

Mayfield School

Moor Lane, Watcombe, Torquay, Devon TQ2 8NH

Inspection dates

5–6 February 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Ambitious leaders and governors have developed the school successfully so that it is a key part of Torbay's provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- Leaders are committed to providing the best education and care, whatever a pupil's needs or disability. This means that pupils and students make good progress from their different starting points.
- Pupils behave well. When pupils become distressed, this is managed in a calm and consistent manner so that pupils feel safe and can return to work when they are ready.
- Arrangements to keep pupils safe are effective. A culture of kindness and care underpins these.
- Children get off to a positive start in the early years. Good teaching in a safe and caring environment leads current children to make good progress.
- Pupils at the Chestnut Centre and the Annex, many of whom have had negative experiences of schooling, learn to manage their emotions and behaviour better so that they can learn successfully.
- Students are well prepared for adulthood. The college provides a wide range of activities so that students become more independent and develop key skills that they will need in the future.
- Teachers make good use of clear individual targets to inform their teaching. Teachers and leaders carefully check progress. Effective action is put in place if a pupil is at risk of not making good progress.
- Some teachers' knowledge of the development of reading, writing and mathematics is insecure. Therefore, work set is not always appropriate.
- Teaching, in calm and purposeful classrooms, is frequently interesting and stimulating. On occasions, the interest of pupils wanes because the purpose of learning is not clear or the activity is not suitable to capture their attention.
- The wide-ranging curriculum is carefully designed to meet the needs of different groups of pupils.
- Parents and carers have a positive view of the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teaching, learning and assessment are consistently good or better by:
 - strengthening teachers' knowledge and understanding of the development of early reading, writing and mathematics
 - making sure that activities planned capture pupils' interests and encourage their concentration and attention.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher's moral purpose to provide for pupils with SEND in Torbay has driven the school's successful transition from a successful small special school to a much larger school on three sites, where pupils, whatever their needs or disability, do well.
- The senior leadership team has embraced the new challenges. Leaders ensure that, on the different sites, there is culture of high expectations and challenge so the pupils and students 'can be the best they can be'. Recently, leaders have brought about significant improvement to the quality of provision at the Chestnut Centre so that behaviour is now managed consistently well, and pupils can learn successfully.
- Middle leaders significantly enhance the capacity of leadership in the school. Their roles in, for example, analysing and improving behaviour and monitoring a subject or key stage mean that there is a very informed leadership team with a deep understanding of the school's work.
- Leaders regularly review aspects of the school. They systematically monitor the quality of teaching and the progress that pupils make. Leaders use the advice of external consultants appropriately to check their judgements. They have identified the key areas for future development and tackle any underperformance robustly.
- Tailored pathways mean that the curriculum is comprehensive and well designed to meet the needs of groups of pupils on the different sites. This means that pupils are engaged and interested.
- Weaknesses in the systematic development of reading, writing and mathematics mean that, sometimes, teachers' knowledge is not secure and too much time is given to some activities and too little time given to others.
- Pupils' learning and personal development are promoted very effectively through extra-curricular activities such as trips and visitors. The school provides residential activities, both locally and abroad. Pupils take part in performances, special events and annual challenges such as Ten Tors. These activities provide opportunities for pupils to enjoy different experiences and use their skills learned in the classroom.
- All additional funding is used effectively. Funding is appropriately targeted to remove barriers to learning or provide additional resources for identified pupils. There are no significant differences in the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils compared to others.
- Sports premium funding has been used to employ a specialist leader who has been successful in extending the range of opportunities for pupils. The school is particularly proud of pupils who have developed their cycling skills, including visiting the velodrome.
- Leaders ensure that a strong focus on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is woven through the school's ethos and work. Pupils learn about and experience other cultures and beliefs. They engage in charity events. They have had opportunities to explore British values through considering the issues of rights and rules. Pupils respect each other and are respected.
- Almost all parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, said

that they feel their child is well looked after and that they would recommend the school to another parent. A typical comment sums up the feeling of many parents, whether their child attends the college, school or the Chestnut Centre: 'An excellent school that always strives to get the best education for its pupils. The school is well led and pupils are happy and well supported.'

