

# Inspection of an outstanding school: Springhead School

Barry's Lane, Scarborough, North Yorkshire YO12 4HA

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Inspection dates:

21 and 22 June 2023

## **Outcome**

Springhead School continues to be an outstanding school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Leaders have the highest ambition for the pupils at Springhead School. Pupils have a wide range of special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) when they join the school. Leaders have created a space for all pupils to find their voice, be heard, and be safe.

Pupils are happy at the school. They are proud of their achievements and delight in sharing in their successes.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Sometimes, they need help to manage their emotions. Staff support for this is subtle and nimble. This means that learning is not interrupted. As pupils progress through the school, they develop greater independence and self-regulation. The school environment is calm and purposeful. Laughter and music can be heard through the corridors.

Pupils understand bullying and do not think bullying happens at the school. They do understand that people sometimes disagree. If pupils have concerns about something, they know staff will listen to them and help them. This is true for all pupils. Staff ensure that they constantly communicate with pupils, especially those with profound and complex needs. All pupils are treated with respect and dignity and they, in turn, show this to staff and visitors.

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

Communication sits at the heart of the school community and the curriculum. Children learn communication methods as soon as they start the Nursery Year. Staff use a range of communication tools to support pupils to connect. For example, leaders have trained all staff to use Makaton. Families have also had access to the training. They have found the resulting conversations with their children life changing. Leaders have introduced symbol exchange and objects of reference to support non-verbal pupils. This allows pupils to respond and request. Pupils learn to read when they are able to access the reasoning and

recall demand of phonics. All classes read together. Staff bring stories to life for pupils with sensory needs by using related sounds and objects.

Leaders have designed a core curriculum that allows staff to deliver bespoke learning to individual pupils. Skills such as communication, physical and social development thread through academic subjects such as science and art. The curriculum is divided into three pathways to better support specific cognition and learning needs. These pathways start in early years and build in demand to Year 14. Pupils can progress through their pathway as well as moving on to a more demanding programme. Leaders have ensured that there is no ceiling on pupils' success. Assessment in all aspects of learning is in the moment. Staff review pupils' progress weekly against targets. These targets link to individual education, health, and care (EHC) plans and curriculum progression.

Leaders offer an impressive range of therapies and intervention programmes on site. Pupils can access spaces such as the 'cool cave' for deep pressure therapy, and the sensory hydrotherapy pool. The school dogs are a crucial support tool for pupils to understand cause and effect and to experience positive social responses. This has led to a significant improvement in attendance.

Leaders have established a highly effective programme to develop pupils' social skills. Leaders have built in a level of jeopardy into the sixth-form curriculum to help students understand the consequences of their actions. For example, students receive an allowance every week to spend in their café. Prices are set so that they must save for the desirable items. If a student spends all their allowance in one day, they will have to manage the consequences. The students learn well from repetition and concrete examples. Pupils work in the community through internships as well as taking part in events such as the jubilee and coronation.

Students in the sixth form prepare thoroughly for independent living. They have access to level 1 and 2 courses in numeracy and literacy as well as a range of ASDAN and AQA awards. Most students in the sixth form move on to a personalised learning college in the local authority. Leaders have designed the curriculum in order to facilitate the transition. The career advisor attends EHC plan reviews from when the pupil is 14. Staff then tailor the support to align with the pupils' skills and needs for adult life.

Leaders believe it is important that staff are looked after. Leaders have ensured staff training is up to date and relevant to the needs in school. Leaders systematically review the programme to ensure that training meets emerging needs. Leaders are aware of the assessment requirements for pupils with SEND. They strive to manage staff workload to reduce this burden. Leaders speak to staff regularly to check on well-being and to receive feedback and new ideas. Leaders see the success of pupils to be dependent on the success of staff and families too. They support families that are facing challenging circumstances and ensure that communication is clear and timely. Staff feel they can take the mantle of responsibility as they know they are not alone and that leaders are walking beside them.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are tenacious. They ensure that pupils are safe and that they learn to keep themselves safe. Leaders have efficient systems to track and respond to safeguarding concerns. They challenge external agencies to reach the best outcomes for the pupils and their families. Leaders ensure that movement between sites is carefully managed. There is always a designated safeguarding lead at each location.

Safeguarding is a golden thread that runs through all aspects of learning in the school. All staff receive up-to-date training for national and local safeguarding concerns. Staff seize opportunities to model safe choices for pupils at the school.

Leaders undertake all the required safeguarding checks before employment. They ensure that staff working with vulnerable pupils receive supervision.

## Background

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

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in July 2014.

## 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](#)' 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	121772
<b>Local authority</b>	North Yorkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10269243
<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	96
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	29
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Alison Matthews
<b>Headteacher</b>	Beth Cargill
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.springhead.n-yorks.sch.uk">www.springhead.n-yorks.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	27 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school has two sites that are two miles apart. Year 12 to 14 and one class of pupils with profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD) are based at the Lady Edith's Drive site. All other classes are based at the Barry's Lane site. Pupils move between sites to access specific provisions.
- All pupils who attend the school have EHC plans. The school caters for pupils with cognition and learning needs and pupils with PMLD.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school has provision for two-year-olds.
- The senior leadership team is new. The headteacher took up the post in September 2021 and the deputy and assistant headteacher started in September 2022. The deputy and headteacher are both new to the school.

## 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.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives in reading and communication, creative arts, and personal, social and health education. Inspectors met with curriculum leaders, looked at pupils' work, visited lessons and talked to pupils and teachers. Leaders were involved throughout the deep-dive activities.
- An inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors reviewed curriculum plans in some other subjects.
- An inspector met with a representative from the local authority.
- An inspector met with representatives of the local governing body, including the chair and vice-chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors reviewed the responses that were received through the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, which included free-text comments. Inspectors considered the responses that were received through Ofsted's staff questionnaire. There were no responses to the pupil survey.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour throughout the school day, including during lesson visits and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents relating to safeguarding, including records of employment checks, safeguarding incidents and behaviour incidents. An inspector met with the designated safeguarding leader.

## Inspection team

Christine Durand, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Angela Spencer-Brooke

Ofsted Inspector

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