

Springhead Infant and Nursery School

Address: Cooper Street, Springhead, Oldham, Greater Manchester, OL4 4QT

Unique reference number (URN): 105668

Inspection report: 27 January 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard ●

Achievement

Strong standard ●

Pupils flourish. They are self-assured, skilful and happy learners. Pupils are genuinely interested in learning important information and hungry to know more. They love being at school.

Pupils are proficient speakers, readers and writers. They achieve highly, such as in their mathematics and physical education. Pupils remember essential knowledge long term because of staff's skilful teaching of subject curriculums.

Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) progress very well through the curriculum. Published information about pupils' attainment in phonics in Year 1 is close to average. This does not reflect the impressive progress that pupils, including those with SEND, make from their starting points.

Pupils' wider knowledge, such as of geography, music and art, indicates that they learn subject content in depth. Pupils are very well prepared for their education at junior school and beyond.

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Leaders' relentless, well-thought-out actions mean that pupils' attendance has risen over time and is now above average. Leaders check pupils' attendance very carefully, contact parents and carers speedily and provide support where needed. The rate of persistent absence has fallen sharply. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils, benefit from the school's high-quality provision.

Throughout the school, pupils are incredibly kind, polite and self-controlled. They take pride in their work. Pupils look after school resources and watch out for one another thoughtfully. Leaders are extremely ambitious for pupils. Older pupils develop as 'pupil leaders' who become thoughtful role models for their younger peers. Relationships between pupils and staff are highly positive, respectful and trusting. Staff understand the school's behaviour policy and follow it well. Leaders take seriously any misbehaviour and help pupils to improve their self-discipline. Leaders and staff consider carefully if any pupil's behaviour is linked to SEND and ensure that expert support is in place, including from external agencies. Leaders and staff match their actions very well to pupils' needs. The school has clear policies to deal with discrimination if it arises.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

Leaders' meticulously designed curriculum means that teachers know precisely the important information to teach pupils and when. The curriculum builds pupils' knowledge carefully in preparation for their future education. Staff teach pupils how to use their subject knowledge successfully, such as to be a scientist or a historian.

Teachers' subject and teaching knowledge benefits significantly from leaders' expert understanding and support, including through the school's involvement in a federation of schools. Staff provide skilful teaching, well matched and adapted to pupils' individual needs, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teachers understand how to help pupils to keep important knowledge in their long-term memory. Staff check in lessons, and when teaching longer units of work, that pupils fully understand the curriculum. Staff revisit important knowledge with pupils, where needed.

Teachers use expertly chosen stories to enthuse pupils about the joy of books, such as discovering exciting imaginary worlds and fascinating information. Staff provide pupils with high-quality phonics teaching and help weaker readers to catch up quickly in their phonics knowledge. Pupils want to read and write and do so with skill and careful thought because of staff's highly proficient teaching. Thanks to leaders' and staff's adept attention to developing pupils' language, speaking and mathematics skills, pupils build secure, in-depth knowledge.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Leaders have established a culture in which pupils' needs are expertly spotted, supported and reviewed. For instance, leaders ensure that staff identify the needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) early and very effectively, beginning in Nursery. Leaders and staff link very well with parents and carers, previous settings and other agencies to support this work.

Leaders use their own expertise about SEND and inclusion with remarkable success. For example, they provide staff with extensive training and regular individual advice to improve their step-by-step support for pupils. Staff also learn to fully consider how to support other pupils, such as children in care. Leaders link with the local authority to support pupils as needed.

The successful inclusion of all pupils is at the heart of the school's daily life. Leaders take a well-thought-out approach to reviewing the needs of pupils. Leaders spend substantial, dedicated time with staff to agree how to include each pupil who needs extra help. As a result of highly effective support, pupils flourish.

Leaders think very carefully about how to use extra funding to meet the needs of disadvantaged pupils. Leaders' clear, long-term decisions are based on their comprehensive knowledge of what works. Where needed, these pupils receive the support that they need, so they have an equal chance to succeed at school.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Leaders have a deep understanding of primary and early years education and inclusion, including special educational needs and/or disabilities. A significant strength is the school's culture of professional learning for leaders and staff. Leaders make maximum use of training and development opportunities for staff and themselves, including through the local federation of schools. Leaders' proficiency benefits the direction, values and daily life of the school. Much of leaders' work is highly successful. Where this is not the case, the quality of the school is improving very well.

Leaders at all levels have a detailed and accurate understanding of the quality of education on offer. They use this successfully and thoughtfully to bring about further improvement. This is a school where each child belongs and is supported to succeed. Leaders recognise and support pupils' individual needs and talents very well and do so for staff too.

Governors bring considerable expertise to their clearly understood roles and responsibilities. They challenge and support the school's work very well, including checking the accuracy of what leaders tell them. Governors keep a close eye on the long-term development of the school and meet their legal responsibilities.

