

Rosebank School

Townfield Lane, Barnton, Northwich, Cheshire CW8 4QP

Inspection dates

1–2 March 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher has quickly gained the confidence of governors, staff, parents and pupils. She has made sure she has canvassed the opinions of staff and taken them into account when planning improvements. Her high aspirations for the school are shared by governors and staff.
- Staff, parents, governors and pupils are proud of their school. Everyone agrees Rosebank makes a positive difference to the lives of pupils and their families.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are eager for the doors to open each morning. Almost all pupils have good attendance, rarely missing a day of school. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary, both in class and around school.
- Middle leaders have a key role to play to further improve the school's curriculum plans and assessment systems. However, these staff have not yet been given the training they need to do their jobs effectively.
- The experienced early years team makes sure that children get off to a good start. Children's communication and language skills improve quickly. This contributes greatly to their progress in other aspects.
- Staff are currently redesigning the school's curriculum so that it better meets the needs of pupils.
- Pupils are safe and well cared for. Staff are tenacious in following up any concerns. They teach pupils how to keep themselves safe both at school and in the community.
- The school prepares pupils well for their transition to high school. Staff make sure that useful information is passed on to the high schools. Staff support pupils well to cope successfully with the challenges of moving to a new school.
- Many pupils have had very negative experiences of school prior to joining Rosebank. Staff are highly skilled at helping pupils to settle in quickly and develop behaviours which will help them to be successful learners. However, teachers do not always capitalise on this readiness to learn so that pupils can catch up more quickly in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Staff provide pupils with a wealth of opportunities to help pupils overcome their anxieties including trips to the supermarket and doctor's surgery as well as visits by the police and fire brigade.
- Leaders keep a close eye on pupils' progress. However, leaders acknowledge that the school's current assessment and tracking system has some shortcomings, which hinder the work of both leaders and teachers.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen plans to develop the role of middle leaders by ensuring that subject leaders receive training so that they have:
 - secure, up-to-date subject knowledge
 - the requisite leadership skills to carry out their roles effectively
 - sufficient resources, including time, to do their jobs well.
- Ensure the curriculum is planned in such a way to ensure that all pupils achieve what they are capable of.
- Align the assessment and tracking system to the school's curriculum more closely.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher has wasted no time since taking up post. She has quickly identified areas for improvement and has also listened carefully to staff and taken their opinions into account. She has made sure that everyone understands the reasons why she is making changes and shares her ambitious vision for the school. Consequently, the headteacher has earned the trust and confidence of staff, governors, parents and pupils.
- The headteacher has made sure that all staff understand their roles and responsibilities in helping to improve the school. She has made sure that the performance management process supports both the school's improvement plan and teachers' individual professional development needs effectively.
- The school makes good use of pupil premium funding. The headteacher makes sure that leaders understand these pupils' barriers to learning well, so that the additional monies are put to good use. For example, the school has trained a senior member of staff to screen pupils for specific learning difficulties. Any identified pupils then take part in a specialist programme. These pupils have made rapid progress in reading as a result.
- Pupils benefit from the additional funding for physical education (PE) and sports. Frequent 'Splash Zone' sessions help younger pupils get used to the environment of a swimming pool before they start swimming lessons in key stage 2. Pupils enjoy the lunchtime football club, rugby coaching and multi-skills sessions.
- Pupils enjoy the wealth of trips and visits organised by teachers. The school takes part in local, regional and national events. During the inspection, staff and pupils dressed as their favourite story characters to celebrate World Book Day.
- Senior leaders from local high schools hold Rosebank in high regard. High school leaders appreciate the comprehensive information provided by Rosebank prior to pupils' transition. Staff at Rosebank make sure that older pupils are well prepared for the challenges they may face at high school. Staff also make sure that parents receive the support they need to help them choose the most appropriate school for their child. Case studies evidence the positive difference that this careful preparation makes to pupils' success at key stage 3.
- Senior leaders ensure that funding for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities makes a positive difference to outcomes for pupils. The headteacher has recently drawn up a comprehensive overview of pupils' different needs across the school to help her improve provision further. The school makes sure that staff are well trained to meet pupils' needs as identified in education, health and care plans. Staff have skills and expertise not only in autistic spectrum conditions, but also in a range of other areas of need which pupils present with.
- The headteacher has made sure that staff now have more opportunities to engage in professional discussions with their colleagues. Staff look forward to their weekly lunchtime meeting. They have discussed a range of topics including the school's approach to assessment and tracking. These discussions help to shape the school's

