

Warmley Park School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109403
Local Authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	356532
Inspection dates	3–4 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Frank Price

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	3–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	113
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	10
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Daniel Wood
Headteacher	Steve Morris
Date of previous school inspection	12 September 2007
School address	Tower Road North Bristol BS30 8XL
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed 15 lessons or parts of lessons and 9 teachers. Meetings were held with the vice chair of governors, staff and pupils. Policies, document and assessment data were scrutinised. Forty-nine questionnaires returned by parents and/or carers were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- How well the school uses comparative assessment data to measure pupils' progress.
- How effectively measures have been developed to record the progress of post-16 students.
- How well the governing body and the senior leadership team have secured improvements, during the absence of the headteacher.

Information about the school

Warmley Park is a special school for pupils with severe and profound learning difficulties, and has an increasing number of pupils with autistic spectrum disorders (ASD). Improved facilities for pupils with ASD have been opened since the time of the last inspection. The majority of pupils come from the local authority of South Gloucestershire, although a few are from outside the county. The majority of pupils are White British. A very small number come from other ethnic backgrounds where the first language is not English. The school gained specialist status for communication and interaction in July 2010.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

The overall effectiveness of Warmley Park School is good. The school has a number of outstanding features. Pupils' behaviour, despite their difficulties, is excellent. This is due to a combination of good teaching which captivates their interest and good systems to manage and reduce any behaviour problems. The care, guidance and support pupils receive are first rate. Staff know their pupils exceptionally well and are skilled at reducing any hindrances that may interfere with a pupil's ability to learn. The school works closely with parents. They are very happy with the progress their children make. One parent commented, 'My son has progressed so much since coming to this school.'

The school has continued to make good improvements since the last inspection. For example, it has been successful in obtaining specialist status. The new provision for ASD pupils has been established enabling them to make good progress in a positive learning environment. The leadership team has been restructured and responsibilities are more widely delegated to middle managers, known by the school as strategy leaders. As a result there is a concerted drive for improvement, particularly in literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology and personal, social and health education. The school has also piloted some innovative ways of working, for example by grouping pupils together based on their preferred learning styles for certain subjects. This has led to pupils' increased enjoyment of learning, as teachers use imaginative ways of teaching concepts.

Although the headteacher has been absent from school for approximately three months due to illness, the leadership team and governors have still pursued ongoing improvements successfully. This demonstrates the very effective systems of leadership and management of the school that the headteacher has established. The school uses ambitious target setting to make sure pupils do not stand still in their progress. When pupils fail to make the expected gains, they are quickly identified and effective plans put in place, which are evaluated, so that the impact of their actions can be measured. The school has an accurate picture of its strengths and areas for improvement. Improvement planning is rigorous and the school has good capacity to improve further.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage gain a good start to their school life. They make good progress from their starting points in each of the areas of learning. The use of learning journeys, where children can contribute their views to their experiences is not yet fully established and this limits their involvement in assessment. As they move from Year 1 to post-16, achievement is good. However, occasionally more-able pupils are not challenged sufficiently, which means that in lessons some pupils' progress is not maximised. The use of assessment information to improve achievement by benchmarking pupils' progress against pupils of similar needs nationally is inconsistent. Sixth form students gain increasing confidence in using the community to support their learning, such as local colleges and work experience providers.

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Pupils enjoy school. They reported that they felt safe and listed many activities that they liked to participate in. Lunchtime clubs such as the film club, music and computer club are hugely popular and provide great enjoyment and stimulation. Pupils' personal development is promoted very well and where their needs allow, they mature into assured young people who are friendly and communicate with confidence. Some pupils have increasingly complex difficulties and the school recognises the importance of meeting these needs through a wider range of specialist equipment and more consistent use of communication strategies. The recently acquired specialism for communication and interaction is planned to help the school achieve this.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase pupils' achievement by:
 - developing children's ability in the Early Years Foundation Stage to take greater ownership of their learning through the use of learning journeys
 - ensuring the most-able pupils are challenged in lessons
 - using comparative assessment information so that pupils' progress can be compared with similar pupils nationally more easily.
- Extend the range and make consistent use of alternative and augmentative communication methods for those pupils with complex communication needs.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and they talk fondly of the lessons they like and varied activities on offer at school. All pupils, regardless of their learning needs, achieve well. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties enjoy sensory experiences and make small, but significant steps of progress. Pupils on the autistic spectrum make good gains in improving their behaviour and social and communication skills. In one lesson, pupils with severe learning difficulties learned how to recognise the features of two-dimensional shapes and numbers up to 10. Progress is good across most of the key stages, although some pupils' progress at Key Stage 4 slows, often due to the severity of their learning needs. Pupils achieve particularly well in reading, science and information and communication technology (ICT). The strong emphasis on learning styles, such as visual and kinaesthetic approaches, enables pupils with complex needs to make good progress. However, in lessons, some opportunities to maximise the potential of more-able pupils are missed.

