

Mayfield School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	113641
Local authority	Torbay
Inspection number	378732
Inspection dates	11–12 July 2012
Lead inspector	Steffi Penny HMI

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

Type of school	All-through
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	125
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	19
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Paul Garside
Headteacher	Mrs June Palmer
Date of previous school inspection	10 January 2009
School address	Moor Lane Watcombe Torquay TQ2 8NH
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Age group	2–19
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Introduction

Inspection team

Steffi Penny

Her Majesty's Inspector

Desmond Dunne

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed all 13 class teachers and a total of 10 hours formal learning, including planned learning through small groups, one-to-one work, and sensory therapy sessions with school staff. Almost all of these observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders. Pupils were also directly observed arriving at school, in extra-curricular clubs and at play.

Discussions were held with the Chair of Governors, pupils, staff and a representative from those who work in partnership with the school. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation including that relating to: pupils' achievement, behaviour and attendance; the quality of teaching; and safeguarding. The Lead inspector analysed four DVDs showing photographs and video footage of pupils' work, progress and achievements over the last three years. The team took into account 50 parents' and carers' questionnaires and others completed by pupils and staff.

Information about the school

All pupils have a statement of special educational needs. These difficulties are: 60% severe learning; 28% profound and multiple; and 12% complex. In addition, 27% have autistic spectrum conditions and a further 14% have very challenging behaviour related to their special educational needs. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. There are twice as many boys on roll than girls; the proportion varying widely in each year group and each key stage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is high at 33%. More pupils join the school at times other than the usual points of transfer than in most schools.

The school provides the full core offer with childcare for those under three which is managed by the governing body; during this inspection there were no children in this age group. The school also provides outreach services for special educational needs and information and communication technology (ICT) access in mainstream schools in the local authority. The school's post-16 provision is known as the Further Education Unit (FE)

The school has achieved many awards. It gained specialist status in cognition and learning in 2010. Since 2011 it has been the lead school for special educational needs and inclusion as part of Torbay's Leadership Academy's 'School 2 School Support'.

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	1
Achievement of pupils	1
Quality of teaching	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	1

Key findings

- Mayfield School is an outstanding school. The outstanding care, guidance and support that pupils receive put them in a position to be ready to learn. The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. These, and outstanding teaching over time, ensure that overall pupils' achievements are outstanding, particularly in communication, literacy, numeracy and in their personal development. Different groups of pupils make similarly outstanding progress.
- Pupils' behaviour and safety are outstanding. All pupils are keen to learn. Although some pupils may display challenging behaviour associated with their particular special educational needs, incidents are frequently pre-empted and when they do happen are exceptionally well managed so that they rarely disrupt learning. The arrangements for ensuring pupils' safety are extremely robust.
- The impact of the FE and the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is outstanding overall. However, during the inspection more good rather than outstanding teaching and learning was seen. Here, and in the good, rather than outstanding, parts of lessons seen in the rest of the school, there was too much teacher talk and adults did not consistently identify or record the next steps in pupils' learning.
- Pupils have a progressive learning experience throughout their school career, which becomes increasingly personalised according to future plans as identified in person-centred reviews for older pupils. Meaningful accreditation is acquired by all pupils and the school knowingly adapts and makes appropriate changes when new courses are available that meet pupils' needs better. Careers advice and preparation for life beyond school are also supported by excellent partnership work with other providers and services.
- Leadership, management and governance are outstanding. The quality of

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teaching and learning is monitored regularly through highly effective performance management systems and is supported by appropriate training opportunities.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Boost teaching so that even more of it is consistently outstanding by ensuring that:
 - teachers do not talk to the whole class for too long
 - all adults consistently contribute to and record the next steps in pupils' learning.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Overall, pupils make outstanding progress from their exceedingly low starting points, regardless of their specific special educational needs, age or gender. Pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or who are vulnerable due to their circumstances make the same outstanding progress as their classmates. The induction programme for pupils new to the school, at any age, ensures that pupils and their families swiftly become part of the Mayfield School community and also make outstanding progress. An overwhelming majority of parents and carers would recommend the school to others. As one parent or carer wrote, 'My child has achieved so much since being at Mayfield. I have also recommended it to other parents in similar situations. In our opinion it is a very special place with fantastic support staff.'

