

# Warmley Park School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109403
<b>Local Authority</b>	South Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	309968
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 September 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Sarah Mascall

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	101
6th form	8
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Patricia O'Driscoll
<b>Headteacher</b>	Steve Morris
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 June 2003
<b>School address</b>	Tower Road North Warmley Bristol BS30 8XL
<b>Telephone number</b>	01454 867272
<b>Fax number</b>	01454 867273

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<b>Age group</b>	3–19
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Warmley Park is a special school for pupils with severe and profound learning difficulties, and also has a number of pupils with autistic spectrum disorders (ASD). The majority of pupils come from the local authority of South Gloucestershire, although a few are from out of the county. The majority of pupils are White British. A very small number come from other ethnic backgrounds where the first language is not English.

A new extension to the school has just been built. It is planned to cater for a wider range of pupils with ASD but was not part of the inspection as it is still being developed and resourced.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Warmley Park is a good school with outstanding features, such as the very high level of care, support and guidance. Parents greatly value this aspect and the vast majority have nothing but praise for the support of staff. The school has established excellent links with parents, ensuring that they know what is happening in school and providing training and workshops to enable them to help their children at home. The very effective links with outside agencies support pupils' care and welfare by enabling their physical and medical needs to be met very well. Very effective care and guidance ensure that pupils make excellent progress in their personal development. A particular strength is in the way they develop into confident, sensible young adults who have a very good sense of self-worth.

Parents comment on how much their children like school and this is reflected by the enthusiasm of pupils when they talk about all the exciting things they do. This is because teaching is good and the commitment and enjoyment of teachers are very evident. The good curriculum contributes to the positive learning environment. It is particularly effective for older pupils and enables them to develop a very good understanding of the world of work. The curriculum for primary-aged pupils is not as well balanced because it is not sufficiently focused on allocating time to numeracy. This has had an impact on the progress pupils make in certain aspects of mathematics, which is satisfactory rather than good.

Although pupils' standards are well below national expectations because of their special needs, their achievements overall are good. Progress for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is good, and it is excellent for those in Years 7 to 11. In the Foundation Stage, an excellent understanding of children's needs, supported by very detailed planning, enables children to get off to a flying start. Progress for students in post-16 is good and they gain good accreditation in recognition of their achievements. The school, though, has recognised that its current systems do not fully show the progress post-16 students make.

A particular strength of the school lies in its very high expectations for pupils, and much of this is down to the good leadership and management of the school. Senior leaders are committed to continual improvement and ensuring the best for the pupils. This is reflected in the fact that although compared to other special schools nationally pupils are attaining very well, the school has put in place effective systems for judging the progress pupils make from when they start school to when they finish Year 11. This has empowered staff to focus on enabling all pupils, regardless of their special needs, to make the best possible progress. Where this is not the case, action is taken; for example, strategies to improve progress for those in Years 1 to 6 further are already in place, although it is too early to judge their impact. The good use of information the school gathers on pupils' progress has enabled it to have an effective understanding of its strengths and areas for improvement.

## Effectiveness of the sixth form

### Grade: 2

Students' good achievements are a result of the well-planned curriculum, which ensures that they have a good range of opportunities to develop independent life skills. As a result, they are well prepared for life after school and most go on to further education. Students gain good passes in accreditation such as ALL (Accreditation for Life and Living), and the new post-16 manager is appropriately looking to extend and develop the range of accreditation further.