Governance of the school

- Governors are well informed. They recognised their need to be more effective as a group and therefore have strengthened their practice. They ensure that they are up to date and welcome external advice to strengthen their knowledge. They have worked with the school to ensure that they have good information and effective processes to hold leaders to account, including for additional funding.
- Governors are highly ambitious. They encourage innovation. This means that they have encouraged and enabled the school's recent development and growth. Their support and challenge have helped the school in developing a successful leadership team which works on continuous improvement.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Keeping pupils and students safe is a priority for the school. A kind and caring approach underpins practice.
- Leaders ensure that safeguarding procedures are continually strengthened. They have invested in online systems, which means that recording has become more rigorous. They give high priority to ensuring that senior leaders are well informed and well trained. Training of other staff is up to date. Consequently, staff know and understand what they must do to report any concerns should they arise. Recruitment procedures are diligently followed.
- Leaders carefully balance the need for keeping pupils and students safe with the need to challenge them to be more independent. They do this through effective risk assessments, ongoing vigilance and a common-sense approach. This means that pupils safely develop skills such as using public transport, as well having opportunities for a wide range of curricular opportunities, for example trips abroad.
- Almost all parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, said their children felt safe at school. Pupils spoken with say that they feel safe.
- Governors have strengthened their monitoring of safeguarding and are well informed. They hold the school to account well.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers establish calm, purposeful and positive learning environments. Pupils have appropriate support and well-prepared equipment so that they can learn successfully.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have very strong relationships with pupils and encourage and coax individuals to concentrate and stay on task. These relationships

are key to developing pupils' confidence, independence and resilience as they learn.

- Adults know pupils very well. When working with those pupils with the most profound needs, for example, they respond sensitively to the slightest noise or change in facial expression. They adapt the activity accordingly. This means that pupils engage and experience activities despite their complex disabilities. On some occasions, teaching assistants are too passive in their support of pupils or do too much for them.
- Adults' very careful questioning and prompting mean that the pupils are challenged to practise and develop their skills. Teachers and teaching assistants ask pupils to use their knowledge of early number or reading in class sessions or by reading simple instructions. Basic skills are consistently reinforced.
- Teachers carefully tailor their approach so that it is age-appropriate and offers sensory or practical activities as appropriate. Most lessons engage pupils well. On occasions, however, the purpose of the learning is less clear or the activity is poorly planned. This means that pupils become bored or confused about expectations.
- Teaching is frequently stimulating. Teachers are aware of the importance of capturing a pupil's interest so that they are more willing to engage with the work. During the inspection, pupils were clearly excited by the focus on Harry Potter. They had opportunities to dress as characters and attend a feast. Through these activities, pupils had appropriate sensory experiences, developed their understanding of literature, practised their reading and developed their speaking, listening and problem-solving skills.
- The school's assessment framework supports teachers in tracking the progress of pupils and setting targets related to their education, health and care (EHC) plans and their starting points. Teachers use this information effectively in their planning and in lessons. Learning and progress are captured throughout the day. Targets are regularly evaluated to ensure that there is clear evidence of achievement.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- On all sites, staff are committed to developing an atmosphere where pupils feel safe and develop confidence to learn and become more independent.
- Pupils' voice, however that might be expressed, is listened to. Staff sensitively deal with behaviour that might be an expression of anxiety. Leaders have developed an effective pupil council and 'listen to me' documents for the annual reviews. These mean that pupils develop a confidence in the staff and the school.
- Staff successfully intervene to support those who have the most challenges. These might include pupils who are withdrawn or timid or pupils whose behaviour is a potential danger to others. Through careful analysis and working intensively with the pupil and their family, there is clear evidence of the school's impact on pupils' good personal development.
- Pupils in the Chestnut Centre are confident, chatty and happy at school. They enjoy

being there as a result of the strong relationships with staff.

- Pupils themselves say that they feel safe and well cared for. The way adults calm those with profound needs suggests that they take comfort from the adults around them.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils conduct themselves well across all the sites. Pupils' behaviour in classrooms is better when they are interested in the teaching. If activities are not well matched to pupils' interests, there are more incidents of challenging, repetitive or self-stimulating behaviour.
- Those pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs, at times, have episodes of anxiety, aggression and resistance to learning. These are managed with dignity. Well-trained and skilled staff de-escalate situations so that pupils successfully return to their learning.
- Clear procedures for supporting and managing behaviour across all sites mean that there are clear expectations in place. There are robust recording procedures for any incidents or occasions when physical intervention is necessary.
- Most pupils' attendance is high. For a few pupils, complex medical needs affect their attendance. For others, previous negative experiences of schooling or family circumstances mean that attendance can be a cause for concern. Staff track the attendance of all pupils very carefully. They intervene when necessary. They are creative and supportive in helping pupils and families so that, over time, more pupils attend more regularly.
- The school works effectively with the local authority and the alternative provider to offer bespoke packages if pupils are not accessing education. The school takes appropriate steps to monitor the provision to ensure that pupils are safe, engaging with learning and making progress.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- School leaders set clear targets for pupils and students based on their individual starting points, the national curriculum and the hopes and aspirations expressed in EHC plans or annual reviews. Teachers and leaders regularly review targets, check they are challenging and intervene when necessary. Most pupils are making good or better progress in meeting their targets.
- Pupils throughout the school develop key communication skills and develop reading, writing and mathematics skills. They become more independent, as well as developing self-advocacy and problem-solving skills.
- Pupils transfer successfully from the school to Mayfield College. Where appropriate, they leave the school with qualifications in English, mathematics and information and communication technology.
- Pupils in the Chestnut Centre and the Annex begin to overcome their social and emotional barriers to learning. This means that they settle and engage more. Work in books shows that they are beginning to develop pride in their achievements and are

making progress in English and mathematics.