improvement plans and also help teachers to improve their practice.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social education is good. Pupils have visited a Buddhist temple to take part in a meditation session, joined a luncheon club for elderly local residents at a nearby church, learned about last year's referendum vote as well as the plight of Syrian refugees.
- Although the school has made sure that staff are well trained to address pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities, not enough has been done to make sure all teachers are up to date with important, recent developments such as early reading and mathematics.
- The headteacher has put plans in place for middle leaders to take on more responsibility for developing their subjects. However, these staff have not yet had the training and support needed to help them carry out tasks effectively.
- The headteacher has prioritised the development of the curriculum across school. Staff have already developed curriculum plans which provide the broad brushstrokes of what pupils will learn. However, the lack of more specific programmes of study, coupled with the absence of a whole-school systematic approach to teaching early reading and mathematical skills is hampering pupils' progress. Moreover, for those pupils who are 'ready to learn', not enough time is given to the teaching of the academic curriculum.
- Senior leaders keep a close eye on pupils' progress in English, mathematics and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. They make sure that pupils' progress is tracked against their targets. The assessment lead has now incorporated three different 'flight paths' to raise aspirations for the middle- and higher-attaining pupils. However, the current system does not fully align to the school's curriculum which is limiting the value of the information it provides.

Governance of the school

- Governors' determination to make the recruitment process for the school's new headteacher rigorous and robust has paid dividends. Governors set high expectations and made sure that these were met. Governors have appointed a headteacher who has the trust and confidence of staff, parents and pupils.
- Governors took swift action during the inspection to address some shortfalls in the information published on the school's website, so that it now complies with all requirements except in regard to the school's curriculum.
- Governors have worked with school leaders to improve the quality of the information they receive so that they have a deeper understanding of the school's performance. For example, middle leaders now provide regular subject reports to governors.
- Governors conduct annual skills audits to make sure that they have the range of skills, knowledge and experience needed. Moreover, they make good use of training opportunities. However, they recognise they need to make more effective use of published data to evaluate the school's performance more accurately, particularly for the most able pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school carries out thorough checks on new members of staff to ensure that they are suitable to work with children. Leaders make sure that staff attend regular training so that they understand their roles and responsibilities. Leaders ensure that record-keeping is meticulous, including for the administration of medication. Staff make sure that pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe both in school and in the community. The school has established excellent partnerships with other agencies to ensure that pupils and their families receive the help they need. Parents, staff and pupils are unanimous that pupils are safe and well cared for.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Established routines, carefully considered learning environments and well-managed transitions mean that pupils feel safe. However, when pupils become anxious, staff are adept at calming them down and quickly re-engaging them in learning. Consequently, lessons proceed without interruption and pupils make good progress.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work seamlessly together. While the ratio of adults to pupils is high, pupils have plenty of opportunities to work independently in class.
- Teachers make sure parents are well informed about their children's progress. Teachers also make sure that information is sent home on a daily basis. Annual reports provide summative information for parents about their children's learning across all the curriculum. Parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey were very positive about the frequency and quality of the information they receive about their children.
- Teachers set suitable homework for pupils, appropriate to their age and stage. Additionally, teachers provide parents with a list of suggested activities for their child to help them to practise and reinforce skills pupils are learning in school.
- Staff relationships with pupils are strong. Pupils are willing to take risks because of the trust they place in the adults who work with them. Staff make sure that pupils quickly acquire the social and communication skills they need to be successful learners.
- Staff are adept at giving praise and positive reinforcement, which motivates pupils as well as helping them understand what is expected.
- Teachers talk to pupils constantly about their learning. However, staff recognise that pupils are often unclear about their individual targets. Teachers have developed a new marking and feedback policy to ensure a consistent approach across the school.
- Teachers balance the competing tensions of rebuilding pupils' confidence in their academic abilities with setting increasingly challenging work. However, teachers do not move pupils' learning on quickly enough once they have confirmed that pupils have grasped key knowledge and skills.
- Teachers use their comprehensive knowledge of autistic spectrum and associated conditions to help pupils overcome their barriers to learning. However, teachers are not as secure or fully up to date in their academic subject knowledge.
- Teachers' comprehensive assessments of pupils' personal and academic competencies

