

High Street, Starbeck, Harrogate, North Yorkshire, HG2 7LW

Inspection dates

1–2 July 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Early years provision		Outstanding	1
Sixth form provision		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Extremely effective and strong leadership at all levels ensures that staff and pupils are very well supported to do their very best in the pursuit of excellence.
- The exceptional vision and drive of the newly appointed headteacher, together with the highly committed and capable governing body, have enabled the school to build on the many strengths found at the previous inspection. Leaders have continuously improved teaching and raised achievement. However, the records of governing body meetings do not always record the level of challenge that governors present to the senior leadership team.
- The curriculum is based on a thorough and in-depth assessment of pupils' learning difficulties. Staff work very closely as a team and engage the support of therapists and outside agencies when needed.
- Teaching is outstanding. Teachers and teaching assistants are highly skilled in working with pupils with severe and profound learning difficulties. This has a very strong impact on pupils' exceptional learning and progress over time.
- There is a wide range of abilities among the pupils, and staff demonstrate a very high level of dedication to meeting all of their needs. Pupils are viewed as individuals and the school does much to raise their self-esteem so that they achieve exceptionally well.
- Early years provision is exceptional and enables children to make outstanding progress over time. Highly effective teaching, with excellent planning, enables children to make rapid progress and settle into their routines quickly.
- In the sixth form, strong leadership, highly effective provision and an increasing focus on life and independence skills have led to outstanding learning and progress. This enables pupils to be extremely well prepared for their next steps in education, training or employment.
- Pupils who were able to express their views all said that they enjoy school and the interesting range of activities the school provides. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding and the extremely high quality of personal care each pupil receives results in them feeling safe and secure.
- British values are very well promoted through the curriculum and particularly through the work that the school does to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural experiences and understanding. This prepares pupils most effectively for the next stage in their education and for life in modern Britain.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited all classes and carried out joint observations with the headteacher.
- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, governors, including the Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body, and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector visited an assembly and observed break and lunchtime arrangements.
- She also spoke formally and informally to pupils about their experiences in school and listened to their views.
- The inspector took account of the views of those parents spoken to during the inspection, the responses of the feedback from staff questionnaires and of the 12 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View).
- The inspector looked at the school's work and scrutinised a range of documentation, including information about pupils' performance and progress, their written work, school improvement planning, and minutes of governing body meetings. In addition, she examined procedures and practice for safeguarding and for monitoring attendance.

Inspection team

Maureen Coleman, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Springwater School serves pupils between the ages of two and 19 years.
- A new headteacher was appointed in April 2015.
- It provides for pupils with severe or profound learning difficulties, of which about one third have autistic spectrum condition. A small minority has moderate learning difficulties.
- All pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an educational health and care plan.
- Some pupils are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those who receive support through the pupil premium, is just above average. (The pupil premium is additional funding provided by the government to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority).
- The number of pupils on roll is increasing, with a significant rise in the number of pupils in the sixth form.
- Children in the combined Early Years Foundation Stage and Reception class attend part-time and gradually increase their hours to full time. Where they do not attend full time in Reception this is due to medical circumstances.
- None of the pupils attend alternative provision.
- The school has specialist status in Cognition and Learning, National Autistic Society accredited status and is a MOVE centre of excellence.
- The school operates a significant outreach programme, supporting mainstream schools in providing for pupils with severe learning difficulties. These pupils are not on the roll of Springwater and are not included in the judgements of this report.
- The school is a partner of the North Yorkshire Communication Aids Partnership, part of the Red Kite Teaching Alliance, and provides strategic leadership for the Harrogate Personalised Learning Pathway, supporting learners post-19 in employment, independent living and training.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the records of governing body meetings, in order that they reflect the level of debate, rigour and challenge that takes place.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher, senior leaders and governors are passionate in their commitment to meeting pupils' individual needs. They have established a culture of high expectations where staff are single-minded in their approach to supporting pupils' academic and personal progress.
- The school has sustained and built on the outstanding practice found in the previous inspection. The strong emphasis on excellence in all teaching and learning enables pupils to make the best possible progress, whatever their starting points.
- Leaders challenge staff, constantly driving school improvement. Staff welcome the support given to them by senior leaders and are overwhelmingly positive about being a member of this strong learning community.
- Middle leaders are highly skilled and are very effective in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. They track the progress of pupils very closely and provide support when progress is not as good as expected. Furthermore, through their outreach work, they provide high-quality training to colleagues within their own school, in other mainstream and special schools, and for the local authority.
- The curriculum is highly relevant to pupils' needs and promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural, social and emotional development exceptionally well. British values of tolerance and respect are central to the school's work and pupils are very well prepared for life in modern Britain. The school promotes equality of opportunity exceptionally well, tackles discrimination in all its forms and fosters good relations with everyone.
- Sixth-form pupils benefit from thorough preparation and extensive guidance for leaving school, including advice on careers and further education opportunities. Strong leadership of post-16 provision and also of early years, results in even more determined and robust leadership throughout the school.
- The pupil premium is used very well to provide additional support for disadvantaged pupils to help them catch up with their classmates. The provision of additional therapeutic support for these pupils, and the continuation of the specialist music therapy, is having a very good impact on their attitudes to learning and on developing their literacy and mathematical skills.
- Primary school sports funding is used effectively to extend the range of sporting opportunities and purchase additional resources. This has increased pupils' participation in and enjoyment of sporting activities.
- Behaviour and attendance are very good and closely monitored. Furthermore, the school works extremely well in partnership with parents. They appreciate the support that they receive from the school and hold Springwater in high regard.
- The local authority provides good support to the leadership team and recognises the significant contribution that the school makes to other schools within the authority.
- Child protection and safeguarding arrangements are very effective as a result of detailed and robust policies and procedures, which are followed to the letter and fully understood by everyone.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors make a very strong contribution to the strategic development of the school. They share the vision and drive of the headteacher and senior leaders and are rightly ambitious for the future development of the school.
 - Governors ensure that pay progression, including that of the headteacher, is related to pupil performance.
 - They demonstrate an acute understanding of the strength of leadership and teaching, and the impact that this has on pupils' achievements. They are clear about how teachers are supported to improve further and they ensure that any weak teaching is tackled robustly.
 - Governors understand data in relation to pupils' achievement, are regular visitors to the school and make sure that policies and procedures, especially those relating to pupils' safety, are comprehensive and kept up-to-date. They are knowledgeable about the quality of teaching and learning. Moreover, robust dialogue and challenge are features of meetings; however, this is not consistently well captured in the minutes of meetings.
 - Governors have a clear understanding of how the school promotes tolerance and prepares pupils for life in modern Britain. There are a good number of parents on the governing body and effective systems are in place for working with parents and for taking account of their views.
 - Finances are well managed and governors check the spending of pupil premium and sport funding to ensure it is having a positive effect on the personal and academic performance of the pupils for whom it