Students respond very well to the different environment and to the fact that they are treated as young adults. Breaktimes and lunchtimes are spent chatting and reading magazines and there are long conversations about the recent events in various soap operas! Teaching is good and activities are well matched to students' needs. At times the limited resources restrict the range of activities, but this is being addressed by the new manager. Leadership and management are effective and there is a good focus on improving provision further. At present, though, there is not an effective system for checking the progress the students make whilst in post-16. This has prevented the school from accurately judging the progress students make from when they start in post-16 to when they leave.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 1**

Excellent leadership and management have led to children making outstanding progress. The curriculum is very well matched to the wide range of needs of the children and is well supported by an excellent range of resources and facilities. Teaching is extremely effective and a very good knowledge and understanding of the special needs of the children together with excellent recording systems enable staff to ensure that activities are appropriate and build upon children's skills. The links with parents are excellent and parents commented on how understanding staff were in easing them and their children into school life. Activities such as a story-reading day, when parents worked with staff in ways of helping their children to enjoy books, support children's learning extremely well.

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

- Improve the systems for assessing the progress post-16 students make over time so that the school can clearly show the effectiveness of the post-16 department.
- Ensure that the curriculum for primary-aged pupils is better balanced so that more time is allocated to the teaching of numeracy.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 2**

Standards are well below average but pupils, regardless of their special needs, make good progress. Those with severe learning difficulties make excellent progress whilst pupils within the main school on the autistic spectrum and those with profound learning difficulties make good progress. It is too early yet to assess the progress of those pupils in the newly established ASD unit.

Although there is a varied picture for achievement across the school, it is never less than good. Achievement in Years 1 to 6 is good overall and pupils progress well in many aspects of their work. Initiatives introduced last year to improve reading skills have already had a positive impact and progress is being made in improving pupils' writing skills. Pupils in Years 7 to 11 make vast improvements in their achievements, particularly in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. There is a very strong emphasis on developing pupils' communication skills and pupils make very good progress both in their verbal communication and through the use of signing and communication aids. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory in information and communication technology (ICT) and action has already been taken to improve achievements and ensure that the subject is taught discretely for older pupils.

## Personal development and well-being

**Grade: 1**

**Grade for sixth form: 1**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. The youngest children quickly gain confidence and feel safe in their new environment. This enables them to develop into friendly, sociable people who are keen to talk and share their ideas. Parents comment on how much their children enjoy school, and this is reflected in the pupils' cheerful manner and smiling faces. Pupils' attendance compares favourably with other local special schools. Because of these very positive features, the school is a very harmonious place where there is plenty of laughter. Pupils show considerable care for each other, helping each other at meal times and celebrating each other's successes. Their behaviour is very good and although there have been a few incidents of exclusion in the past, pupils have responded well to the new behaviour strategies and there have been no incidents recently. Pupils are full of enthusiasm for all the sporting activities and are very aware of how to lead healthy lifestyles. They like the school lunches and comment on how healthy the food is. The school council is very active in making changes and feels very involved. It is, however, limited to the secondary and post-16 pupils, which means younger pupils do not have any formal opportunities to contribute to school life. Pupils gain considerably from all the opportunities to experience work placements and college life. Their social skills and ability to understand what is appropriate and what is not ensure that they are extremely well prepared for life when they leave school.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

There are common threads in the quality of teaching that ensure that it is consistently effective. The very good links with outside agencies together with a high level of training in specific areas such as in communication skills ensure that staff are extremely knowledgeable about pupils' special needs. This enables them to support pupils extremely well. All staff use praise effectively to encourage pupils and give them confidence to attempt new challenges. Teachers ensure that pupils know how to behave and are firm in encouraging pupils to be aware of what is acceptable behaviour. ICT, including interactive whiteboards, is now used very well in supporting learning. For example, staff record activities during lessons using digital cameras and the pictures are shared with pupils at the ends of lessons to recap and develop their learning. Pupils take a great deal of pleasure from this and because staff download the pictures onto a CD to send home, parents have a good understanding of their children's learning.