Pupils' progress in reading is outstanding. The effective teaching of systematic phonics (the connections between letter patterns and the sounds they represent) shows more-able pupils' increasing ability to blend letters together to read new words and to segment them to spell accurately. For other pupils, imaginative and fun 'light and sound display' sessions take place within lessons to stimulate pupils' sensory awareness and develop coordination and their communication abilities. In one such session seen, pupils thoroughly enjoyed 'exploring a jungle' and then 'taking a train ride' while the adults successfully helped them improve their articulation. Pupils who do not have verbal speech are provided with the means to hold conversations or to share their likes and dislikes. The school helpfully provides workshops for parents and carers which, for example, reinforce the school's 'total communication' ethos. Also, music therapy, hydrotherapy and multi-sensory approaches to learning have a very positive impact on the development of disabled pupils and those who have profound and multiple learning difficulties.

Exceptionally for the school, there is a small number of pupils in Key Stage 3 who are attaining National Curriculum levels in English and mathematics at around their

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chronological age. The school is working with its partnerships to provide GCSE examination courses for them when they start Key Stage 4 and it is in the process of developing techniques to help these pupils overcome the barrier of an examination structure with which they will find it hard to comply.

From Key Stage 3 onwards pupils continue to extend their skills and confidence through specific programmes that promote their independence and allow those who are able to sample different vocational skills. Excellent partnerships with other providers and services ensure all pupils leave school well prepared for the next stage in their lives.

Quality of teaching

Inspection evidence concurs with the vast majority of parents' views that overall teaching and learning are outstanding. Teachers have high expectations of pupils based on accurate, ongoing assessment of their learning and identified strategies and interventions for when they are not meeting their targets. However, in some of the parts of lessons seen during the inspection pupils' progress was good rather than outstanding. On these occasions teachers talked too long to the whole class and resources, especially including other adults in helping pupils' learning, were not used as well as they should have been. In contrast, the very best lessons were exceptionally well planned to ensure the maximising of learning time that was bespoke to each pupil. Here, all staff referred to and recorded the achievements of the pupils during the lesson and teaching assistants had the prudence to adjust the planned activity if the work was proving to be too easy or too hard for the pupil. Also, the amount of choices that pupils could make was carefully considered so that they were not overwhelmed by having too many or their learning restricted by having too few.

DVD footage and photographs are used exceptionally well by the school to triangulate evidence and for the moderation of pupils' achievements along with celebrating pupils' enjoyment of learning. Two highly productive examples of work produced within the FE department are 'Bubbles' where pupils have fun experiencing bubbles and 'Rachel's Christmas Film', where pupils demonstrated their different personalities and ideas on how to wrap the perfect present and what to do with a cardboard box.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Through planned school activities along with trips and visits pupils learn how to share, take turns, value others' opinions and trust each other. Pupils know how to keep safe and how to help each other keep out of harm's way. For example, they learn how to do risk assessments, such as when it is safe to cross a stream, and demonstrate courage to try new things when it is safe to do so. Pupils told inspectors that they are very happy in school that they enjoy work and learning very much and that at Mayfield School they make new good friends. Pupils are extremely aware of what is right and wrong and what they need to do in order to be good citizens, and

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that bullying of any kind is not to be tolerated. Relationships within the school community are a major strength. Many parents and carers wrote to say how pleased they are about the way their children are looked after and cared for at school. One parent or carer, expressing the views of many, wrote, 'My child really enjoys the time spent in school and I am very grateful to the staff for the wonderful care and education they provide.'

Pupils said that they felt the school listened to them and were rightly proud of the changes that have been voiced through the school council and followed through by the school. They also said that the pupil with the peer-mediator role had helped them resolve quarrels and differences of opinion without the need of totally relying on adults to sort things out. They appreciated this and other examples where they took on roles and responsibilities, in class and around the school.

