



# Springwater School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 121776  
**LEA** North Yorkshire  
**Inspection number** 281098  
**Inspection dates** 1 March 2006 to 2 March 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs Kath Halifax CfBT Lead Inspector

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Special	<b>School address</b>	High Street
<b>School category</b>	Community special		Starbeck
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 19		Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG2 7LW
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01423 883214
<b>Number on roll</b>	41	<b>Fax number</b>	01423 881465
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Sybil Blackburn
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	3 April 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs G Cook

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

## Description of the school

Springwater is a small special school, which serves the Harrogate and Selby districts of North Yorkshire. All pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Though designated a school for pupils with severe learning difficulties, 39% of pupils have profound and multiple learning difficulties, with a further 22% of pupils having autism. Almost all pupils are of white British heritage. The percentage entitled to free school meals is average. At the time of the inspection, there were two children under five. Provision is made alongside Year 1- 6 pupils in the primary department. Attainment on entry to the school is well below that expected of pupils of this age.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

This is a good school with some outstanding features. It is moving forward at a good rate and has the capacity to continue to do so. Through good teaching and a good curriculum, children in the Foundation Stage settle quickly and make good progress. The good teaching and good progress continues through all age groups so pupils' achievements are good in relation to their prior attainment. However, on occasions, work does not sufficiently stretch more able pupils so their rate of progress sometimes slows. Pupils of all ages and capabilities make outstanding progress in their personal development because of the excellent provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. All pupils are valued and respected and every effort is made to include all capabilities in all activities. The school has been awarded the local authority Inclusion Quality Mark. Links with other professionals and the community are good and, alongside the excellent care, contribute to pupils' well-being and achievement. Leadership and management are good. Subject managers know what they do well and what needs to be improved. However, there is no curriculum manager to draw the strands together and provide an overview of the curriculum. Managers are accurate in their self-evaluation. They demonstrate a good understanding of what the school does well and have suitable plans to improve the provision. The recent introduction of work with mainstream schools is enabling some pupils with severe learning difficulties, and others with communication needs to stay in their local school. Parents and pupils hold the school in high regard. Value for money is good.

## **Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form**

### **Grade: 2**

Following the criticism of the last inspection, provision for students in the post 16 unit has improved. The accommodation has improved significantly with students now sited in the main building. A nationally recognised award has been introduced. Whilst only one qualification is available, all students leave with accreditation reflecting their achievement. Inspection findings agree with managers' evaluation that the provision is good. Good teaching enables all students to make good progress and achieve well. Provision for personal development is excellent. Students grow in confidence and become increasingly independent. For example, lunchtime arrangements encourage students to take responsibility, think for themselves and make decisions. Though few are capable of independent living, through the activities provided, they gain skills in basic cookery, decorating and horticulture. They are particularly proud of their contribution to the Woodland Walk. Students are prepared well for life after school with, for example, visits to specialist colleges, but they have only recently been allocated a Connexions officer.

## **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure that more able pupils are always set challenging tasks that really make them think.

- Have an overview of the curriculum so everyone has a balanced programme of work.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement is good overall, being very good in communication and in personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE). Pupils in all age groups with speech and language needs make very good progress because of skilled teaching using the method most appropriate to their needs, be it symbols, signs or picture exchange. Equally, all pupils achieve very well in PSHCE because of the taught programme and daily routines. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well because of good teaching and the very close links established with parents and other professionals. Pupils with autism achieve well because teachers are skilled and use approaches that are well suited to their needs. As a result, pupils with autism in Years 7 to 13, the secondary department, have made sufficient progress to be taught in classes with their peers.

Pupils with profound and multiple needs are now educated in the main part of the school. They make good progress and achieve well because the activities provided are designed to enable them to learn through using their senses. Progress and achievement for other groups of pupils is good overall. In most lessons, more able pupils make good progress, but occasionally their rate of progress slows because the tasks provided are not sufficiently challenging. Achievement in writing and in information and communication technology has improved since the last inspection and is now on a par with achievement in other subjects.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Managers have been modest in their judgement of good. Excellent provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has resulted in pupils making outstanding progress in their personal development. Primary age pupils settle quickly, show curiosity and grow in confidence. Older pupils talk proudly of the buddy system and how they help others and how the Woodland Walk provides a tranquil environment to reflect, especially the Tree of Thoughts. Pupils are encouraged to be healthy with even the most physically disabled being active. Pupils are aware of their role in the community, undertaking tasks in school, contributing to Starbeck in Bloom, and to numerous charities, including sending equipment to a school in Nigeria. Alongside a local business pupils gain an understanding of recycling through the 'Trash Can Hunt'.