This is a happy school. Staff wellbeing is high because leaders treat them with respect. Leaders listen to staff's views about their work. They protect time for them to complete planning, review lessons and undertake training. The school's expert leadership ensures that professionalism, teamwork and respect are core behaviours of the staff who work here.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

Leaders make certain that pupils are fully ready for their future lives. For example, pupils know about healthy eating and how to stay safe online. The school provides a wide range of extra clubs for pupils. Leaders keep a close eye on which pupils take part in clubs and act to increase take-up, such as by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Leaders focus very carefully on building pupils' sense of what it means to be a mature, successful person. They ensure that pupils become incredibly confident, resilient and independent. Pupils learn about what can make friendships positive and respectful. Leaders and staff inspire pupils about learning, 'switching them on' to the joys of education. As and when needed, leaders use activities, such as structured teaching outdoors, to build pupils' wellbeing very successfully, including for specific disadvantaged pupils.

Leaders and staff draw on their deep understanding of pupils' individual needs to provide highly effective pastoral support. Where needed for pupils, this can be one-to-one time to talk. For other pupils, this help may be a series of structured sessions to enable them to manage their feelings well.

The school's great ambitions for pupils' lives are evident, for example in the teaching of 6- and 7-year-olds about different careers. Pupils aspire to a range of possible future jobs, including as vets and train drivers.

Pupils develop a solid grasp of essential topics, such as looking after the local environment. They understand the importance of having a voice and being responsible. Pupils develop important, age-appropriate knowledge about fundamental British values. For example, they deeply respect other people's feelings and listen carefully to other people's views. They know that families can be different and that people may have different faiths. This helps to prepare pupils very well for life beyond school.

Expected standard

Early years

Expected standard

Leaders' well-thought-out curriculum guides staff to focus successfully on the essential knowledge that children should learn. Teaching in the early years is often high quality. For example, staff support children's language and thinking through meaningful back-and-forth conversations. Staff think carefully about the words, questions, books and stories that they use to teach the curriculum. Staff spot the needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) quickly and effectively. Staff establish regular and effective communication with parents and carers about pupils' learning.

Children become confident, coordinated and active in their physical movements. Most children, including those with SEND and disadvantaged children, develop the wider curriculum knowledge they need to be ready for the next stage of their education. For example, they build a secure foundation of skills in speaking, reading, writing and mathematics. In the Reception Year, staff teach phonics skilfully. On occasion, the activities that teachers select to teach some other parts of the curriculum do not help children to learn as well as they could.

Leaders are experts in early years education. They draw on their in-depth knowledge and the support of the local federation of schools to make certain that the quality of the early years is significantly improving over time.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils are happy and settle easily because this is a school where pupils develop lots of friendships and benefit from a high-quality education. Pupils say that attending the school is joyful. They feel safe and trust leaders and staff to act should they have any concerns. Pupils learn with limited distractions and free from worry about bullying. They behave themselves and rise to meet leaders' high expectations of them.

Pupils find that leaders value their differences and strengths. Leaders and staff think and act carefully so they can meet the needs of pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders and staff ensure that pupils feel that they belong. As a result, all pupils make great strides forward in their learning. They achieve very well in the range of curriculum subjects. By the time that they leave, pupils are fully ready to continue learning at their next school.

Pupils are confident, skilful learners. They love that the curriculum is rich in stories and books that fire their imagination and excite them about coming to school. Pupils benefit greatly from the extra clubs the school offers, for example construction, cooking or computing. Pupils respect people, such as the elderly and those who help communities to feel safe and well. Pupils think kindly of those who are less fortunate than themselves.

Pupils enjoy opportunities to broaden their experiences. For example, recently pupils explored immersive virtual reality headsets and used data loggers to collect real-time

information. Two classes of pupils spoke as a group on a stage to the wider public in an Oldham-wide choral speaking event. Many pupils at the school have a chance to take on a pupil leadership role, such as being a 'planet protector', member of the school council or team captain. It is little wonder that pupils' attendance and achievement at the school are high.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that the activities that staff use in the early years help children to learn the curriculum as well as they could.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Malcolm Milwain.

The school is part of a federation called The Ivory Federation.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the executive headteacher and several other leaders, including the deputy headteacher and the special educational need coordinators. Inspectors spoke with a representative of the local authority and with staff, pupils, parents and carers. The lead inspector spoke with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors, in an online meeting.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not use alternative provision.

At the time of the inspection, two pupils had an education, health and care plan.

Gillian Kay: Executive Headteacher

Lead inspector:

Tim Vaughan, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Sarah Barraclough, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 27 January 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

149

Below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

207

Below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

18.66%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

0.00%

Well below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

16.11%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Close to average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	4.3%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	6.4%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	6.6%	5.9%	Close to average

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	11.2%	13.3%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	17.2%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	23.5%	16.2%	Above

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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