

Baycroft School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116617
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	357991
Inspection dates	9–10 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Sarah Mascall

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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	182
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Maria-Brigid Ryan
Headteacher	Chris Toner
Date of previous school inspection	3 March 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 27 lessons and observed 21 teachers. Meetings were held with members of the governing body, staff and students. Students' work, information on their progress, safeguarding policies and other documents were evaluated. Questionnaires from 75 parents and carers, 58 staff and 92 students were scrutinised.

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

- The effectiveness of the school's strategies in supporting students to improve their behaviour.
- How effectively data are used to ensure that all students have equality of opportunity and address areas where improvements are identified.
- How effectively the school enables students to take responsibility for their actions and maintain their progress in terms of their personal and social development.
- The effectiveness of teaching in ensuring that students know how well they are doing and understand what they have to do to improve. The effectiveness of teaching in ensuring that students know how well they are doing and understand what they have to do to improve.

Information about the school

Baycroft is a school for students with a range of special needs. All have statements of special educational needs. Just over half of the students have moderate learning difficulties, with many having additional special needs. The remaining students have identified needs for behaviour, emotional and social difficulties, severe learning difficulties and autistic spectrum disorders. A very small minority of students are in the care of the local authority. The vast majority of students are from White British backgrounds.

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

Baycroft is a good school that enables its students to make good progress both in terms of their personal development and academically. As a result, students are well prepared for life when they leave school. The school achieves this through the strong leadership of the headteacher and the commitment and hard work of her staff. There is considerable importance placed on the care and support of students. The partnerships with outside agencies are particularly effective in providing good quality guidance to staff, parents, carers and students. Good teaching enables students to achieve well and students benefit from an effective curriculum that is adapted well to meet the needs of individuals. Teachers are knowledgeable about the levels students are working at and most use this information well to ensure work in lessons is matched to the needs of individuals. Good quality marking helps students know what they have to do to improve. However, this not consistent across the school and occasionally students all do the same tasks in lessons and the marking of work does not provide them with suggestions of what they need to do to improve.

Students' enjoyment of school is reflected in the excellent attendance that they have maintained over the last three years. Students say they feel safe and, although there have been concerns about the behaviour of a small number of individual students, clearer systems and procedures have been effective in ensuring that behaviour is good in and around school. Students are active in the school community and feel they are listened to. They are involved well in the local community but opportunities to extend their understanding of life in a multicultural society are not always well promoted.

A strength of the school is senior leaders' understanding of what they need to improve and the effective action that is taken to bring this about. Self-evaluation processes are well established and governors do much in supporting the school to move forward. All these factors ensure that the school has good capacity to sustain the progress it is making. The school has gathered considerable information about the progress of students and effectively collates teachers' assessments of students' achievement. The progress of individual students is checked regularly by senior managers and quick action taken to support any individual who is not making sufficient progress. However, the school is at an early stage in using this information to provide a clear overview of progress across the school and of the different groups within the school. This lack of information restricts the ability of staff to ensure all the different abilities within the school are making the progress they should. ♦ ♦

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that work in lessons is always matched to students' abilities and that marking provides students with a clear understanding of what they have to do to improve.
- Make better use of data to ensure that staff have a clearer overview of progress across the school and within the different groups.
- Extend the range of opportunities for learning about different cultures within the United Kingdom and beyond. Extend the range of opportunities for learning about different cultures within the United Kingdom and beyond.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The attainment of students is well below that expected nationally. Despite this, by the time they leave school, all gain accreditation, in the form of GCSEs, Entry-level accreditation or awards in ASDAN. There are particular strengths in achievement in art and information and communication technology (ICT). In art, for example, Year 8 students use a variety of techniques in their work on aboriginal art, while Year 10 students concentrate very well in designing and producing printing cards. Students clearly enjoy lessons and this was very evident in a humanities lesson when Year 9 students were very focused on making leaf-shaped information leaflets about the rainforest, confidently recalling the names of the different layers of the forest. Information gathered by the school shows that all students, including those in the care of the local authority, achieve equally well.

The enthusiasm of students in participating in activities is very evident. For example, the Year 11 GCSE group are keen to practice their GCSE play, *Pygmalion* and are practically word perfect! Others are keen to show their skills in design and technology, and cookery, and there is clear pride in their achievements. Students talk very positively about school and all that they can do. In discussions, they say they feel safe and the new reward systems have had a positive impact in improving behaviour across the school. Students are very positive about the school meals and show a good understanding of staying healthy. In a Year 11 science lesson, students were very against the use of illegal drugs and showed good awareness of the harm that can be done through their use. The school council plays an important role in bringing about improvements in school and a student is part of the governing body committee looking at buildings and health and safety.