Pupils develop their knowledge of how to keep safe and lead healthier lifestyles, exceptionally well. Their personal development is good. Pupils' social and moral development is a strength, and their spiritual development is satisfactorily promoted through assemblies. Many pupils experience residential trips to develop their knowledge of different communities in Britain.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	*
Pupils' attainment ¹	
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

* In some special schools inspectors do not make a judgement about attainment in relation to expectations of the pupils' age.

How effective is the provision?

Pupils enjoy lessons and work hard to achieve well. Teaching is often vibrant and imaginative. Planning is comprehensive and notes the use of preferred learning styles of pupils. This approach does much to make lessons interesting and fun. For example, one pupil learned the concept of a number four, by making it in playdough. Staff bring learning to life by confident and varied use of ICT. Pupils enjoy watching video clips or photographs of themselves. In a numeracy lesson, digital photography was used to provide immediate feedback of learning and this powerfully reinforced pupils' learning objectives. Staff have positive and supportive relationships with pupils and as a result they thrive and enjoy learning. Pupils are encouraged to communicate through a variety of ways, although sometimes signing is not used consistently enough across the school. Pupils' progress is carefully tracked across subjects and used to inform teachers' planning. Assessment is used well to ensure learning is personalised and to trigger interventions, for example to provide effective additional reading support or increase a pupil's independence skills.

The curriculum contributes successfully to pupils' learning. It is enriched through the use of themed days, lunchtime and after-school clubs and overnight field trips, in which pupils participate with enthusiasm. Links with the local community provide good learning

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opportunities, such as helping out an elderly person's home and work experience opportunities. The curriculum is personalised well to meet the wide range of needs. For example, ASD pupils have a highly structured, but low stimulus environment, while pupils with profound needs benefit from a multi-sensory environment. Life skills opportunities, to further promote pupils' independence and the expansion of accredited qualifications for older pupils, are being developed through the specialist status. Outstanding care ensures pupils are safe and confident and they are receptive to learning. Excellent targeted support ensures that pupils get the help they need. The school is constantly reviewing and developing its provision. Highly effective working with parents and other agencies ensures that pupils' needs are met as well as possible and that pupils are prepared for their next phase of education very well.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

At the heart of the school's success is a widely held ambition and passion for continuing improvement, which is championed by the headteacher. Collective teamwork is a strong feature of the school. The school works closely with parents, other agencies and governors. This helps to maximise the potential of every child. The headteacher sets high expectations for both staff and pupils, but this is done in a positive and supportive environment. Middle and senior managers are extremely effective and this has resulted in more effective monitoring, teaching and learning in core subject areas. The gaining of specialist status has further given the school a boost and sense of anticipation as to what can be further achieved in the area of communication and interaction. The active governing body is fully involved in setting the strategic direction in the school, for example, in helping to achieve specialist status. They are knowledgeable and hold leaders to account extremely successfully for the quality of the school's provision and outcomes for students.

Assessment data is used perceptively to check that all pupils, whatever their background or disability, achieve well. The strength of the analysis is in its use to detect individual underperformance and implement strategies to address issues quickly and effectively. However, the use of local data to measure pupils' progress has limitations and the headteacher is aware that the use of wider comparative data will provide a clearer benchmark and greater challenge for pupils.

