

# Mayfield School

Moresby Road, Hensingham, Whitehaven, CA28 8TU

## Inspection dates

16 – 17 October 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- The school uses its considerable expertise and resources very effectively, which inspires every pupil to excel in their physical, personal and academic development. Pupils make exceptional progress in all areas of learning so that by the time they leave school what they achieve is outstanding.
- The provision for students who are above compulsory school age is outstanding. They make excellent progress and achieve extremely well, as a result of their teachers' high expectations and the great many opportunities promoting independence.
- Staff are a highly effective team. They possess all the knowledge and skills needed to ensure each pupil is given substantial support and encouragement. As a result, pupils make rapid and sustained progress in every aspect of their development. Staff know pupils well and ensure all of the work and activities they plan are right for each pupil and cover completely what they need to learn.
- Outstanding teaching makes learning enjoyable and challenging. It elicits pupils' very best efforts and builds their confidence to increase their knowledge and skills.
- Pupils' very positive attitudes to learning encourage excellent behaviour.
- The school's outstanding leadership and management ensure there is a constant pursuit of new ideas and well-planned improvements made to the school's work. Staff are challenged to be as effective as possible and their professional development contributes substantially to this.
- Pupils' work and activities have considerable variety. Teachers make these activities enjoyable, exciting and interesting to pupils. Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is being newly developed this year.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out over two days.
- Most teachers were seen teaching in the 12 lessons inspectors visited.
- Inspectors met with pupils, staff, representatives of the governing body and held a discussion with two representatives of the local authority. They scrutinised pupils' work and examined a range of the school's documentation. Inspectors looked at policies and procedures for keeping pupils safe, data on their academic performance, the school's evaluations of its work and improvement plans.
- Inspectors took account of the views expressed by 11 parents using the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and the school's survey of parents' views.

## Inspection team

Alan Lemon, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

John Ellwood

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Mayfield School educates pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs. All have a statement of special educational needs identifying severe learning difficulties or profound and multiple learning difficulties.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and the proportion known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding) is well-above average.
- Since the last inspection, the number of pupils on roll has grown from 87 to 109. Two additional classes were added to accommodate this increase.
- At the beginning of this school year, three children of pre-compulsory school age were admitted. It has been four years since the last group of children of this age were on roll. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision has been reintroduced to meet the requirements for these children.
- There are 24 students above compulsory school age on roll.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage develops to match the high quality provision in the rest of the school by:
  - checking rigorously that children's progress in all areas of learning is rapid and sustained
  - embedding the new national framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is outstanding

- Pupils make significant progress in their knowledge, understanding and key skills. By the time they leave school they are exceptionally well prepared for the future. All reach the challenging targets set for them and many go well beyond these.
- Whatever a pupil's disability or special educational need, the school's very considerable expertise in meeting their needs means each pupil is stretched as far as possible in their learning and progress. The school promotes equality of opportunity exceptionally well. Those who have profound and multiple learning difficulties are highly involved through very well-planned and imaginative and interesting activities which help to develop their senses and physical skills. As a result, they very much enjoy the experiences provided and make very good progress in their communication skills, increasing their interests and making a wide range of choices.
- The rigorous analysis of pupils' progress ensures no individual or group falls behind. Extra funds provided through the pupil premium have been well spent supporting those pupils who may be at risk of not achieving their potential, with the result that the gap in achievement between pupils eligible for the pupil premium and others is negligible.
- Even though pupils have widely varying abilities to read, write and count, each pupil develops to an outstanding extent. Very good opportunities throughout school to practise and improve their reading mean many pupils learn effective ways to recognise words, which for some involves skilful linking of letters and sounds.
- The huge investment in improving pupils' physical skills enables them to achieve as much as they can in moving independently, handling and controlling things. Many learn to form letters and write words. More-able pupils rapidly improve their handwriting and independently set out their thinking in well-constructed sentences and paragraphs. Where writing is beyond pupils' physical control, they use their reading skills effectively to order words into sentences and lists.
- Pupils communicate very effectively using the most appropriate means, which for some means using sign language or symbols. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have, in a few weeks, made very good progress in using symbols and some children already put these together as a simple sentence, such as 'I want a biscuit'. Throughout the school, pupils for whom it is appropriate make very effective use of computers and digital equipment both to communicate and to help them with their work.
- Pupils above compulsory school age take a significant amount of responsibility for their learning. They manage the choices given to them with confidence and gain awards in personal development, life and work-related skills. Pupils improve their reading, writing and mathematical skills and apply these very effectively to everyday problem-solving tasks, such as sourcing information and calculating costs. They develop the confidence and skills that enable them to be independent and that lead systematically on to further education, training and employment.

### The quality of teaching

### is outstanding

- The large team of staff needed to support pupils is very well qualified to tackle a demanding and challenging job. All members of the team work closely together using their wide range of knowledge and skills to ensure pupils learn and progress in every respect. Physiotherapists, speech and language and occupational therapists work extremely well with staff creating the right conditions so that every pupil has the best opportunity for learning.
- Teachers and their assistants are trained very well to support pupils' learning and progress and they do so outstandingly well. They are expert in encouraging pupils, managing their behaviour and promoting learning. They know the pupils well and constantly check their progress and stay alert to small breakthroughs in learning.
- Teachers know the pupils well and this enables them to plan lessons very effectively. When setting new work, very careful consideration is given to what pupils have already learnt. While a

class may be reading, writing or counting, pupils work at their own level. In mathematics, for example, some pupils work with paper and pencil, and others use objects to count, add or take away. Teaching assistants' support is well-informed and very sharply focused on sustaining particular pupils' thinking, concentration and effort. They go over what needs to be learnt time and again until pupils have grasped new knowledge or a new skill.

