

# Rosebank School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	111513
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cheshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	325395
<b>Inspection date</b>	26 February 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Caroline Broomhead HMI

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	49
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr John Watters
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Helen Johnson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 March 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Townfield Lane Barnton Northwich Cheshire CW8 4QP
<b>Telephone number</b>	01606 74975
<b>Fax number</b>	01606 783564

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Rosebank makes provision for pupils with complex needs aged 3 to 11 years. In recent years it has been developed as the local authority's specialist provision for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder, and communication and language difficulties. The proportion of younger children who are now admitted to the school with a diagnosis of autism has increased to 70%. There are 49 pupils on roll, all of whom have a statement of special educational needs. Most of the pupils are of White British heritage and a small number speak English as an additional language. The length of time pupils remain at the school varies according to their individual needs; some attend the school for assessment purposes and then move on to other mainstream schools in the area.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Rosebank is an outstanding school. It provides a high quality of care and education. Visitors are struck by the warm, welcoming, calm atmosphere which pervades all areas of the school. The pupils are happy, extremely well cared for and look forward to coming to school each day. They willingly take part in the extensive range of activities on offer both in school and out in the wider community. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and the impact it has on their children's development.

The school has developed a wealth of expertise in working with pupils with autistic spectrum disorder and communication difficulties. Teamwork is a strength of the school and the expertise of other professionals is very well harnessed to meet pupils' individual needs. The Pupils know what is expected of them at all times and they trust the adults who look after them. Pupils' behaviour is impeccable and their personal development is outstanding.

In classrooms teachers are skilled at capturing pupils' imagination and attention by making lessons interesting and fun while at the same time creating a calm environment in which pupils can listen and learn. As a result of this outstanding teaching, pupils make good, and sometimes outstanding, progress, particularly in their communication and language skills. As they progress through school they learn to overcome the barriers to learning associated with their particular needs.

The school is well led and managed by the headteacher and her deputy who have very successfully created an environment which supports high-quality teaching and learning and in which pupils can thrive. The senior leaders provide clear direction and encourage staff to take ownership and responsibility for the school's ongoing development. As a result, the school has maintained a good understanding of its strengths and areas for improvement. However, the resulting action plans do not specify what impact the school expects to have on pupils' progress and achievements and therefore the school cannot be certain that it is setting sufficiently challenging targets for improvement.

The governors are supportive of the school but their role in evaluating and challenging its work is underdeveloped. The school is going through a period of uncertainty in leadership and governance. The headteacher is retiring in April, having worked on a part-time basis recently, and governors have been unable to recruit a replacement. Also, despite their best efforts, they have not been able to fill the current vacancies on the governing body. The school provides good value for money. However, due to recent changes to local authority funding arrangements it is managing a reduction in budget over the next three years. The school is recognised by the local authority for its outstanding provision. Given its current circumstances, its capacity for further improvement is good.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 1

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills generally below the expected levels for their age. Carefully planned induction procedures ensure that they settle extremely well. They are assessed carefully and individual programmes are put in place. These include activities tailored to their learning needs with appropriate levels of challenge and interest. These enable children to make good progress from their starting points.

Children are very well supported in development of their independence skills as staff are exceptionally skilled in knowing when to offer support and when to allow the children to try tasks unaided, for example when children are dressing and undressing. Children have a wonderful time and show obvious enjoyment while rolling barrels in the hall and using bubbles outside. Children initiate their own play and can choose from a wide range of well-planned opportunities indoors and outdoors. Children have continual access to the outdoor learning environment and there are many exciting opportunities for them, such as digging and planting, building ramps and bridges, and hiding in tents.

Careful management ensures an inclusive environment where the needs of all children are met. The development and maintenance of links with parents, carers and other agencies is strong. Staff are well qualified and experienced and the manager ensures that all statutory requirements are met.

A nurturing ethos enables children to feel safe and secure. Excellent levels of supervision enable children to learn about personal safety within their school. Children are encouraged to take exercise, for example walking in the local forest, and to make healthy choices, such as choosing fruit after lunch. Their behaviour is very good and they are calm and engaged. They are encouraged to play together.

Transition onto Key Stage 1 is managed very well; each child receives tailored support to ensure that stress and anxiety is minimised.

