



Mayfield School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 103619
LEA Birmingham
Inspection number 276958
Inspection dates 18 January 2006 to 19 January 2006
Reporting inspector Anne Orton HMI

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

Type of school	Special	School address	Heathfield Road
School category	Community		Birmingham
Age range of pupils	2 to 19		West Midlands B19 1HJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0121 4643354
Number on roll	153	Fax number	0121 4645358
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Shirley Buzza
Date of previous inspection	31 January 2000	Headteacher	Mr Paul Jenkins

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Mayfield special school is a split site community school in Birmingham. All pupils have statements of educational need as a result of their severe or profound and multiple learning needs. Primary aged and some secondary pupils are based at the main site. Post-14 students have a separate base approximately one mile away. More than half the pupils are eligible for free school meals and three quarters are from ethnic backgrounds other than British reflecting the local community. These proportions are much greater than is found nationally. The school has gained a significant number of prestigious awards including Investors in People, Arts Mark (gold) and Charter Mark.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Mayfield is a good and improving school. Some features of its work are outstanding. Pupils enjoy coming to school and achieve well. They make outstanding progress in their personal development due to the school's exemplary provision and the excellent care, guidance and support they receive. Teaching is good overall and outstanding in the Foundation Stage and for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). The school has an innovative and exciting curriculum, based on the National Curriculum and recognised accreditation and enlivened by extensive creative opportunities. Despite their learning difficulties, all pupils participate in and benefit from experiences that enrich their lives and expand their horizons. The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher has overcome significant staffing difficulties to build and develop an effective team of managers, teachers and support staff. The school knows its strengths and has identified accurately where it needs to improve. It knows that its assessment procedures have improved since the last inspection and that attendance has improved significantly. However they recognise that more needs to be done to extend self-evaluation and develop the use of data in order to drive improvement still further. The school is well placed to secure these goals. It has a good capacity to improve and provides good value for money.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 2

What the school should do to improve further

- refine its assessment procedures so that teachers, managers and governors have a more detailed picture of the progress of particular groups of pupils
- use this information in a more analytical way to extend the school's understanding and use of self-evaluation.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Across the school, pupils make good progress overall in relation to their individual targets. This is as a result of the active and innovative teaching they receive. Pupils in the Foundation Stage and those with more significant learning difficulties make very good progress because teaching for these pupils is outstanding. By the end of year 6, pupils have gained a range of skills and understanding appropriate to their learning needs. Teachers support these small steps of progress towards understanding through the effective use of signing and visual aids. As a result, pupils make good gains in developing their self-awareness and sensory perception. Pupils' progress is further enhanced through the school's use of practical and enriching activities, often supported by outside expertise. Students in the post-14 facility also make good progress in their courses. As a result of effective curriculum planning and support, they acquire skills that equip them well for the next stage in their learning and for life after school.

The majority of students leave the school with nationally recognised qualifications. In individual cases, progress is outstanding. For example, in 2005, one student who transferred from another special school gained six GCSEs. This was because of sensitive and effective teaching in conjunction with a planned integration programme in a local mainstream school. The school makes effective use of its knowledge of how well pupils are doing to ensure they make steady progress and to set them challenging targets. Examples of pupils' work from year to year reflect this. Although the school does not currently evaluate the achievement of specific cohorts or groups, it tracks individual pupils well. For example, teachers regularly adjust targets where it appears that a pupil may achieve these earlier than planned.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils' personal development is a central focus of the school's work and has a very positive impact on their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which is excellent. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They behave very well and any challenging behaviour, which occurs because of their difficulties, is managed extremely well and disruption is minimal. Pupils' attendance is very good and has improved significantly since the last inspection. This is as a result of the school's systematic and focused work with parents. Pupils work well together in class and show a good level of independence even in the youngest classes. They participate enthusiastically in lessons and are keen to show their work to each other and to visitors. Despite their difficulties, pupils are actively involved in making a contribution to the life of the school. Through extensive art, drama and musical opportunities, especially those supported by Creative Partnerships, they also make a significant contribution in the wider community. The post-14 student committee enables pupils to have an important influence upon school life. Adopting a healthy lifestyle is strongly promoted and water is readily available throughout the school day. Healthy options are available at mealtimes. Pupils make wise decisions about their diet encouraged by such initiatives as the "healthy tuck shop" for post-14 students. Through good teaching, outstanding guidance and targeted support, pupils are being effectively equipped with the skills they will require in their future lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. It has some outstanding features particularly in relation to the creative arts, communication and personal development. Teaching in the Foundation Stage and in the PMLD classes is outstanding. In the most effective practice, teaching is lively and active. In these lessons, all staff are clear about what needs to be taught and ensure the pace and challenge are appropriate to individual needs and abilities. Where teaching is less effective, this is sometimes because the planning has not been communicated in enough detail to focus support staff on

