

# Springside

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	135200
<b>Local Authority</b>	Rochdale
<b>Inspection number</b>	329050
<b>Inspection dates</b>	5–6 May 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Rosemary Eaton

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)	76
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>	Mrs J Hall
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Jane Herring
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<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>	Albert Royds Street Rochdale Manchester OL16 2SU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01706 764451
<b>Fax number</b>	0

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

## Description of the school

Springside caters for pupils with a very wide range of needs. Most pupils have severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties or autistic spectrum disorders. Small numbers have moderate learning difficulties, behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, are hearing impaired, have sight problems or have physical disabilities. All pupils have a statement of special educational need. The nature of the learners' difficulties means they are working below national expectations. A much higher proportion than average is entitled to free school meals. Half the pupils are White British and half are from minority ethnic backgrounds, principally Pakistani. A small minority of pupils are in the early stages of learning English. The local authority looks after a few pupils. There are ten children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school is housed in a new building where it is co-located with a mainstream primary school. Many resources such as the staffroom, hall, and kitchen are shared. The school has gained a number of awards including the School Council Bronze Award, Activemark, Bronze Eco Award and Healthy Schools Award.

## 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. Outstanding leadership by the headteacher has enabled the school to become established very quickly. Pupils' achievement and personal development are both good. Each is enhanced by the many exciting opportunities resulting from Springside's splendid partnership with the mainstream school with which it shares its site and building. Many parents are full of praise for Springside. 'A very welcoming school' and 'we applaud all concerned for the efforts they make' are typical comments.

Pupils are not all able to articulate their own feelings about school. However, the pleasure they display each morning as they recognise familiar staff is just one indication of pupils' immense enjoyment. They respond enthusiastically to the many opportunities for them to practice healthy lifestyles. From the Early Years Foundation Stage onwards, the whole school takes part energetically in the 'Active Fit' sessions that start the day. Pupils have great fun as they stretch, march and dance with the help of adults or independently, afterwards checking that their heart is beating faster. The good curriculum is a significant factor in pupils' eagerness to learn and play their part in school life. Over half the pupils attend after-school clubs, pursuing interests as diverse as ten pin bowling, beauty, football, or parachute games. Leaders demonstrate their strong commitment to providing all pupils with equal opportunities by organising transport home for any pupil who would otherwise be denied these experiences.

Pupils say that they feel safe in school, reflecting the good quality care, guidance and support the school provides. Staff work closely with a wide range of agencies and professionals to ensure pupils' well-being. In turn, pupils do their best to help others. They make a good contribution to the school community, for example, through membership of the joint school council. This represents one of the excellent enterprises linking Springside's pupils with those of its partner mainstream school. Working and playing alongside children from both schools gives pupils' self-confidence and social skills an enormous boost and helps to prepare them well for the next stage in their education.

Good teaching means that pupils learn well and make good progress. One of the school's significant successes is the speed with which teachers have responded to the challenge of providing for the very wide spread of needs represented by the pupils in each class group. In most lessons, teachers use assessment information effectively to plan work that meets all these needs. On occasions, however, tasks for some pupils are too hard and for others too easy and consequently their learning and progress slows. Teachers and teaching assistants share warm working relationships with pupils, praising their work and encouraging them to try hard. Staff have not yet agreed more formal approaches to helping pupils to understand how they can improve. As a result, for example, the quality of marking is inconsistent and pupils are not routinely reminded about how to improve their work.

Overall, the school is well led and managed and provides good value for money. Leaders have ensured that staff share high aspirations for pupils and are fully committed to making the most of opportunities offered by the co-location. Targets for improvement are challenging and met regularly. The progress made in the short time since the school opened is convincing evidence of its good capacity to continue to develop. Its work is already having a strong impact on community cohesion. Pupils from the mainstream school remark that 'We are getting to know how it feels to have a disability. We are all friendly together.'

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children achieve well during the Nursery and Reception Years. From their individual starting points they make good progress because staff understand the needs of each child and provide high quality opportunities for learning. Children are consistently required to communicate to make choices about, for example, snacks or activities. A wide range of methods is offered, such as speech, signing, using switches or eye movement so that children can find the ones that suit them best. As a result, communication is often an especially strong area of learning. Children have fun as they learn, often alongside children in other classes or the mainstream school. These experiences enhance children's personal development and they become increasingly confident and sociable. Good leadership ensures that children's opportunities mirror as closely as possible those in mainstream settings. Despite persistent rain, a number of children were eager to learn outdoors. Suitably dressed, they propelled themselves purposefully in toy cars or enjoyed being pushed in buggies before sharing the work in the 'car wash'. Plans are in hand to ensure that the outdoor areas of both classrooms are as stimulating as the indoor environments. Staff are vigilant in their care for children and each child has a named adult to oversee their welfare. Links with families are strong, before and during children's early years.