While links have recently been established with other schools, both abroad and in the United Kingdom, students' understanding of life in a multicultural society is not well developed. The vast majority of students, by the time they leave school, are responsible young adults who have developed good skills that will support them well in the world of work and college.

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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	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	1
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?

Teaching is good and there is an increasing amount of outstanding practice across the school. Strong teaching is most evident in subjects such as science and art, and it is good in the practical subjects including design and food technology. In these subjects, planning is detailed, outlines how the needs of individual students will be met, and assessment is used well to support learning. Students have opportunities to work in groups as well as individually, and questioning is used effectively to check students' understanding. This good practice is evident in many lessons but is not yet consistent across the school. Assessment procedures ensure all teachers know the levels that students are working at, but not all use this information effectively to enable students to know what they have to do to make better progress. As a result, there are occasions when all students, regardless of their ability, are given the same work and there is too much reliance on staff to help students complete tasks. Teaching assistants work well with staff, and the majority of teachers ensure that they are involved in planning and know what their role is during lessons.

The curriculum is well adapted to meet the needs of the different groups within the school. A recent initiative to provide alternative activities for students at risk of being disaffected has already had a positive impact on their learning. While literacy and

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numeracy are generally well promoted in lessons, opportunities are occasionally missed to extend skills further through other subjects. The school is aware of this and is in the process of improving cross-curricular links to the same level as those that already exist in ICT.

The care, guidance and support of students is good. Individual education plans are much improved with more-focused targets. Good steps are taken to support individuals on a one-to-one basis if they are struggling in lessons and this has had a very positive impact on these students' progress. Regular meetings with multi-agency staff do much to support students and their families, and partnership links are strong.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, well supported by her senior leaders, has achieved much since the last inspection. She has taken effective action to bring about improvements, and recent appointments to her staff team have ensured a strong, vibrant team spirit. The governing body describes her leadership as transparent because she is very clear about what works well and what does not. As a result, the governors are well informed and have a clear view of the school. Plans to develop the role of middle managers are beginning to have an impact and effective action has been taken to empower subject leaders in analysing progress. Senior leaders track the progress of individuals very well, ensuring that staff identify and respond very quickly to any students who are not making sufficient progress and provide the support they need to do well. This ensures that all students have the same opportunities and that there is no discrimination. However, senior staff are not yet using the information to give a clear overview of progress across the school or ensure that the different groups all make the same progress. Governors monitor safeguarding arrangements effectively. The governing body has a satisfactory overview of community cohesion and is keen to develop far more links than at present. Good plans are in place, for example, to develop business partnerships locally to encourage enterprise initiatives. Links with the wider community, including schools in another part of the United Kingdom, together with a school in Angola, have been established recently. Links with parents and carers are good and contact through the use of home link books is appreciated by parents and carers. This is a new initiative, and the use of these books by staff and parents and carers is gradually being embedded.

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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	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are very positive about the school and the impact it has on their children. Overall, parents were very positive, and their views can be summarised by two parents' comments: one wrote, 'Since my child has started at Baycroft it has done wonders for his confidence and general acceptance of who he is ♦ as he leaves, he is a different happy boy', while another stated, 'A very, very good school to children and parents. Thinks and understands what is best for each child. The head and assistant headteacher are very, very good and have helped my family a lot.'

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Baycroft 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 75 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 182 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	45	60	27	36	3	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	51	68	22	29	2	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	35	47	35	47	4	5	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	37	49	31	41	3	4	2	3
The teaching is good at this school	44	59	25	33	4	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	30	40	42	56	2	3	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	36	48	34	45	4	5	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)	40	53	29	39	4	5	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	42	56	27	36	5	7	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	34	45	35	47	5	7	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	37	49	32	43	4	5	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	44	59	28	37	2	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	47	63	24	32	3	4	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.



12 December 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Baycroft School, Fareham PO14 2AE

Thank you so much for being so friendly and helpful when we came to inspect your school recently. A special thank you to the students in the school council who took time to talk to Bob. ♦ It was great to know that you like so many things about school.

We found Baycroft to be a good school. You work hard in lessons and, because of this, you do well in your learning. We were impressed at how much you know about keeping healthy and it was good to hear about all the different activities you are involved in. I hope the play production went well ♦ you certainly all knew your lines very well. The school has lots of ways of checking that you are all doing well and your teachers make sure you make good progress in your learning. ♦

The school is well led by the headteacher and all the staff work very hard to make sure you do well. Because the school wants to be even better, we have asked them to do three things:

- make sure that the work you do in lessons is matched to your ability and that marking helps you understand what you have to do to improve
- make better use of all the information on how well you are doing so that staff have a better understanding of progress across the school and within the different groups
- extend the range of opportunities for you to learn about different cultures within the United Kingdom and beyond.

We wish you well for the future and hope you develop even better links with schools abroad and in the United Kingdom.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Mascal

Lead inspector

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