Medical and personal needs are deftly dealt with by staff, causing the minimum amount of fuss and disturbance to learning. They are also very adept at helping pupils to find ways to manage their own behaviour, pre-empting escalations of inappropriate behaviour due to pupils' frustrations or anger. When unexpected outbursts do occur, staff's management of pupils is perceptive and sensitive; it seldom requires their physical intervention, deals effectively with any risk of bullying and the learning of others is very rarely disrupted. Pupils are never excluded from school. After taking into account pupils who have been unavoidably absent (when undergoing major surgery or respite care), attendance is above average.

Leadership and management

The school is organised extremely well. It operates a delegated system of leadership which ensures that all staff are involved in the development of the school and are accountable for specific aspects of its monitoring and evaluation. Leaders at all levels are passionate about ensuring that learning is meaningful to the pupils and that they are best prepared for life after school as they can be. Interventions and provision mapping for pupils' special educational needs are regularly and thoroughly reviewed in relation to the impact that they have on the pupils' learning and well-being. Staff monitor, challenge and cross-check each other's work to ensure that assessments are accurate as well as regularly completed. For example, careful monitoring by speech and language therapists and higher level teaching assistants, with middle leadership roles, ensures that speaking and reading attainment is accurately moderated and recorded.

The governing body holds the school firmly to account for the achievement of the pupils. Through discussion with leaders they have an increasing knowledge of educational matters, such as the best way to teach phonics to Mayfield pupils. They and the headteacher ensure that safeguarding arrangements are fully met and child-protection procedures exemplary.

The highly inclusive curriculum meets the aptitudes and interests of all pupils exceptionally well, incorporating therapy and medical needs as appropriate for each

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pupil. The promotion of equality and tackling discrimination are evident in all aspects of the school's work. Memorable experiences are provided for all pupils and they are consistently given opportunities to develop and demonstrate their own personality. Pupils are encouraged to play a very active part in society. For example, they take part in various activities to raise money for charities and have been enjoying the Queen's Jubilee year with parties, celebrations and a 'Jubilee Challenge' in Dartmoor (related to the Ten Tors race). Pupils go on trips, for example to London, and can take part in residential and exceedingly challenging outdoor activities such as abseiling and canoeing, regardless of their disability. Weekly enterprise activities are provided for pupils in Key Stage 3 and above with vocational opportunities and accredited courses in construction, hairdressing and other specific ones that fit pupils' expressed interests and ambitions. These opportunities and staff's use of praise and rewards to build pupils' self-esteem (giving pupils the confidence to try new things) contribute highly successively to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Senior leaders are not complacent and they are continually researching and implementing ways to improve the school further. For example, staff have been trained in phonics which has had a major impact on improving pupils' reading and communication skills, and some staff have been trialling the use of more modern technologies with the aim of raising attainment still further. These, and the improvements since the previous inspection, demonstrate the school's outstanding capacity to improve.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



13 July 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Mayfield School, Torquay TQ2 8NH

Thank you for making Des and me feel so welcome when we came to inspect your school. We enjoyed talking with some of you, along with watching you learning and at play. I am writing to tell you what we found out.

Mayfield School is an outstanding school in every way! Staff care about you very much and want you to be able to do your very best in all aspects of your learning and be ready for when you leave school. Regardless of who you are this generally happens because you want to learn and enjoy learning because your school provides you with excellent opportunities to do so.

We all think that even more of your learning should be consistently outstanding for your futures to be improved still further. We judge that the school can do this best by making sure that in lessons teachers do not talk to too much to the whole class and that all adults identify and record the next steps in your learning.

You can all help by coming to school as often as you are able, trying as hard as you can in all of your lessons and letting adults know if your work is too easy or too hard.

Thank you once again for helping us with our inspection. We wish all of you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Steffi Penny
Her Majesty's Inspector

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