on entry are used to develop pupils' personalised plans. Teachers use this information well to help pupils settle in quickly and help pupils to develop key behaviours for learning. However, not all teachers make good use of the information they gather about pupils' learning on a daily basis to inform their planning. As a result, sometimes pupils do not move on to new learning quickly enough.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Many of the pupils have experienced failure in their previous school prior to joining Rosebank. Staff make sure they gather a wealth of information about each pupil before they are admitted to the school. Staff make good use of this information to make sure that pupils get off to the best possible start at Rosebank. Consequently, pupils enjoy coming to school.
- Staff are highly skilled at helping pupils to develop the skills they need to be successful learners. They raise pupils' self-esteem and self-confidence quickly, so that pupils are willing to take an active part in school life, including academic learning.
- Staff provide a wealth of opportunities to help pupils manage everyday situations more effectively. Staff take pupils to the supermarket, doctor's surgery and park to rehearse these situations with pupils. For pupils preparing to transition to high school, staff practise waiting for a bus and what to do if it does not arrive. Staff teach younger children what to do if they get lost. During the inspection, the fire brigade worked with groups of children to practise what to do to keep themselves safe in the event of a fire.
- The teacher in charge of computing has placed high priority on teaching pupils to keep themselves safe online. There are regular opportunities both in personal, social and health education and computing lessons for pupils to learn how to keep themselves safe. The computing leader has developed an e-safety policy which makes sure that there are robust systems to keep pupils safe in school, including the schools internet monitoring and filtering systems.
- Parents, staff and pupils are unanimous that any very rare incidents of bullying would be picked up quickly and addressed by staff. Staff make sure that very careful consideration is given to the organisation of classes and clubs so that vulnerable pupils are kept safe.
- Pupils take part in a range of physical activities. Key stage 2 pupils go horse-riding, swimming and take part in multi-skills sessions. Key stage 1 pupils are prepared for swimming lessons through their timetabled sessions in the school's 'Splash Zone'. Pupils are encouraged to try new foods at lunchtime and as part of food technology lessons.
- Although the school is highly successful in helping pupils to be 'ready to learn', teachers do not capitalise on this quickly enough by introducing more challenging work. Consequently, pupils do not develop higher-level learning skills, such as resilience and perseverance, which would help them to make even better progress.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils' conduct both in class and around school is exemplary. Staff make sure that pupils are clear about the school's high expectations for behaviour. The consistent and clear boundaries reinforced by staff, as well as the excellent role models of their peers, help new pupils to know what they should do.
- Many pupils have had a history of disruptive behaviour in their previous schools. Staff ensure that these pupils are given the support they need to be successful. The school's own records evidence the significant improvements in pupils' behaviours over time.
- The deputy headteacher keeps a close eye on patterns and trends in behaviour across the school. She makes sure that swift action is taken to address any emerging issues.
- Almost all pupils attend school regularly. The school follows up quickly on any pupil absence to make sure no pupil is absent without very good reason. The family support worker provides intensive support to parents who are struggling to get their children to school.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils enter the school at different ages. Many have experienced disruption to their education when they join the school. All pupils are diagnosed with autistic spectrum conditions. Meticulous attention to each pupil's needs, including the most able, means that pupils settle into school life quickly.
- Pupils make substantial and sustained progress over time, particularly with their social and verbal communication skills. Parents are delighted by the progress their children make at the school. One parent noted that her child had made 'dramatic progress in all areas particularly speech since starting at the school'.
- Many of the pupils struggled to cope in their previous schools. Some exhibited challenging behaviour, others were reluctant to attend or struggled to work in their classrooms alongside their peers. Parents who responded to the online survey described the positive change in their children since starting at Rosebank. One parent described their child as 'calmer, happier and learning', something the parent asserts they had never felt possible.
- The school's own assessment measures evidence the strong progress that the overwhelming majority of pupils make in English, mathematics, science and PSHE education from their different starting points. The school tracks pupils' progress closely against that of pupils with autistic spectrum disorder in schools across the country which use the same assessment tool.
- Disadvantaged pupils make at least similar progress to their classmates, regardless of their starting points.
- The school's most able, older pupils flourish because the teachers accurately judge the pitch and the challenge of the work they set. These pupils enjoy the challenges their teachers set them. Consequently, these pupils make good progress.
- Pupils learn to cope with everyday activities which they find overwhelming. From the

day they start at Rosebank, staff encourage pupils to take risks and try new things. Staff plan a comprehensive programme of activities during pupils' time at the school so that pupils quickly become confident and independent. Consequently, pupils are able to cope better with everyday life.

