

Baytree School

The Campus, Weston-super-Mare, North Somerset, BS24 7DX

Inspection dates 2–3 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Pupils enjoy coming to Baytree School. They arrive happily to their classrooms and politely greet their teachers and other adults.
- Good relationships with parents and carers and strong links with other local schools ensure a positive and exciting learning environment.
- Pupils of all abilities, including children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, achieve well and make good progress during their time at the school.
- Teaching is almost always good with some that is outstanding and, as a result, pupils are regularly challenged by the work set.
- Pupils behave well. Most take part with enthusiasm in stories and questions, happily completing tasks or playing with others.
- Good quality leadership and management ensure that the school runs smoothly. Leaders have improved teaching through effective performance management linked to regular training opportunities.
- The headteacher has a clear and ambitious vision for the school. She is ably supported by other senior staff and governors and together they have created a caring and supportive ethos in which all pupils flourish.
- The sixth form is good; students achieve well although the range of accreditation offered to them is limited.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The use of communication aids is not always effective. In a few lessons communication aids are not used well enough to enable all pupils to achieve to their full potential.
- Opportunities for students in the sixth form to pass awards and certificates are limited.
- Insufficient attention has been given to developing pupils' understanding of cultural aspects.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 14 lessons, some jointly with the headteacher, during the inspection. In addition the inspectors made a number of other short visits to different lessons and listened to some pupils read.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body, a local authority representative and other staff. The inspectors also spoke with a number of pupils.
- The inspectors observed the school’s work, and looked at a variety of documents, including the school’s own data on pupils’ progress, planning and monitoring documents, safeguarding information and pupils’ books.
- The inspectors took account of the 17 responses to the online Parent View survey and questionnaires from staff members.
- The inspectors spoke to four parents and carers during the inspection.

Inspection team

Denise Morris, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Robert Pugh

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Baytree caters for pupils who have severe or profound learning difficulties, including about a third of whom have autism spectrum disorders.
- The vast majority are White British and very few are from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- A higher than average proportion is eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding given to schools by the government).
- A small minority of pupils receive funding for their additional needs.
- The school also caters for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in a shared class with pupils in Years 1 and 2.
- There is a sixth form for students aged 16 to 19.
- Baytree shares a campus with a primary school and a support centre for the community. The headteacher has been in post for two years.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the impact of teaching to enable the achievement by all groups of pupils to improve by:
 - embedding the use of communication aids such as signs, symbols, interactive switches and technology fully into practice for all pupils who need to use them
 - increasing training for all staff on the use of communication aids so that they are confident to support pupils
 - monitoring the use of communication aids to ensure they are regularly used.
- Increase accreditation in the sixth form so that students have more choices about their futures.
- Extend opportunities to enable all pupils to broaden their awareness of other cultures and lifestyles.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is

Good

- All groups of pupils, including those with profound and multiple learning difficulties and those with autism spectrum disorders, make good progress. Those whose circumstances make them potentially more vulnerable also make good progress, the result of well-targeted support provided through premium funding. Achievement has improved over the past two years. School tracking information shows that all groups achieve well from their individual starting points.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage benefit from tasks that are specific to their needs and abilities. One child, for example, was successful in threading beads onto a string to improve her dexterity and hand control. The strong focus on encouraging her independence ensured that she had the confidence to complete her task and join in with all the activities with enthusiasm.
- More able pupils achieve well in reading. They benefit from a practical approach to linking letters and sounds, often tracing letter sounds with their fingers to help memorise them.
- Students in the sixth form achieve well. They benefit from good quality facilities and effective links with local colleges so that they are well prepared for their futures. They achieve well on their accredited courses although leaders are aware that the range of qualifications provided for them is limited.
- Pupils succeed in a good range of activities provided for them. For example, in music therapy those with autism spectrum disorders learn to listen and take part in communal actions, singing and turn-taking.
- In a very few lessons, pupils in need of aids to support their communication do not always achieve as well as they could. Occasionally, the learning of these pupils is slowed down by the lack of use of communication aids to enable them to make choices and answer questions.
- Pupils make good progress in their spiritual, moral and social development. Pupils in Years 10 and 11, for example, achieved well when they took part, and won a prize, in a local 'Enterprise for all' scheme in which they developed a 'baby pacifier' as a product. They completed a presentation to other schools and made their own video to support their entry.