- The excellent planning of work for students above compulsory school age gives them great scope in taking charge of their learning. Teachers very skilfully stand back, but judge appropriately when support is needed.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage staff take every opportunity to promote learning and they are sharply focused on developing rigorous ways of checking on children's progress. During breaks, children are encouraged to ask, sign or use symbols when choosing their snack. Further up the school, adults adapt their teaching to give pupils more independence and responsibility for managing their work.
- Across the school, expectations of what pupils can achieve are high. Teachers and their assistants challenge pupils well with lots of questions, getting pupils to say and show what they know and can do. This works wonders for pupils' self-confidence. They enjoy the lively interactions with adults and each other during lessons, motivating them to try very hard.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are outstanding

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are outstanding. They like school and very much enjoy the experiences they have. Even though attendance is reduced by unavoidable absences, pupils are excited by coming to school. Over time, their self-confidence increases considerably.
- It is remarkable that many pupils, who because of the complexity of their needs find it difficult to join in with others and the school in general, settle down very quickly, behave well, make friends and join in activities. Pupils' relationships with the adults and with each other are exceptionally positive, which for many is crucial in forming the trust in others that they need in order to get involved.
- Pupils are always keen to take part in lessons and are willing to follow the teachers' lead. Much lively teaching stimulates pupils' interest and they contribute to lessons with enthusiasm, reading aloud or going out and using the board to show others what they know. High expectations of pupils taking charge of as much as possible, means they show very good initiative and responsibility in managing their books and equipment.
- Most pupils' behaviour is very good. They understand and adhere closely to the school's expectations to stay calm and be cooperative. A very few pupils have some difficulty doing this of their own accord although their behaviour is very effectively managed. As a result, the school enjoys a peaceful and welcoming atmosphere which benefits everyone.
- Pupils feel safe and keep safe by treating each other with respect and responding well when being supervised by adults. The arrangements in school for pupils' safety are robust. Pupils are taught to understand the major risks to their safety, in particular the use of the internet.

### **The leadership and management** are outstanding

- The school has benefited immensely from many years of strong leadership and management. The headteacher is very ambitious and there is no let-up in her search for new ideas for making the school even more effective. She maintains the highest expectations and gives staff very clear direction for achieving and sustaining high professional standards. As a result, the school has improved exceptionally well and hence is enabling its pupils' to achieve outstandingly.
- The headteacher and her deputy headteacher keep a very close check on how well the school is working and that has benefited pupils. Leaders have a realistic and accurate view of the school's strengths and where things could be better, in particular through their detailed examination of data on pupils' progress. The quality of teaching is looked at regularly. Feedback from this shows

teachers what they need to improve and this is constantly strengthening pupils' learning and progress.

- Very effective management of teachers' performance gives them clear pathways to increasing their knowledge and skills and to promotion. The link between the quality of teaching and how teachers are paid is clearly articulated by leaders and is understood by teachers.
- School improvement priorities are informed by leaders' clear understanding of where the school should go next. Other staff with leadership roles contribute incisively to the school's evaluation of what it does well and what could be improved, and they are decisive in their areas of the school's work. In the short time the school has had children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, good provision has been made for them and the new national developments at this key stage are rapidly becoming embedded.
- The depth of quality in the school's leadership means that it has built an even greater capacity for improvement since the previous inspection in 2009, when its capacity was already judged to be outstanding.
- The local authority maintains a light touch involvement with the school, knowing its considerable strengths, but nevertheless local authority representatives visit regularly to give support to helping the school to improve even more.
- The range of work and activities that pupils do match the learning opportunities found in the best schools. Leaders are meticulous in ensuring work is appropriate to pupils' age and is expertly adapted to match each pupil's stage of learning. Subjects are linked together through themes such as the Olympics or Shakespeare. As a result, creative, enjoyable activities are provided, for example, bringing in a theatre group to lead workshops and filming pupils' performances. The work older pupils do is driven by their pursuit of several awards which give them credit for their achievements.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body is very well informed about the school's strengths and its plans for improvement from the information provided by the school's leaders and through governors' regular visits to check on specific areas of the school's work.
- Governors have a very good capacity for evaluating the effectiveness of the school in meeting pupils' needs and promoting their progress. Members of the governing body are fully conversant with the school's data on pupils' progress and the quality of teaching. They ask probing questions about pupils' progress and this also places them in a strong position to challenge the school on teachers' performance and the impact the pupil premium has had on pupils' achievement.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	112464
<b>Local authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	401265

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 – 19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	109
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	24
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jackie Davies
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lynne Brownrigg
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	October 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01946 691253
<b>Fax number</b>	01946 696836
<b>Email address</b>	admin@mayfield.cumbria.sch.uk



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