

# Baytree School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109409
<b>Local Authority</b>	North Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	309971
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 January 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Judith Goodchild

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
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	68
6th form	13
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ann Grosvenor
<b>Headteacher</b>	Phil McKinnie
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 May 2004
<b>School address</b>	The Campus Highlands Lane Weston-super-Mare BS24 7DX
<b>Telephone number</b>	01934 427555
<b>Fax number</b>	01934 625567

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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

Since its previous inspection, the school has moved onto a campus that it shares with a primary school and a community learning centre. The school caters for pupils with severe learning difficulties, profound and multiple learning difficulties and, since the previous inspection, there has been an increase in the number of pupils with autistic spectrum disorder, complex medical needs and those who have attained National Curriculum Levels 1 and 2. A new headteacher took up post in January 2008.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Baytree School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Its key strength lies in the strong systems for care and welfare that enable the pupils to feel safe in school and to make good progress in their personal development. These aspects are much valued by parents and they speak highly of the standard of care and support they and their children have received from staff. Sharing a campus with a primary school gives pupils the opportunity to share both playtimes and lessons. This contributes significantly towards the development of their social skills.

Pupils clearly enjoy school and this is very evident from their happy, smiling faces. They are enthusiastic about some aspects of school and are keen to be involved in sporting activities, some of which they share with local secondary schools. Their behaviour is good and their positive attitudes are reflected in their concentration and hard work in lessons. However, at times they become restless and lose interest in learning when teaching is not matched to their individual ability. Teaching is satisfactory overall but varies across the school, and is most effective where lessons are practical and there are clear learning objectives for each pupil. At present, however, there are weaknesses in the setting of targets for pupils to enable them to make the progress they should. As a result, pupils are not always challenged in their learning and their achievements are satisfactory rather than good. For those children who start in the Foundation Stage, progress is good. They benefit from teachers' good understanding of their special needs and make particularly good progress in their personal development.

Whilst the curriculum is satisfactory, the school has taken good action in reviewing it and is putting in place changes to ensure it is better matched to pupils' needs. This is intended to enable pupils to learn in a more systematic way that will build upon their experience and skills. Time during the day is not always used effectively and this has had an impact on the progress pupils have made. Quick action is being taken to address this through the new curricular planning structure.

The school has been through a period of change and the new headteacher has worked hard to get to know the school in a very short period of time. The school recognises that it has not been effective in checking all aspects of its work, particularly concerning the progress that pupils are making. As a result, it has not previously had a sufficiently clear understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. This is reflected in the school's overly positive view of its effectiveness. The headteacher, however, has a more realistic view and has already put in place a development plan that recognises the school's key strengths as well as the areas that need to be developed. Teachers comment that they feel empowered to move the school forward and are clearly committed to bringing about improvements.

### Effectiveness of the sixth form

#### Grade: 3

Students are happy and social relationships are good. Relationships with staff are supportive and students are willing to discuss any areas of concern with them. Teaching overall is satisfactory but on occasions, time is wasted and teaching assistants are not deployed effectively, with the result that students lose interest and concentration. The curriculum is relevant for post-16 students in that it supports the development of life skills that will prepare students well for life beyond school. Systems for recording progress are variable. Students gain external

accreditations for courses and opportunities to follow those of a vocational nature are satisfactory. The management review currently being undertaken will allocate responsibility for managing the post-16 provision. At present, post-16 students share classes with pupils in Years 10 and 11. This impedes their development as young adults; an area for development that was identified at the previous inspection.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children get off to a good start in Class 1 and make good progress. Although they are taught with pupils in Years 1 and 2, careful planning of what they should learn enables them to achieve well. They make particularly good progress in their personal development, gaining effective skills in looking after themselves and developing independence. Children benefit from good teaching. A strength of teaching is the good use of communication, children are encouraged to listen but their understanding is supported by the good use of sign and symbols. Staff have high expectations of the children and this is evident in how quickly they adapt to the structures of the classroom. Leadership and management of the provision are good. There is a good vision to extend the provision to create a discrete nursery, and the school is aware that resources are not yet sufficiently adapted and developed to meet the needs of a growing number of Foundation Stage children. This is particularly the case for outdoor accommodation to enable children to have access to toys such as bikes and to play outside when ever possible.