Pupils enjoy school and are very well behaved. They are proud of their achievements, show respect for others and are tolerant of the idiosyncratic ways of those with complex needs. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils attend whenever they can, but attendance has fallen because of serious illnesses.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Teaching in PSHCE is outstanding. Teachers and support staff work together very effectively. Training with the advanced skills teacher has significantly improved the contribution of learning assistants. Teachers plan their lessons conscientiously taking account of targets in individual learning plans. They provide a range of activities to make learning meaningful and to match the different age groups within each class. Questions are pitched at different levels to include all pupils. Teachers suitably plan different tasks for pupils of differing capabilities. Though separate tasks are planned for more able pupils, these are sometimes too easy so the thinking and reasoning of these pupils is not sufficiently stretched. Most lessons are fun and conducted with a sense of urgency, but on occasions, pupils are kept together in introductory discussions too long so the pace of learning slows. Assessment is good. Teachers record pupils' successes in a number of ways. Very good use is made of digital cameras to record achievement. These have resulted in good Records of Achievement, but photographs and work are not always assessed in relation to expected levels and annotated. Adults make particularly good use of interactive whiteboards to gain and keep pupils' attention.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and meets legal requirements. Numerous visits and visitors make learning exciting and meaningful. While the curriculum is broad, it is not balanced in some classes. The curriculum for PSHCE is successful in promoting healthy, safe lifestyles and daily routines contribute significantly to growing independence, and security. However, though an important subject, an unusually large amount of time is spent on PSHCE. Recreational time is planned well, but staff are aware there is not enough structure for some pupils during the long lunch break. Class groups have changed since the last inspection allowing pupils with profound and multiple needs to work alongside their peers. Meticulous planning and good teaching enable children in the Foundation Stage to achieve well in the same class as primary age pupils. Over 25% of pupils benefit socially and academically from links with their local school. Work related learning has improved and is good and is preparing pupils well for life after school.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 1

Managers have again been modest in their judgement of good. Pupils of all ages and capabilities receive outstanding care and support. The welfare of all is paramount. Very good communication and detailed care plans ensure adults are familiar with the support systems for the particularly vulnerable and those with degenerative conditions.

Suitable child protection procedures are in place and understood by staff. Where appropriate, rigorous assessments of the risks presented by individual pupils are undertaken. Similarly, the assessment of potential risks on visits out of school and in lessons is noted. Effective links with other professionals contribute considerably to pupils' well-being and achievement. For example, improved links with speech and language therapists are contributing significantly to achievement in language and communication. The school works well with parents to involve them in their child's education through, for example, workshops for Makaton signing. Pupils are prepared very well for the change from the primary to secondary department.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management have improved since the last inspection and are now good at all levels. Legal requirements are now met and the school improvement plan is clear and recognises the most important areas for development. The views of parents, pupils and staff are taken into account when making changes. The re-organisation of the leadership team has resulted in clarity in responsibilities. All members are very good examples to other staff. Their enthusiasm and foresight is driving the school forward at a good rate. The skills of individual team members are used effectively in school and in the local authority. For example, work is being done to support colleagues and pupils in mainstream schools, and the headteacher shares her knowledge on the Specialist Provision Forum. Subject management is good, co-ordinators have suitable development plans, but no member of staff has overall responsibility for the curriculum to check that there is a good balance of subjects in all classes, and there is no rolling programme for subjects to be reviewed.

Governance has improved. The committees work efficiently and governors are not afraid to challenge the headteacher. For example, following their monitoring visits to classes, they questioned how the admission of pupils with autism would affect other vulnerable pupils. Useful information on pupils' progress has been collected for the past three years and is being used effectively to track progress and set challenging targets, as well as highlighting pupils who may need additional support for various reasons. The system is currently being improved to track the performance of different groups of pupils.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

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

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	1
The behaviour of learners	1	1
The attendance of learners	3	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	1

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

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

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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**

I know many of you find reading difficult, so I have asked Mrs Cook and your teachers to talk to you about this letter. As you know, I met a number of you during the recent inspection of your school. I especially enjoyed eating lunch with you and talking to you. Thank you for being so polite and friendly, and helping me in my work.

What I liked most about your school

- You are very well behaved, work hard and enjoy school.
- You have good teachers and support staff so you make good progress.
- Circle time, PSHCE, visits in the community and the work you do in the Woodland Walk make an excellent contribution to your personal development.
- You are very well cared for and links with other professionals such as the nurse and speech therapist make a significant contribution to your well-being.

What I have asked your teachers and governors to do now

- Make sure the work provided for more able pupils really makes them have to think hard.
- Make sure the managers keep a check on all the subjects you are taught.

I enjoyed my short time with you and wish you well for the future.