

# Mayfield School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119889
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	301659
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 June 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Atkinson

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 special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	73
6th form	17
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Cllr Pat Case CBE
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Angela Griffiths
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 April 2003
<b>School address</b>	Gloucester Road Chorley Lancashire PR7 3HN
<b>Telephone number</b>	01257 263063
<b>Fax number</b>	01257 263072

---

<b>Age group</b>	2–19
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 June 2007
<b>Inspection number</b>	301659

---

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Mayfield School is a school for students and pupils with complex learning difficulties and additional physical, sensory and emotional difficulties. A significant, and increasing, number of pupils have Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) with associated challenging behaviour identified as their predominant learning difficulty. Students and pupils come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds and a very large catchment area resulting in some pupils travelling long distances to school. The percentage of those entitled to free school meals is well above the national average. The pupils are predominantly White British. No pupils speak English as an additional language. There is a very small number of looked-after children and all students and pupils have statements of special educational need. The school achieved Specialist Schools' status for communication and interaction in 2007.

## 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 school and gives good value for money. It is well led and managed, has made mostly good improvement since its last inspection and consequently has a good capacity to improve.

Students and pupils really enjoy coming to school because they receive good care and support from adults who they trust, respect and have confidence in. As one pupil said, 'they're your friends as well as your teachers'. The leadership by the headteacher and deputy headteacher is key to the positive ethos where students and pupils feel personally valued and appreciated and staff are ambitious to provide a high quality of education. The effect is that students and pupils have high self-confidence and self-esteem and are keen to make as much progress as possible. Parents are extremely appreciative of the commitment of the dedicated staff and its impact on the progress and personalised care for their children. As one parent commented, 'I can honestly say that sending my child to Mayfield was the best decision I ever made.'

It is because of good teaching and a good curriculum that pupils achieve well in the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and in their personal and social development. They are taught very effectively and individual needs are well planned for. ASD pupils make good progress because good use is made of innovative approaches to developing their communication skills. Teachers have high expectations and are very skilled in managing challenging behaviour and complex learning needs. Teachers and support staff work closely and collaboratively to ensure that pupils' individual needs are given the utmost attention and support. Lessons are interesting because of the very good use of resources that make learning exciting and accessible to every pupil. Teachers have made a number of changes to how the progress that students and pupils make is assessed. As a result, there has been some inconsistency in the accuracy of the assessment of pupils' work and consequently the tracking of pupils' progress has not been rigorous enough. Children in the Foundation Stage have a good start to their education as their needs are quickly assessed and specific interventions are adopted to help individuals to progress well. Foundation Stage staff are able to secure a clear picture of a child's needs through their good links with external agencies and parents. Provision in the Further Education (FE) unit is satisfactory. In this phase there is room for improvement in teaching and learning because expectations are not high enough and students do not take enough responsibility for their own learning. Older students have good opportunities for work-related experiences and become more mature in their relationships with people outside of the school and more confident in taking advantage of the opportunities available to them.

Students' and pupils' personal development is good and underpins other successes. Their behaviour and the respect they have for each other are exemplary. The school day is calm, structured and purposeful and everyone feels safe and secure with an absence of bullying or feelings of isolation. This is borne out by the excellent relationships between adults, students and pupils. It is identified as a major strength by parents; a typical comment being, 'Our child is safe and secure, which is of paramount importance to us.' The attention to pupils' health is reflected in the good range of sporting opportunities available and the active promotion of healthy eating.

The curriculum is good because of the ways in which it is adapted to meet the personal needs of all students and pupils. The diversity of special needs is fully met and specialist resources and techniques are used well to extend the learning opportunities to all pupils. The school gives

very good care and support to pupils but the guidance it gives to pupils about how they progress to their next level of achievement lacks clarity.

The many strengths of the school's provision derive directly from the clear direction set by the leadership and management team. The headteacher is well supported by an able deputy headteacher and they work collaboratively to initiate and support improvements. The outcome is a school where priorities are clear, morale is high and staff are committed to further success.

## **Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form**

### **Grade: 3**

The inspection supports the school's view that the overall provision in the FE unit is satisfactory. The impact of staff changes and absences is that there has been little improvement since the last inspection. Post-16 students' achievements are satisfactory and recognised through modules in the National Skills Profile and the Accreditation for Life and Living Skills. Students are given satisfactory guidance and support in completing accredited courses but expectations of students with profound and complex learning difficulties are not high enough. Teaching is satisfactory. Planning is thorough and relationships between adults and students are good and influential in promoting good behaviour and attitudes. Teaching does not offer enough opportunities for students to take responsibility for their own learning. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Support staff are very effective in the care and support they give to students.

## **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in the FE unit.
- Ensure that teachers use assessment information to provide work that challenges pupils and enables them to reach their next steps in learning.
- Rigorously track the progress of pupils to ensure that pupils make the progress of which they are capable.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 3**

Achievement is good. In the Foundation Stage, children have a good start and make quick progress towards their individual targets. Their communication and personal and social skills develop rapidly and they acquire the right attitudes and behaviour that enable them to learn. Pupils from Years 1 to 11 make good progress from their starting points. They achieve well in English, mathematics and personal and social skills. Progress is recorded using a nationally recognised 'small step' approach but insufficient attention is paid to analysing the rate of progress and there is some inconsistency in the accuracy of assessments. Students in the FE unit make good progress in their personal development, particularly in their economic well-being, because of the positive experiences in supported work-related placements.