An emphasis on promoting tolerance and respect underpins much of the school's work. The school is a harmonious community, where everyone is respected and valued equally. Pupils have good opportunities to be involved in the local community such as mixing with

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other pupils in a range of schools and accessing facilities in the local community to support learning. Safeguarding is of paramount importance and is fully embedded at all levels. Risk assessments are thorough and the school places great emphasis on teaching internet safety to pupils.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start with a wide range of complex needs. They make good progress and achieve well in relation to their very low starting points. Pupils with profound and severe learning difficulties make great strides in mobility skills and tracking of objects. They develop an increasing sense of self. For example, in a welcome session children enjoyed using music and pom-poms and were able to recognise photographs of themselves and their friends. Pupils with ASD make good progress in communicating through signs and symbols.

Staff work well together as a team and activities are well planned and resourced to extend and develop each small learning step. Assessment is used well to measure children's progress and plan relevant learning experiences. However, there are limited opportunities for families and children to contribute to and share learning journeys. Staff know children well, but there are some missed opportunities to challenge the most-able children through questioning and use of different activities to stretch them further. Arrangements to ensure children are looked after and safe are excellent. The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. The arrangements for children's induction and transition are smooth. The school is proactive in ensuring parents are supported and guided so they know how to access therapists and specialists.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Sixth form

Students in the post-16 department receive a good quality of education. The department is calm, organised and purposeful and well led and managed. Students make good progress towards their targets, but do particularly well in ICT and in developing their personal and social skills. They achieve well in a developing range of externally accredited courses, which suits their different levels of ability. They have good opportunities to become more independent and confident through college placements and work experience opportunities. Students fill in application forms and undergo interviews for internal work placements. The measuring and tracking of students' progress has improved since the last inspection, so that their achievements can be demonstrated more easily. Teaching is generally good and is marked by strong relationships and students are keen to talk and contribute to lessons eagerly. Occasionally written language is too hard for students to understand and the pace of lessons during explanations can be slow, and as a result students sometimes lose concentration. Students are prepared well for the future either for local or residential colleges.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

Views of parents and carers

Just under half of parents and/or carers returned parental questionnaires. They are supportive and delighted with the care and education their children receive. There were numerous supportive comments, indicating both the appreciation and high regard for the work of the school. They like the ethos of school, find that it has supportive staff and that their children make good progress. A typical comment was, 'This is an excellent school which meets all my child's needs.' Inspectors found that the school works very closely with parents and carers and rightly views this partnership as an important aspect of its work. A

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very few parents felt that the school could communicate more effectively with them through the home-school diaries.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Warmely Park School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 49 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 113 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	36	73	12	24	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	39	80	10	20	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	29	59	19	39	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	51	22	45	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	33	67	15	31	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	27	55	21	43	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	26	53	22	45	1	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	24	49	20	41	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	33	67	15	31	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	57	18	37	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	57	18	37	12	24	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	34	69	12	24	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	36	73	12	24	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



5 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Warmley Park School, Bristol BS30 8XL

I enjoyed my visit to your school, talking with many of you and meeting the school council. You told me how much you like school and especially the range of clubs you can attend. Those of you who went on the residential trip really enjoyed yourselves. I liked the fact that you have plentiful opportunities to go on trips, and for older students that you can attend colleges and do work experience. You also get involved in raising money for many worthy causes.

Your school is a good school and all the staff and governors are working hard to make the school a happy and exciting place to be. You are looked after outstandingly well and this helps you to do your best. You told me you feel safe and comfortable at school and you get on well with all your members of staff, who know how to help you to do your best. You receive good teaching, which is lively and imaginative. I thought lessons were made very interesting by using lots of different ways to make your learning fun. This helps many of you to make good progress.

The headteacher, staff and governors do a good job in leading your school. Everyone helps each other and this makes your school a good place to be. I have asked the people who are responsible for running your school to do the following things, so that it can become even better.

- For younger children to have more opportunities to be involved in their learning.
- For more-able pupils to have work which will help them do even better.
- To check how well you make progress when measured against other similar pupils.
- Extend the methods some of you communicate by and to ensure they are used more often.

You can help to improve your school by continuing to enjoy school and trying your best. I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Frank Price

Lead Inspector.

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