is intended.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. The school has highly effective systems for managing pupils' behaviour, and those who need them have comprehensive behaviour management plans. Routines to support behaviour are understood and consistently applied. There is an evident respect for pupils' dignity, and provision for their emotional and physical well-being, all of this leads to exemplary behaviour.
- Pupils' impressive behaviour is successfully promoted by the positive relationships with staff and between pupils. Pupils say that they enjoy school and feel safe. They display trusting relationships with the adults who care for them.
- Communication cues are consistently used by staff to indicate to a pupil if they are going to be hoisted up or down, taken to the bathroom or are transferring to another activity or area of the school. This ensures that the school's aim of keeping pupils safe, ready and willing to learn is very well met.
- Attendance is good. Any authorised absence is as a result of serious medical conditions and pupils' need for on-going medical attention.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. The school provides exemplary care for all its pupils, many of whom need sensitive personal support.
- The school does all it can to make sure that pupils are taught diligently and made aware of how to keep themselves safe. Posters around the school, assemblies and work in lessons constantly remind pupils about the importance of staying safe and adopting safe practices.
- Pupils are happy at school, display a willingness to help one another and treat everyone with respect. The school records show that there is no evidence of bullying, including homophobic, racist and other forms of bullying based on prejudice.
- The oldest pupils benefit from experiencing a wide range of work-related opportunities, including informal opportunities within the school 'Bistro' and a weekly enterprise at 'The Bakery'. This further contributes to their readiness for the next stage in their lives.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teaching over time is never less than good and it is outstanding overall. This high quality of teaching ensures that all groups of pupils achieve outstandingly well and make excellent progress.
- Teachers have high expectations and a thorough knowledge and understanding of each pupil's learning difficulties. They are very knowledgeable about how to cater for the needs of pupils with severe and complex learning difficulties. As a result, pupils demonstrate a high level of response and are able to concentrate for increasing periods of time.
- Lessons are often a hive of activity, with the teacher and teaching assistants using a variety of strategies to capture pupils' attention and engage them in learning. For example, in a phonics (letters and the sounds they make) lesson one pupil's interest in making a model of a robot was skilfully adapted through speaking and listening activities to consolidate and extend his understanding of the use of phonics in early writing skills.
- Reading, writing, communication and mathematics are taught exceptionally well. The teaching of English typically engages pupils in the use of a wide range of communication aids, including signing, pictures, objects and symbols, and these support learning outstandingly well. Furthermore, the teaching of reading is very effective because of the regular teaching of phonics and also because of regular reading practise.
- The excellent use of a range of technology, including switches, enables many pupils to gain confidence to respond and share their ideas. Over time, they become increasingly adept at expressing their views, likes and dislikes; for example, by turning toward a pleasing sound or smell, or turning away from something they dislike.
- Teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants is exemplary. Teaching assistants are given very clear directions so that they know exactly how to support pupils' learning. Additionally, timely and skilful adaptation of planned activities in response to pupils' mood and engagement is a particular strength. For example, following a walk in the local area during a very warm afternoon, on their return to school the planned activity for the afternoon was changed to a highly appropriate sensory session, which relaxed the

pupils before the end of the school day.