individual needs. Pupils enjoy learning. Teachers provide a wide variety of stimulating and motivating activities, such as visits, integration opportunities and creative workshops. Pupils also learn well because they are encouraged to extend their understanding in relevant and practical ways. Teachers use demonstration and modelling well to prepare pupils for subsequent learning activities. The stimulating learning environment, together with the effective use of signing and visual aids, enables all pupils to access the curriculum appropriately. Information and communication technology (ICT) and sensory development resources are also used effectively. Outstanding relationships between adults and pupils, coupled with a positive reward and celebration ethos, support effective behaviour management. In the most successful lessons, the contribution of the well trained support assistants is excellent. The strong teamwork between teachers, support staff and therapists ensures that all pupils, including those with autism and PMLD, make good and often very good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school's curriculum is outstanding. Pupils follow appropriate subject programmes and accredited courses but within a structure that is meaningful for their needs and highly relevant to their lives. The creative arts, literacy and personal, social and health education programme is reinforced across all subject areas. Shared programmes have been developed with collegiate schools to enable best practice to be extended during inclusion opportunities. This has a very positive impact on pupils' progress. The classes for post-14 students offer particularly good learning opportunities within an age-appropriate setting. Through its links with Connexions, the school provides excellent vocational and work experience placements relevant to pupils' needs, interests and future lives. Older pupils are also supported to decide on and access relevant college courses where this is possible. All pupils have access to an extensive and exciting range of additional opportunities. The school welcomes a variety of visiting artists and musicians and enables pupils to participate in performance where this is possible. Through its involvement in Creative Partnerships, the school provides outstanding enrichment activities and highly relevant community visits, which help to improve pupils' social and life skills. These greatly contribute to improving children's self-confidence and enable them to develop increased independence.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides a very high level of care, guidance and support. Education, medical and care staff work very closely together to meet the needs of individual children including those looked after by the Local Authority. Parents are very complimentary about the service the school provides for their children. They report that links with external agencies are very good. They appreciate the support and liaison that the school provides to ensure that all pupils' needs are very effectively met, even outside school. Detailed personal care plans are monitored regularly to ensure that pupils continue to be provided with the support they need to help them to learn. The

arrangements for child protection are very well managed. Staff have a good understanding of the procedures to follow to identify children who are potentially 'at risk'. The safety of children is given a very high priority and exemplary procedures are in place to ensure that they are protected. Pupils report that they feel very safe and secure at school. Careers education and guidance for pupils provide good and relevant information. Courses at local colleges enable pupils to experience a range of vocational options. Well planned work experience provides good opportunities for pupils to learn about the world of work. Pupils are involved in, and sometimes lead in, making choices about work placement. This opportunity enhances and develops their confidence and independence. The forthcoming development of an on-site Children's Centre with its enhanced facilities will bring further opportunities to the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good overall. Through the commitment and drive of the headteacher, the school has now overcome the difficulties caused by a significant turnover in its teachers. Supported by a new and very effective senior management group, he has had significant success in building and developing a strong staff team. Morale is high and staff have very good professional development opportunities linked to school needs. The school knows itself well and has correctly identified where it needs to go next. However, rigorous self-evaluation mechanisms are still being refined. The school has appropriate systems in place for recording the progress of individual pupils. It uses data well at pupil level and staff can easily identify and challenge the progress made by individuals. The school is aware that the range of information about groups of pupils and cohorts is more limited and has suitable plans in place to develop this as a priority. Senior managers have been effective in improving the quality of teaching. Performance management is now secure and a culture of self-review and team teaching has been encouraged. This has had a positive effect in developing the skills of teachers new to the school or to special education. The school's plan to combine the different elements of monitoring is a positive move and will further support its self-evaluation development. Governance of the school is satisfactory overall. Despite difficulties in recruiting new members, governors are committed and increasingly knowledgeable about the school's strengths and weaknesses. They fulfil their responsibilities appropriately and are beginning to provide effective challenge. The school is well placed to develop further. It has a good capacity to improve and provides good value for money.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
The quality and standards in foundation stage	1	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	Yes
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	1
The behaviour of learners	1	1
The attendance of learners	2	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	1

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	2
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	3
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	Yes

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Dear Pupils Thank you for welcoming the inspectors to your school. We really enjoyed meeting you, especially the students who talked to Mr Hill about Villa Street and those who shared their lunch with Mrs Orton. This is what we liked about your school. • you are kind, friendly and well behaved. • you try hard at your lessons and learn a lot. • everyone at Mayfield takes great care of you. • they know you well, and are able to help you when you have difficulties or when you are upset. • your teachers give you exciting work. This helps you to learn what you need for when you leave school. • your school is a nice place to learn. • your work is displayed well and everyone can see how well you are doing. • your parents think the school is good too. • your headteacher and all the staff try hard to make sure that you have all that you need to succeed. We have asked them to think about a couple of things. • we want them to look at how well you are doing compared with young people in other schools like yours. • we want them to use what they find out to plan what next to do to make your school even better. Anne Orton Richard Hill (Your inspectors)