The quality of teaching is

Good

- Pupils throughout the school benefit from good and sometimes outstanding teaching which engages all groups in well-planned, exciting activities to promote their good progress.
- The vast majority of lessons are well managed so that behaviour is good. Lessons have effective pace and well-established routines so that pupils know what to expect.
- In the very best lessons teachers provide individual tasks that meet each pupil's individual needs. In these lessons teachers ensure that pupils have a means of communicating so that they all can join in with discussions and make choices.
- Pupils' successes are carefully checked and recorded through photographs and annotations but marking for a few older pupils does not always help them improve their work. Regular tracking of their achievements, however, shows that all groups of pupils make at least good progress in English and mathematics.
- Teachers work collaboratively with each other and with other local schools to share ideas and resources. Close partnership with the two other local special schools is helping to improve teachers' skills.
- Teaching typically enables pupils to make good progress because relationships are strong and pupils have confidence in their teachers and other staff.
- Regular daily links with parents and carers promote effective collaboration and teachers promote learning at home through pupils' daily diaries.
- Planning is linked closely to pupils' individual needs and abilities and teachers have high expectations of all groups of pupils, questioning them well to extend their understanding and skill.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are Good

- All groups of pupils, including those with autism spectrum disorders, behave well. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and to their peers.
- Pupils value staff and work well with them. They regularly help to find resources and tidy their classrooms at the end of sessions. At lunchtime they take responsibility for collecting and choosing their lunch, showing clear awareness that vegetables are good for them.
- Pupils take their responsibilities on the school council seriously. They say that they help around the school and make sure everyone is happy.
- All staff manage behaviour well. Many pupils who have difficulties with their emotional and social skills or because of their special educational needs make good or better progress in learning and joining in with their peers. This is because of the good quality support and guidance that they receive.
- No evidence of any unkindness or any type of bullying was seen during the inspection and a review of school documentation confirms this is typical of school life.
- The calm atmosphere in school helps promote positive relationships, turn-taking, sharing and good spiritual, moral and social development. Pupils' cultural development is less well developed although the way in which pupils of all abilities are involved in raising money for charity, such as the 'Christmas shoe box' appeal, shows their clear awareness of social responsibility.
- Safe risk-taking ensures that pupils learn how to judge what is safe and what is not. For example, pupils in the sixth form told inspectors how they catch a bus to go to college and learn how to travel independently. They are very proud of this.
- Parents and carers feel that their children are safe at school. Parents and carers who spoke to the inspectors commented on how their children's behaviour had improved since being at Baytree and how much their children love coming to school.

The leadership and management are Good

- The headteacher, senior leaders and staff have successfully improved the school over the past two years. They have strengthened the curriculum so that it meets pupils' individual needs and abilities well and have developed the current good quality learning environment in which pupils thrive and feel valued.
- Leaders have improved school management by expanding the senior leadership team. This has resulted in increased capacity so that leaders have undertaken more rigorous observations of lessons. Consequently, there have been good improvements in the quality of teaching and in pupils' achievement.
- Leaders have embedded a strong emphasis on supporting the individual needs and abilities of all pupils to help them overcome many of the barriers to their learning.
- The curriculum is effective. It successfully extends and promotes pupils' literacy and numeracy skills and their spiritual, moral and social development in particular, preparing them well for the next stage of their education. Close links with the on-site primary school have a positive impact on integration opportunities for pupils.
- Leaders have rightly identified the need to embed the use of the good quality communication aids already in place so that the few pupils who require them can make regular and best use of them to join in with conversations and make choices.
- Robust performance management has ensured a high focus on mentoring and supporting staff training needs. Leaders make effective use of the 'Teachers Standards' demonstrating this through their regular and accurate monitoring of teaching and learning and the appropriateness of the high quality training programme which regularly enables staff to seek promotion.
- Parents and carers are supportive of leadership and value the work they do to promote the well-being of their children. There is a good partnership with parents and carers, other schools and local support services.

- Safeguarding procedures are effective and fully meet current requirements.
- The school has been designated as an improving school and one that requires low levels of support by the local authority.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- shows clear strategic direction, promoting an ethos in which all groups of pupils thrive
- is fully involved in evaluating the school's strengths and areas for improvement
- holds leaders to account for maintaining improvements and high quality outcomes by regularly checking outcomes
- manages the finances well, ensuring that the financial resources made available to the school are managed effectively
- uses additional money allocated for pupils with additional needs well to the benefit of these pupils by providing additional therapeutic approaches, including hydro-therapy and music therapy.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	109409
Local authority	North Somerset
Inspection number	405234

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	68
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	16
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Penny Tottle
Headteacher	Fiona Richings
Date of previous school inspection	September 2010
Telephone number	01934 427555
Fax number	01934 625567
Email address	baytree.spec@n-somerset.gov.uk

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