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

- implement recent plans to extend and develop the curriculum to ensure that pupils' skills are developed in a consistent way over time and best use is made of teaching time
- improve assessment procedures to enable teachers to set challenging targets so that pupils make the progress they are capable of
- develop the skills of the management team in monitoring the work of the school so that they have a better understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. A small proportion of schools where overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which has areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

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

Standards are exceptionally low because of pupils' learning difficulties, but their achievements are satisfactory overall. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 generally get off to a good start and benefit from well-focused teaching. This, however, is not consistent throughout the school and the pace of progress slows and is satisfactory rather than good. There are contributory factors to this. Pupils' targets are very variable and not always sufficiently challenging to enable them to make the progress expected of them. Where pupils are set challenging targets, they make good progress. This is often evident in their personal, health and social education, where many achieve well. Time during the day is not always well used. As a result, opportunities are missed to extend pupils' skills.

The school has collected considerable information about pupils' achievements but it has not used this effectively to enable it to check whether pupils are making good enough progress or to identify whether there is any difference in the progress of the different groups of pupils.

The achievement of post-16 students is satisfactory. They gain accreditations for courses based in school and the vocational courses they follow. As in the main school, progress is not systematically recorded or analysed to check that it is good enough.

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

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

The enjoyment of pupils in coming to school is reflected in their good attendance and good behaviour in lessons. They concentrate well and listen attentively when stimulated and challenged to learn. They enjoy opportunities to work together and have good relationships with each other. They get on well with staff, and are happy to approach staff if they have any concerns. The school provides a safe and caring environment for pupils. They are aware of the need to stay healthy and many choose healthy food such as fresh fruit at break times. Pupils take part with evident enjoyment in physical activities such as dance club, football and Rebound.

The spiritual, social, moral and cultural development of pupils is good. The school has recognised the need to develop more opportunities for pupils to accept responsibility within the school community and has recently introduced a school council. Pupils' multicultural awareness is developed in a variety of ways such as visits to places of worship, an Indian Week with the primary school and studying other countries. Integration opportunities help to develop pupils' social skills and confidence through shared playtimes and lessons with local schools. For example, boys attend dance classes and other pupils share games lessons with local secondary schools. Pupils benefit from a wide range of visits to extend their knowledge of the wider community. The development of pupils' skills to support their future economic well-being is satisfactory overall. In Years 10 and 11, there is no systematic planning for the consistent development of pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

**Grade: 3**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

Where teaching is most effective, such as in the classes for the youngest pupils, there is a good understanding of pupils' special needs. For these pupils, teaching is often lively and lessons are made as practical as possible. The good use of communication strategies in several classes supports pupils' learning well. Teachers have gained confidence in the use of ICT and where this is used well, for example in a good lesson seen on data handling for pupils in Years 8 and 9, pupils are fully involved and enjoy the work they do. The quality of planning varies across the school. In lessons such as those for Years 8 and 9, expectations are high and pupils challenged by the task. In other lessons, however, planning is not always focused on the progress of individuals. It does not often highlight how teaching assistants can support pupils' learning or the expectations of what each pupil will achieve by the end of the lesson. In a few lessons, the pace of learning is slow and, for example in a lesson observed for a small group of post-16 students, the gains from the activity were very limited and unclear. At times like this, pupils lose interest quickly and younger pupils often require encouragement to get back on task.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

**Grade: 3**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

At present, the school has put in place a temporary curriculum that provides pupils with an adequate range of experiences while it undertakes a full review of its curriculum. It has recognised that the curriculum it has offered was not fully meeting the needs of all its pupils and that the use of time has not been effective. A clear policy statement and an identification of the programmes pupils will follow have already been established. Planning for the new curriculum for Years 1 to 9 will ensure that it is in place by September 2008 at the latest. It will be focused on teaching through a more thematic approach so that pupils develop a wider range of skills and experiences that are often linked to practical activities. The curriculum for Years 10 and 11 is also in the process of being refined. At present, it is not sufficiently different from the post-16 curriculum and does not enable pupils to develop their skills consistently, particularly the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT. A wider range of accreditation is now available for pupils in Year 11 and for post-16 students, in response to the previous inspection report. The post-16 curriculum is appropriately based on developing life skills that will support students in their life after school. However, opportunities for older students to follow vocational courses are limited to one provider and currently there are no links with further education colleges.