- Some pupils are successfully re-integrated into a mainstream school. If they have more complex needs, staff work successfully with the local authority to identify the most appropriate provision. Pupils then make successful transitions to their new placements.
- Students in the college gain accredited qualifications. They also strengthen their independent living, self-help, communication and problem-solving skills. Future destinations are agreed with the student and their parents. Successful destinations when they leave include a wide range of courses in further education, employment and a successful transition to a supportive living placement.

Early years provision

Good

- High-quality care by adults ensures that children are safe and provided with effective support to address their diverse needs. This means that children develop key skills to behave well and learn.
- Adults successfully focus on developing early communication skills, including early reading and writing. Their emphasis on developing speaking and listening means that children develop important skills of expressing their ideas and feelings.
- Effective assessment informs planning well and means that activities meet children's needs. Children makes strong progress towards their termly targets and progress to early learning goals.
- Staff work together well as a team to ensure a consistency of approach and the maintenance of high expectations. They have a positive relationship with parents.
- School leaders work together to ensure that the early years provision is of high quality. Their links with external cluster groups ensure that they keep informed about national and local developments and can moderate their work with other providers.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- The development of the college has significantly raised the aspirations and opportunities for students at Mayfield. Leaders' focus on employability, independence and adult life gives the college a very clear purpose.
- Leaders are ambitious for their students. They have very high expectations and are determined that students will experience choice and receive the widest opportunities and the very best provision so that they leave well prepared for adulthood.
- Leaders have detailed knowledge of the quality of the provision and of individual students. They work hard to continuously improve their offer. They work with other agencies to ensure that future destinations are well prepared for their students.
- Students follow a tailored curriculum based on their needs and their aspirations. A well-designed programme of pastoral support ensures students' well-being. The college works with other providers and employs specialist staff to ensure a broad range of high-quality opportunities. The students value the quality of the careers advice from college staff and external agencies.

- Students learn in a calm, well-organised and purposeful environment, thus promoting their maturity and sense of well-being. Teaching and support are good. Many students achieve nationally recognised qualifications.
- Students reflect on their learning on a regular basis. This is shared with parents. However, links are not always made to academic progress. This means that some successes or areas of future development are missed.
- All students are well prepared for their next destination. A few are successful in gaining and maintaining employment. Some continue their education in local colleges, for example in courses in art and accountancy, and a few enter supported living. The work of the college means that students have the skills and personal development to succeed.
- Leaders ensure that students are kept safe through strong procedures and vigilant staff carrying out ongoing examination of risk and opportunities based on their knowledge of the students.

School details

Unique reference number	113641
Local authority	Torbay
Inspection number	10093689

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	238
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	38
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Matt Burrell
Headteacher	June Palmer
Telephone number	01803 328 375
Website	www.mayfield-special.torbay.sch.uk
Email address	june.palmer@mayfield special.torbay.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	3–4 December 2014

Information about this school

- Mayfield School is on three sites.
- The main site caters for boys and girls up to 16 years of age with severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties.
- The Chestnut site in Brixham caters for primary-aged pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs.
- Students with severe or profound learning difficulties aged 16 to 19 attend Mayfield College in Occombe. On this site, the school has recently opened an annex to the Chestnut Centre for pupils who have been excluded from mainstream schools.

- Most pupils have EHC plans.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. Over half of pupils are eligible for pupil premium funding. This is above the national average.
- Currently, one pupil is supported by an alternative provider in agreement with the local authority.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all three sites and observed teaching and learning alongside senior leaders.
- Formal and informal discussions took place with senior leaders, including governors, staff, pupils and students, a representative of the local authority and a representative of the alternative provider.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents, including the school’s self-evaluation, minutes of meetings of the governing body, monitoring of teaching, plans for improvement and analysis of pupils’ progress, behaviour, exclusions and attendance.
- Inspectors checked documentation relating to safeguarding, including the single central record and recruitment procedures.
- Pupils’ work in different subjects was scrutinised alongside senior leaders.
- Pupils’ behaviour and supervision were observed in lessons, during breaktimes and on arrival at school.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their work informally and met with groups of pupils and students and listened to their views about their school.
- Inspectors took account of the 46 responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View, and 28 free-text responses.

Inspection team

Stephen McShane, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Martin Bragg	Ofsted Inspector
Jen Edwards	Ofsted Inspector
Chris Hummerstone	Ofsted Inspector

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