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

- Ensure that teaching consistently matches work to the needs of each pupil.
- Develop systems to help pupils to understand how they can improve their work.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils often make the best progress in learning to communicate because their skills are promoted consistently throughout lessons and day-to-day activities, such as choosing lunch. Their social skills also develop rapidly and are enhanced by regular opportunities to work and play with different groups of pupils and in varying locations, for example, shops or in the mainstream playground. Work in art and design is frequently high quality, for example, wire and clay sculptures of figures created by pupils in Years 5 and 6. Most pupils meet their challenging individual targets. As its assessment information builds up, the school is increasingly able to compare the achievement of different groups of pupils. Inspection evidence indicates that boys and girls from different ethnic backgrounds, including those in the early stages of learning English, achieve equally well. When their individual starting points are considered, there are no evident differences in achievement in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) by groups of pupils with different learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties move forward in much smaller steps than those with severe learning difficulties, which represent equally good progress. The highest attaining pupils are challenged by lessons in mainstream classes, helping them to make good progress in areas such as literacy skills. Special programmes and approaches used with pupils who have autistic spectrum disorders or sensory impairments ensure that their achievement is also good. Pupils in the care of the local authority progress equally as well as others.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Parents confirm how much their children enjoy school. A number of pupils report that they like being with their friends. They say that most children are kind to each other. Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds work and play happily together. Pupils start to take some responsibility for their own safety, for example, when using roads or by learning to swim. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. For example, those with profound and multiple learning difficulties come to understand their feelings more. They learn to communicate their likes and dislikes so that they can make staff aware if they are uncomfortable or unhappy. Behaviour is good, and at times, excellent even though a minority of pupils need significant help to control their emotions and compulsions. Pupils know that their daily snacks are healthy and a number choose to eat fruit for pudding rather than cake. Attendance is satisfactory. Most pupils, including many with complex medical conditions, attend regularly. However, a small minority have unnecessary absences, which the school is working hard to reduce. Pupils are always ready to help their friends and teachers. They collect registers, distribute snacks and recycle paper, encouraged strongly by the joint eco-group.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are nearly always effective and where this is the case, teachers choose resources very carefully. They often use ICT to good effect. For example, higher attaining pupils in one class practised forming letters on the interactive whiteboard so that they could correct any mistakes easily. In one lesson, a pupil with visual impairment handled small character dolls to help her follow the class story. Because each age group has pupils with a wide range of needs, and pupils are taught by age in the same class, frequently a number of small ability groups operate for at least part of each lesson. Mostly, tasks and resources are well matched to pupils' needs although occasionally, activities are the same for pupils whose needs are too different, resulting in work that is too hard or too easy for particular pupils. Teaching assistants make significant contributions to teaching and learning, for example, by leading activities within the classroom or specialist rooms or supporting pupils in mainstream lessons. Staff manage pupils' behaviour well so they are usually able to stay in class and benefit from lessons.

## Curriculum and other activities

### Grade: 2

The school's curriculum is adapted well to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. For example, facilities such as sensory rooms and the hydrotherapy pool enhance opportunities for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties. Those with behavioural, social and emotional difficulties benefit from special programmes and a therapeutic inclusion room has recently been developed. All pupils have opportunities for inclusion with mainstream pupils, sharing assemblies and joining lessons on a daily basis. Subjects are increasingly brought together within topics such as 'Transport', enabling pupils to practise their skills in different contexts. Days are devoted to particular themes, for example, the work of UNICEF, and help to form more links between the co-located schools. Learning is further enriched by frequent forays into the community to visit amenities, such as allotments, parks and shops. Further afield, pupils are stimulated by outings to an airport or war museum, for example. Visits by

musicians, theatre groups and sports coaches promote learning and personal development. Opportunities to learn outdoors are developing well as the two schools plan new facilities such as 'forest school' areas.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school takes very great care of pupils. Current government safeguarding requirements are met. The arrangements for child protection are comprehensive and all necessary policies are in place. A range of documents such as positive behaviour plans are drawn up when necessary and ensure that pupils' individual needs are met. The nursing team is effective and takes the lead in areas such as administering medication and establishing medical care plans. The nurse joins the deputy headteacher and education welfare officer in encouraging attendance. For example, parents who are reluctant to send children to school because of health concerns are invited to discuss these. Children in the care of the local authority and those in the early stages of learning English are given good quality additional support. The school offers courses to parents, for example, in learning to sign. Teachers collect a range of useful information about pupils' learning and progress which enables them to set increasingly precise targets for individuals. However, pupils are not consistently helped to understand what they need to do to improve their work.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher has brought a calm, but determined manner and an exceptionally structured approach to establishing the school. For example, before opening, staff were presented with key policies and a diary for the school's first year. Training events and opportunities for them to be part of some decisions, such as the layout of accommodation for the Early Years Foundation Stage, helped to allay staff's apprehensions. The senior team represents all groups of staff and supports the headteacher wholeheartedly. Its members carry out their responsibilities conscientiously and seize opportunities for initiatives. Both the headteachers of Springside and the mainstream school have worked closely together from the outset sharing the conviction that co-location has enormous advantages for all pupils. The school has a clear commitment to promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating discrimination. Springside has plans to contribute further to community cohesion by increasing the support it offers to other mainstream schools, building on the links made already. Senior leaders have established an accurate view of the school's strengths and where further improvement is needed. A rolling programme is in place to involve middle leaders more in evaluating performance in their areas of responsibility. Governance is satisfactory. Many governors are still new to their roles. They are very keen to develop their expertise, under the strong leadership of the chair.

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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?	2
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?	2
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?	2
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?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
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>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
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>	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

## 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	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
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**

Thank you for being so friendly when I visited your school. I really enjoyed meeting you and seeing you work and play. I could see how much you like your school and I understand why. Springside is a good school.

You behave well and help each other and the teachers. You have lots of chances to work and play with children from the other school, so you make even more friends. The staff arrange lots of clubs and visits to help you learn and have fun. They look after you well and you told me that you feel safe.

You learn a lot because you have good teachers. Sometimes lessons are a bit too hard or too easy for some of you. I have asked the teachers to make sure work is just right for everyone. I also want them to let you know how you can improve your work.

Your headteacher and the staff have got your new school off to a great start. I want to send them and each one of you my very best wishes for the future.