The use of time during the day is very variable and work has already started on planning more effectively to ensure that best use is made of the school day. Timetables reflect a number of activities linked to improving pupils' personal skills but there is, at present, insufficient planning to ensure that staff build upon pupils' experiences, and the school has no system for recording how effective these sessions are.

## **Care, guidance and support**

**Grade: 3**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

The care and welfare of pupils is of a high standard. Staff have an in-depth knowledge of pupils' medical and personal needs and have the relevant training so they have the skills to meet them. There are good partnerships with outside agencies that ensure that the diverse needs of pupils are met through a range of therapies. Parents are very happy with the school and the standard of care it provides. The induction of pupils into the school is very good and ensures that they settle quickly and easily. The arrangements for transition planning are good, incorporating appropriate careers advice, and increasingly involve pupils in choosing their own options. Safeguarding procedures are rigorous and secure. Health and safety is well managed.

Whilst the support for pupils' welfare is effective, guidance to enable pupils to make the best possible progress in their learning is less effective. Systems for assessing the progress of pupils are not fully developed. Although academic targets are set, they are not always sufficiently well focused to ensure that pupils consistently develop their skills. Whilst most individual education plans are completed in detail with clear teaching strategies, this is not the case for all pupils in Years 10 and 11 or post-16 students.

## Leadership and management

**Grade: 3**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

The new headteacher has a clear vision for the future of the school that is shared by staff and governors. He has started the process of change by putting in place an interim school improvement plan to address areas he has quickly identified for development, such as curriculum and assessment. He has rightly recognised the need to review the management structure to ensure that all staff are more effective in the monitoring and evaluation of the performance of the school. At present, managers do not make sufficient use of all the data they have collected in order to check that pupils are making the progress that they should. Nor do they have a sufficiently good overview of aspects of the school such as the quality of individual education plans and the provision of challenging targets for pupils.

Since the last inspection, the school has made satisfactory progress and addressed nearly all the key issues successfully. For example, there has been an increase in accreditation opportunities for pupils in Year 11. However, the school has not been effective in establishing a separate post-16 group and this hampers their development as young adults.

The majority of the governors have only recently been appointed. They are supportive of the headteacher and are keen to become more involved in the monitoring of the work of the school as their expertise grows. They have a good understanding of the finances of the school and meet their statutory obligations.

Currently there is no substantive post directly responsible for the management of the post-16 provision. Part of the management review being undertaken by the headteacher will address this issue.



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## Annex A

## 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?	3	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	No
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2	
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	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	3	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	
How well learners enjoy their education	2	
The attendance of learners	2	
The behaviour of learners	2	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	

### The quality of provision

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

<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>	3	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	4	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	
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**

I am writing to let you know how much we enjoyed coming to visit your school. Thank you for making us feel so welcome and helping us during the school's inspection. Your school is doing a satisfactory job. Your new headteacher has worked hard since the beginning of term to identify what the school does well and what it needs to do to improve. Here are the main points:

- your achievement as you move through the school is satisfactory overall, although children in the Foundation Stage make good progress
- your personal development is good and you feel safe and secure at school
- you have a satisfactory curriculum and the headteacher and staff are working hard to make work and activities even better in the future
- the teaching that you receive is satisfactory, and in some cases good
- you have opportunities to share lessons and play with children from other schools.

To make your school even better, we think that assessment of your work could be better so that you can make even more progress, and your skills can be consistently developed over the time you are in the school. Staff who have senior positions in your school are right to look at ways they can improve their skills so they can help all of your teachers to make things even better for your learning.

Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly when we came to see you. You can help too by carrying on working hard as you have been doing and continuing to behave well.



30 January 2008

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Baytree Special School, Weston-super-Mare, BS24 7DX**

I am writing to let you know how much we enjoyed coming to visit your school. Thank you for making us feel so welcome and helping us during the school's inspection. Your school is doing a satisfactory job. Your new headteacher has worked hard since the beginning of term to identify what the school does well and what it needs to do to improve. Here are the main points:

- your achievement as you move through the school is satisfactory overall, although children in the Foundation Stage make good progress
- your personal development is good and you feel safe and secure at school
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Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly when we came to see you. You can help too by carrying on working hard as you have been doing and continuing to behave well.

Judith Goodchild  
Lead Inspector