

Inspection of a good school: Springside

Albert Royds Street, Rochdale, Manchester OL16 2SU

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 May 2022

Outcome

Springside continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils find their voice at Springside School. They learn how to communicate their feelings and needs. Staff treat every pupil as an individual because they know that every pupil is unique. Pupils develop strong, trusting relationships with staff. They are happy, well cared for and safe in school.

Staff have high expectations of every pupil. They work closely with parents and carers to plan for their children's needs. One parent comment typified many: 'I can't speak highly enough of this school. The staff work with compassion and care for my child and other learners.' Parents feel included and valued. They have confidence in the school and feel their children will reach their full potential.

Staff understand pupils' individual needs extremely well. Staff use a wide range of resources and therapies effectively. They draw on the expertise of other professionals. This ensures that pupils' emotional, physical and personal needs are met well.

Staff are highly skilled in managing pupils' behaviour. They are quick to intervene when any pupil may need support and consequently, bullying is extremely rare.

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

All children in the early years and pupils in the rest of the school have complex special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders have thought carefully about the long-term needs of these children and pupils. They have designed a highly ambitious curriculum aimed at meeting these needs. The curriculum supports pupils to become independent. For example, it builds their ability to communicate effectively. Pupils are taught future life skills. Each pupil's education, health and care plan (EHC plan) informs their very small steps of learning. This ensures that pupils reach their individual long-term targets.

Teachers use assessment strategies effectively. They plan creative, practical and meaningful activities that allow children in the early years and pupils throughout the school to build on prior learning. Pupils experience well-connected series of lessons that reflect their individual needs.

Teachers incorporate reading into all areas of the curriculum. Pupils enjoy listening to stories. They join in with sensory stories enthusiastically. Teachers immerse children and pupils in song, rhyme and music. However, pupils who are at the early stages of learning to read do not practise reading using books that carefully match the sounds that they have learned. As a result, they do not build their phonics knowledge as well as they could. Leaders have purchased a new phonics curriculum, but this has not been implemented fully.

Most pupils make remarkable progress through the curriculum often from very low starting points. Staff work well with local nurseries. They ensure children in the early years have a seamless transition into school. Parents' views are vital in planning provision for each child. Staff continue to work closely with parents throughout each school year to ensure pupils achieve the best possible outcomes. The transition into secondary school is also planned well in advance so pupils are ready for their next steps in education. The parents who expressed a view were overwhelmingly happy with the school and their children's personal and academic achievements.

Leaders ensure that pupils experience a wide range of activities beyond the classroom. These activities help pupils to develop independence. Pupils become familiar with visits to supermarkets, cafes, parks and beaches. They learn to manage their emotions and behaviour in these unfamiliar settings. Pupils learn and socialise in an outdoors environment. They enjoy sporting activities, including water sports, cycling, gymnastics and swimming. They celebrate a diverse range of cultural and religious festivals through sampling food, dancing and singing. Staff meticulously ensure that every pupil can take part in this programme of activities.

A wide range of communication methods are in use throughout the school. Staff are highly skilled in teaching pupils to use these methods to communicate in different ways. Staff have a consistent approach to the way they communicate with pupils. They model and repeat key words. This enables some non-verbal pupils to develop their own personal way to communicate with staff and each other. Staff also work closely with parents so pupils have a consistent approach to communication at home and school.

The curriculum has a very positive impact on pupils' behaviour. Teachers ensure each individual pupil's needs are met. Consequently, pupils settle and enjoy their learning. Staff respond quickly if a pupil becomes anxious or unsettled so that learning is not disrupted.

Leaders engage well with staff and listen to any concerns they may have about workload or well-being. The vast majority of staff appreciate the support they receive from leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Staff are skilled in noticing any tiny changes in pupils' behaviour, emotions or appearance that may indicate a cause for concern. Leaders act swiftly to secure help and support for pupils, including referrals to the local authority.

Leaders also work closely with families. They provide support where it is needed around school attendance and pupils' behaviour. They help parents and their children navigate the challenges of growing up to ensure pupils keep themselves safe.

Members of the governing body meet regularly with leaders to ensure the quality of safeguarding remains strong.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The current reading books do not connect closely to the phonics that pupils learn. Leaders have purchased a new phonics curriculum. However, this has not been implemented fully. As a result, some pupils do not make the progress that they should in early reading. Leaders should ensure that staff are confident in delivering the new phonics curriculum and that pupils' reading books help them practise the sounds that they have learned.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in September 2016.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	135200
Local authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	10210951
Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	120
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Charlene Mullane
Headteacher	Melody Fierro
Website	www.springsideschool.com
Date of previous inspection	13 and 14 September 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.
- The school caters for pupils with an EHC plan for the following needs: physical difficulties, hearing impairment, visual impairment, autism spectrum disorder, moderate learning difficulties, profound and multiple learning difficulties and severe learning difficulties.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, inspectors spoke with the headteacher, senior leaders, a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body, teachers and staff. They also spoke with parents and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, communication and interaction, physical development and personal, social and health education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons,

spoke to teachers, communicated with some pupils, listened to pupils read and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also looked at EHC plans and other related plans for some pupils.

- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum and looked at pupils' work in some other subjects.
- During the inspection, inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including that in relation to safeguarding, pupils' behaviour and pupils' wider development. They met with the safeguarding leaders.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Julie Bather, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Gary Kelly

Ofsted Inspector

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