Pupils achieve well in other subjects; such as, design and technology, music and art because of the innovative ways in which these subjects are taught. They also achieve well in physical education where there is a strong emphasis on promoting confidence in water, participating in sporting activities and exercising regularly. Pupils with complex communication and learning difficulties make good progress in communication and literacy skills. They make effective use of alternative means of communication, including the picture exchange system and symbol writing. Pupils with the most profound difficulties make good progress, particularly when taught

using specialist techniques that use sensory experiences, symbols and pictures to structure their learning activities.

## **Personal development and well-being**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Students and pupils make good progress in their personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and this is a significant strength of the school. The school's very positive and supportive ethos is underpinned with well established routines, clear boundaries and a system of rewards. This leads to excellent behaviour. Adults are very effective in creating an atmosphere where students and pupils feel secure, safe and relaxed and consequently enjoy coming to school and work to the best of their ability. Attendance is good and above the national average and not surprising as one parent commented, 'My daughter would attend seven days a week if she could.' Students and pupils eat healthily at school and through food technology lessons develop an understanding of how to make appropriate choices. Everyone has access to good opportunities to take physical exercise, making excellent use of community resources and local professional coaches. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Students and pupils make a really positive contribution to the school's community through its excellent links with primary and secondary schools and active involvement in fundraising. Students in the FE unit are given work experience opportunities and, as a result, are well prepared to move on to further education or training.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good for pupils from the Foundation Stage to Year 11 and satisfactory in the FE unit. Teachers and support staff have very good relationships with pupils and use a wide variety of approaches to engage and motivate them. As a result, pupils enjoy lessons and work hard to achieve their individual targets. Lessons are well planned and structured and good use is made of imaginative resources to bring learning alive and make it accessible to all. There are high expectations of behaviour and teachers and support staff work very effectively as a team to ensure that pupils receive sufficient support to achieve the intended outcomes. Classrooms are well organised and routines are well established resulting in a good ethos for learning where pupils feel secure and challenged. A significant strength is how teachers use alternative methods of communication to question pupils and promote independence in their learning. However, in the FE unit there is a tendency for the staff to lead too strongly and students are not given enough independence with their learning.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

The curriculum is of good quality and meets statutory requirements. Personal, social and health education is a key element and helps pupils to live healthier and safer lives and be included in

as wide a range of activities as possible. There is a wealth of opportunities for pupils to participate in; for example, in music, physical education and visits to the community. The good opportunities for work experience are enormously influential in motivating students, widening their horizons and raising their aspirations with the effect that there is a growing confidence and desire to experiment in new activities. Regular visitors to the school create an air of excitement among pupils and extend learning. Good use is made of specialist learning techniques and teaching assistants in ensuring that individuals experience a curriculum that is personal to their specific needs.

## **Care, guidance and support**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

The school provides very good care and support and parents feel their children's personal development needs are extremely well catered for. Arrangements to safeguard students and pupils are very thorough and risk assessments are always conducted to ensure that there is appropriate access to the available activities and experiences. This means that the most vulnerable or at risk pupils are well supported and given equality of opportunity. Child protection arrangements and those to ensure everyone's health, welfare and safety are very securely in place. The school liaises very closely with parents, who have the utmost respect for its work. Links with other agencies are very good and as a result pupils and their families feel they are given good advice and support. The assessment of pupils' achievements is inconsistent because of the changes that have taken place and limited opportunities to moderate these assessments. As a result, pupils do not always receive clear enough guidance about what they need to do to move to the next step in their learning.

## **Leadership and management**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and deputy headteacher lead the school with drive, energy and enthusiasm. Their clear vision is fully shared by the leadership team and all staff. As a result, there is a very positive ethos where staff are keen to implement innovative approaches to teaching, assessment and communicating with ASD pupils. The new leadership group work very well as a team and are effectively addressing the school's priorities. This results in a stronger focus on the importance of tracking pupils' achievements and analysing performance data to further improve the opportunities and outcomes for all pupils. Middle leaders have quickly grasped the importance of these initiatives and are keen to implement them. Governance is good. Governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses well and carefully monitor the finances. The morale of the staff is high and professional development opportunities are excellent, resulting in the centre's good capacity to improve.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).



## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

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

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	2

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

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	No
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

---

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

14 June 2007

Dear Pupils and Students

Inspection of Mayfield School, Chorley, PR7 3HN

Thank you very much for making me so welcome when I came to visit your school. I was very impressed by your behaviour and attitudes towards school. You all seemed to enjoy school so much and were rightly very proud of your achievements. I soon discovered from my discussions with you that you are an ambitious group of young people who want to do your very best. I know that the staff at the school also want you to be successful and they are the main reason that you have such a good time at school. I agree with you that you go to a great school where learning is fun and you have so many interesting things to do during the day and in school clubs. Your school is good because:

- the staff work very well as a team to look after you
- you have lots of opportunities to do interesting things
- you are expected to work hard and you do!
- the school is well led and managed.

I have discussed with the headteacher what the school can do to get even better and we agreed that it is very important that the provision in the FE unit needs to get better, that staff assess your progress accurately and that the school tracks your progress carefully so that they are sure you are achieving what you are capable of.

However, the most important thing is that you continue to be as positive and enthusiastic as you were last week. You all made me realise what can be achieved through hard work and determination.

Thank you and best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

John Atkinson

Lead Inspector