The most effective teaching is in the secondary department, where it is very enthusiastic and there is a very good focus on making lessons practical and interesting. An excellent maths lesson focusing on number work involved pupils in physical activities, and they were encouraged to move around the class when looking for objects displaying numbers. Occasionally teachers do not make the best use of resources. For example, when reading a story to a primary-aged group of pupils, a small book was used that was difficult for pupils to see and there were no visual clues to support their reading skills. As a result, pupils became disinterested and fractious.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

The curriculum has a number of strengths, but particularly its focus on improving literacy and communication skills. This has resulted in pupils making good and often excellent progress in these areas. Planning for secondary-aged pupils is very good and there is a wide range of activities that are age appropriate and enable pupils to develop their skills. Particular attention is paid to providing pupils with the ability to cope in college settings and in the place of work, and this prepares them very well for their next stage of learning. Whilst the curriculum for primary-aged pupils is generally good, it is not well balanced for mathematics and insufficient time has been given to this subject. The range of enrichment activities is very good, especially for secondary-aged pupils, who greatly appreciate all the opportunities they have to participate in clubs.

## **Care, guidance and support**

**Grade: 1**

**Grade for sixth form: 1**

Care and guidance for pupils are given considerable priority by the school. Links with outside agencies and specialists support pupils extremely well and ensure that the quality of care is very high. The school has employed some of its own specialists to ensure pupils get the best possible care and provides very good quality support to enhance communication. Risk assessments are of high quality and these, together with very detailed care plans, ensure pupils' welfare is very good. Child protection procedures and arrangements for the vetting of staff are robust. There are excellent procedures in place to support pupils in making decisions about their future education. This is effectively supported through successful links with local colleges and the Connexions service.

Pupils are involved in their individual education plans and are very aware that they have targets for literacy and numeracy. They are kept well informed about what they learn through the progression boards displayed in the corridors showing how they extend their skills, and they are given constant feedback by staff about how well they are doing and how they could improve. Older pupils set their own targets; for instance, one has decided he wants to learn how a camera works.

## **Leadership and management**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

The school is very well led by the headteacher, who is effectively supported by his leadership team. Senior leaders take an active part in improving aspects of provision and this is very evident in the high quality work on improving assessment. There is a commitment to bring out the best, not only in pupils but also in staff. As a result, the school's capacity to improve is good. There are very good systems for monitoring and improving teaching and supportive action is taken to enable all staff to improve their practice. The information concerning pupils' progress is analysed well and has provided the school with a clear picture about its strengths. Areas for

development inform school improvement planning and this enables the school to deal effectively with any issues. Whilst the school sets itself challenging targets, it has recognised that these could be linked more closely to the clear criteria it has established for what constitutes good and better progress. Some good work has been done in looking at the progress of different groups, such as by gender, but, as is the nature of this school, it has recognised that this could be improved further, especially for post-16 students. Governors play an active role in the school and minutes of meetings show that they provide a good level of challenge.



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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1	
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	2
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	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	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	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
How well learners enjoy their education	1	
The attendance of learners	2	
The behaviour of learners	1	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	

### 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?	2	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	1

<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	2
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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you very much for making us feel so welcome. We very much enjoyed meeting you and finding out about your school.

We feel your school is a good school. These are the things we liked best:

- Your headteacher and the senior staff work very hard to make sure you all achieve as well as possible.
- You make excellent progress in your personal development, and especially in your social skills.
- The school is excellent at ensuring that you are safe and well looked after.
- The school works very closely with your parents and with people who can help you.
- The planning for what you learn is good. It is excellent for the older pupils because it gets them ready for leaving school.
- Teaching is good and this helps you to make good progress in your learning.
- We were very impressed with the student council, but we wondered if you could find better ways to involve the younger pupils in the council.

The things we think it could do better are:

- Making sure that primary-aged pupils do enough work on numeracy.
- Making sure that teachers know how much progress the students make whilst they are in post-16.

We wish you all the best for the future.

15 September 2007



Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Warmley Park School, Warmley, Bristol BS30 8XL**

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The things we think it could do better are:

- Making sure that primary-aged pupils do enough work on numeracy.
- Making sure that teachers know how much progress the students make whilst they are in post-16.

We wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Mascall (lead inspector) and Richard Hill