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

- Ensure that the school's improvement plans include suitably challenging targets and provide more precise details of the expected impact on pupils' progress and achievements.
- Develop the role of the governors in monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the school's work.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' achievement is good and sometimes outstanding. Standards overall are exceptionally low reflecting the developmental delay associated with pupils' learning and social difficulties. Pupils arrive at the school at different ages and stages in their schooling. On entry to the school all pupils have delayed development in language, communication and social skills and their attainment in most subjects is below that expected for their age. There is a wide range of ability across the school and sometimes within individual classes, therefore standards in reading, writing and mathematics vary considerably between individuals but most make at least good progress against their individual learning objectives in these subjects. A small number of more able pupils reach average standards in aspects of English, mathematics or science. Most pupils make outstanding progress in speaking and listening during Key Stage 2, reflecting the intensive support given to pupils in developing their communication skills. For some pupils with more severe difficulties, progress is made in small incremental steps over time. For example, they begin to communicate with more intention using symbols, or others master single words. Pupils' attainment in other subjects is now being recorded but the school does not yet have sufficient data to be able to judge progress accurately over time. As a result, achievement overall has been judged to be good rather than outstanding.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils very much enjoy coming to school and attend regularly. One parent commented that her daughter can't wait for the taxi to come each morning. In this calm, safe environment pupils feel secure and are able to focus their attention on their learning. They learn from an early age to communicate and interact with others and as they grow they show increasing maturity and self-confidence. This makes a good contribution to their future development. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They are extremely polite and courteous. They learn to take turns and wait patiently, knowing that they will be treated fairly and with respect. With gentle prompts from staff they show an increasing awareness of how to keep themselves safe. Pupils particularly enjoy taking part in sporting activities. In a gymnastics lesson, they watched and waited quietly while others were having a turn on the trampoline, all demonstrating the skills they had acquired. In assemblies and throughout the school day pupils respond very well to opportunities to be still, to reflect and to become more aware of themselves as part of a wider community. They learn about other faiths and cultures through the religious education curriculum, which includes visits to different places of worship. They enjoy the outdoors, for example their walks in the local country parks, and take part in planting trees locally.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are outstanding. Teachers are highly skilled in working with pupils with autism and communication difficulties. Lessons are well planned, with activities and resources being tailored very closely to pupils' individual needs and abilities. In the best lessons a good pace is set, which maintains pupils' interest and concentration. All staff are aware of pupils' individual learning objectives and clear about their own roles in supporting pupils to achieve them. Very careful attention is given to how pupils are grouped for different activities and this provides them with opportunities to become more independent learners as well as developing their ability to interact socially with others. Pupils enjoy their lessons and respond positively to the very well-established routines and clear instructions they are given. They are provided with simple structures, for example visual timetables, which help them to understand and manage their school day and this reduces some of their anxieties. They are encouraged to achieve their best and to recognise what they have done well.

Detailed assessment arrangements ensure that staff keep a regular overview of the small steps of progress pupils are making and use the information effectively to plan for their individual needs. Well-established systems are in place internally for checking the accuracy of teachers' assessments. The pupils' progress file is used to track pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics, science, and personal, social and health education and has now been extended to include other subjects.

## Curriculum and other activities

### Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. It has been carefully adapted to suit the needs and interests of pupils, with particular emphasis being placed on promoting pupils' social and communication

skills, their physical development and their confidence to enjoy an extensive range of activities in the wider community. Personal and social development permeates all aspects of the curriculum, with a very strong and successful emphasis on promoting pupils' emotional well-being. Teachers use the good range of resources, including information and communication technology, and visual resources, well to help pupils' understanding. The curriculum makes a highly significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Weekly educational visits include trips to places of interest such as museums. There are many opportunities for pupils to take part in sports and leisure activities such as horse riding and swimming.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Provision for pupils' care, guidance and support is outstanding. Individual support and guidance is always of a high quality throughout the school day. Teachers and other professionals work together very effectively to provide focused intervention programmes, for example in the use of picture exchange systems which help pupils improve their communication skills. Pupils are well supervised at all times, but also given every opportunity to demonstrate their growing independence. Staff set high expectations and are excellent role models for sharing and showing respect for others and pupils can be seen mirroring these behaviours around school. A real strength of the school is the consistency in approach used by all staff in helping pupils to stay calm, make choices about what they want to do and remain positive. Pupils are supported well in settling in when they first arrive and also in getting ready for moving on when they are nearing the time to leave. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has continued to drive the school forward and ensured that it has successfully addressed the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Senior leaders monitor all aspects of the school's work and have a good awareness of its strengths and the aspects they wish to develop further. However, recent uncertainties in the senior leadership and governance of the school have led to some aspects of monitoring not taking place in as much detail as in previous years. Despite these uncertainties, the high quality of care and education has been maintained, reflecting the strong teamwork and expertise which exist in the school.

Senior leaders have established a culture in which every child is valued and is given every opportunity to access all aspects of school life. The school's strong links with other schools, other professionals and the wider community enhance the curriculum very well. The school makes a good contribution to promoting community cohesion, particularly at the local level, and senior leaders are already considering how they might promote global awareness further. The school works closely with families and takes seriously its responsibilities for promoting the health, safety and well-being of its pupils.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

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

<sup>1</sup>Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

## The quality of provision

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Inspection of Rosebank School, Northwich, CW8 4QP

Thank you for welcoming me and the other inspectors into your school this week. We enjoyed spending the day with you. Here are our findings.

n Rosebank is an outstanding school. We were very impressed with how hard you try in school and how well you improve your speaking and listening. Some of you were answering some quite difficult questions in class and this was really good. You make good progress at school and sometimes your achievements are outstanding.

n You are very polite and courteous and we saw that you are pleased when you are able to stay calm. Your behaviour is impeccable (that means it is exceptionally good) and you can be very proud of that.

- You have lots of opportunities to go out on visits and to go to local sports centres or gyms. We know that you particularly enjoy these activities. I was amazed at how good those of you in Key Stage 2 were on the trampoline.
- The school is well led by the headteacher with very good support from all the teachers. They take very good care of you all and help you to stay safe and healthy.
- The teaching is outstanding. The teachers are very well trained and have a good understanding of your needs.
- The school's leaders have good plans for making the school even better, but they do not always say how well these will improve your progress and achievements.
- The school governors want the best for you but need to check more closely on how well the school is doing.

Once again, thank you for inviting us into your lessons and onto your tables at lunchtime. We enjoyed our visit and send you our best wishes for the future.