- For those pupils who are working significantly below age-related expectations, the school's assessment measures provide reliable information which helps the school set appropriate targets. These pupils benefit from the personalised approach to learning. They make good progress from their starting points.
- The school promotes reading. Staff encourage pupils to make good use of the school library and often use high-quality books as a stimulus for learning. However, pupils at the early stages of reading are not making as much progress as they could. The lack of a consistent approach to teaching phonics means that sometimes teachers set work which is too easy for pupils. Moreover, opportunities are missed to link pupils' learning in reading to their writing.
- As with reading, the lack of a systematic approach to teaching mathematics means that in some classes, teachers set work which does not take into account pupils' previous learning. However, in other classes, teachers use questioning skilfully to check pupils' understanding. These teachers select activities carefully to help pupils' consolidate their learning and make well-judged decisions about when to move pupils onto new learning.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years provision is improving. The experienced early years leader has an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision.
- Children get off to a good start. Staff get to know children and their families before they join the school, quickly identifying children's needs, interests and aptitudes. They use this information well to plan pupils' learning, promote independence and identify any additional support a child may need.
- Children are working well-below age-related expectations when they join Rosebank. Staff use the early years outcomes measures and the school's own assessment system to check children's starting points and track their progress. As children move into Year 1, teachers make sure that children have further opportunities to take part in early years activities and experiences. This strategy helps to build firm foundations for children's future progress.
- Staff and parents work together to develop a consistent approach. Children respond well to the daily routines and clear boundaries in school. Frequent communication between staff and parents ensures that any emerging issues are resolved quickly.
- Staff build effective, positive relationships with children and provide highly effective support. Children are happy to come into school, feel safe and supported. As a result, children are willing to try new experiences and engage in a range of activities through the day.
- Staff are highly vigilant and are proactive in addressing sensory needs and managing behaviour. Early years staff undertake regular safeguarding training. Staff follow up any concerns assiduously. The early years leader makes sure that all early years

welfare requirements are met.

- Although staff record pupils' learning, they do not make effective use of this information to plan children's next steps.
- The lack of a systematic approach to the teaching of early reading, writing and mathematics hampers children's learning. Consequently, although children make good progress across the curriculum, they do not catch up as quickly as they should in literacy and numeracy.

School details

Unique reference number	111513
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	10001278

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Special
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	46
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ann White
Headteacher	Lucy Lee
Telephone number	01606 74975
Website	www.rosebank.cheshire.sch.uk
Email address	head@rosebank.cheshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	8–9 February 2012

Information about this school

- The school caters for pupils with autistic spectrum conditions. Many of the pupils have associated communication and behaviour difficulties. All pupils have an education, health and care plan or statement of special educational needs.
- Pupils join the school at different ages.
- The school is a member of a Teaching Schools Alliance. The school offers support to mainstream primary schools.
- The headteacher took up post in September 2016.
- The proportion of pupils who come from minority ethnic groups is much lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much lower than the national average.

- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is above the national average.
- There are many more boys than girls on roll.
- The school does not meet requirements for the publication of information about the curriculum on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning across the school, including joint lesson observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders, middle leaders, a group of staff and members of the governing body.
- Inspectors also spoke to representatives of the local authority, an independent consultant who works with the school, staff from external agencies who work with the school and members of the Teaching School Alliance.
- Inspectors examined a wide range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance, school improvement planning and assessment information.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils informally during the school day and observed them during playtime and lunchtime. An inspector also met formally with a group of pupils.
- Inspectors heard a number of pupils read.
- Inspectors checked a range of pupils' books with senior leaders.
- Inspectors spoke with a number of parents during the inspection and considered the 28 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire.
- Inspectors spoke with a group of staff and also considered the 22 responses they received to the inspection questionnaire for school staff.

Inspection team

Pippa Jackson Maitland, lead inspector

Michelle Beard

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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