- The marking of pupils' work is exemplary. Feedback to pupils about their work is usually verbal, regular and accurate, giving pupils time to reflect on their learning and providing suggestions and examples on how they can improve their work.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- As a result of their severe and complex special needs, pupils' attainment on entry is significantly below that expected for their age. Pupils' attainment at all stages of their education remains well below that of pupils in mainstream schools. However, in relation to their starting points, including those in the sixth form, pupils make excellent progress in cognitive, communication, literacy, mathematics and physical skills.
- Pupils who are unable to speak make outstanding progress in learning to communicate through signing and the use of symbols and switches to express themselves; they make choices and respond to activities through movement, gesture and vocalisation.
- There are no significant differences in the achievement between different groups of pupils, including boys and girls and those known to be eligible for additional funding.
- The most able pupils learn about phonics and read with interest and expression. They are successfully challenged to achieve as highly as they can. Without exception, pupils gain a range of qualifications suitable to their abilities.
- Pupils' skills in sport and their interest in an increasing range of sporting activities continue to grow as a result of effective use of the additional sports funding.
- Sixth-formers achieve outstandingly well and have plentiful activities to engage in interesting and appropriate work experiences. As a result, they are very well prepared for the next stages in their lives.
- Mainstream schools say that the outreach service provided by Springwater is exceptional and enables many pupils to remain in mainstream education despite their complex special needs.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- Children enter school with skills and knowledge that are significantly below what is typical for their age. However, they make a very good start to their education and benefit from a curriculum that has breadth and depth, providing exciting learning opportunities, which the children enjoy. For example, they use musical instruments to aid their communication and social skills by learning to share and take their turn.
- Adults have very high expectations and work superbly as a team. They set activities at the right level of difficulty and ensure that children have fun while they learn. Teaching is outstanding over time.
- The leadership and management of the early years are outstanding. Children make excellent progress and grow in confidence as they seek out activities that they particularly enjoy, and begin to make choices and show a readiness to start learning in Year 1.
- Learning opportunities are very well organised and the detailed planning contributes significantly to the development of children's physical and emotional health.
- Children in the early years make excellent progress resulting from sensitive and effective transition arrangements, which enable them to settle quickly into school life. Parents and families are encouraged to be involved in their children's education and make regular contributions to recording milestones in their lives through written post-it notes, which are added to learning journals which log pupils' progress.
- Staff work extremely well with parents, keeping them well informed of their child's progress and offering frequent coffee mornings, which are very well attended and where parents can meet and offer each other mutual support.
- Children are very well behaved and are starting to interact very impressively with other children and adults in the school.
- Safeguarding and child protection policies are fully in place and very well understood and implemented by all staff. This ensures that children are safe and secure, and looked after exceptionally well.

The sixth form provision**is outstanding**

- The sixth form is outstanding. Leadership is undertaken by the deputy headteacher and is extremely effective. Teaching is always at least good and is outstanding overall. The school works hard to foster independence and develop effective life skills to support pupils in the next steps of their education or training and, subsequently, for life in modern Britain.
- Programmes of work, work-experience placements and accredited courses fully meet pupils' needs. All pupils are successful in gaining a range of accredited qualifications when they leave.
- Achievement in mathematics and English is outstanding because of the high focus placed on these areas.
- Relationships between students and staff are exceptional and staff are very keen for all students to do well. They work hard to ensure that tasks are relevant to pupils' interests and abilities and provide quality experiences to support them in today's society and the next steps in their lives. For example, one pupil showed a high degree of concentration and determination following a list of instructions to wash and valet a car. He demonstrated an increasing ability to work independently, thoroughly and keep to time scales.
- Pupils also display an increasing ability to work together, as demonstrated during a food technology session where they worked collaboratively to make spaghetti bolognaise and cheese cake. They also took great delight in planning the follow-on lesson to debate and agree on their next cooking challenge.
- Pupils' attitudes to their work are extremely positive. They behave very well and are fully informed about how to keep themselves safe. Students take a pride in their activities and achievements and, as a result of the comprehensive support provided in lessons and in their free time, they make outstanding progress. No opportunity is missed to promote learning and the acquisition of new skills.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	121776
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	449788

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	2–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	53
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	23
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Annette Bradley
Headteacher	Sarah Edwards
Date of previous school inspection	9 November 2011
Telephone number	01423 883214
Fax number	01423 881465
Email address	admin@springwater.n-yorks.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2014

