

Mayfield School

Moor Lane, Watcombe, Torquay TQ2 8NH

Inspection dates

3–4 December 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Outstanding	1
Sixth form provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and other leaders have high expectations for all the pupils.
- Leaders, including members of the governing body, provide effective training for staff and rigorous checking of learning. As a result, pupils achieve well and make good progress.
- Children in the early years provision enjoy their activities and achieve outstandingly well.
- Pupils in the new off-site Chestnut Unit have made a good start and most are beginning to improve their behaviour and progress.
- Leaders manage the budget well. They ensure that additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils is spent for their benefit. As a result, these pupils achieve as well as, and sometimes better than, their classmates in English and mathematics.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about their children's progress.
- The range of subjects and additional therapies supports the learning and personal development of pupils well.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively, so pupils improve their awareness of the wider world. This leads to pupils' improving their independence, enjoyment and personal skills.
- Pupils behave well in and around the school. They say they feel safe at school. The school's arrangements to keep them safe and secure are effective.
- Teaching across the school is typically good. Most tasks are effectively planned and meet pupils' individual needs well, so that pupils make good progress. Relationships in lessons are very strong.
- The sixth form is good. Students have opportunities to gain relevant qualifications that will support their futures.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A few pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties at Key Stage 4 do not always achieve as well as they should, because the tasks set are sometimes too difficult.
- Not all pupils in the off-site unit complete enough tasks in their lessons, so that their progress dips.
- Sixth form students are unsure about e-safety procedures and do not know where to find out about them.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 13 lessons, including some at the off-site Chestnut Unit. All lessons were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- The inspectors talked to several pupils, and observed a few reading their symbols, words or books.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the senior management team, subject leaders, the sixth form leader, the leader in charge of the Chestnut Unit, and the Chair of the Governing Body. A telephone conversation was held with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at a number of documents. These included the school's own information about pupils' progress, planning and monitoring documents, safeguarding information and pupils' work.
- Inspectors took account of the 11 responses to the Ofsted online survey (Parent View) and two letters sent to them by parents. Inspectors also took account of the 55 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Denise Morris, Lead Inspector

Additional Inspector

Susan Smith

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Since its previous inspection Mayfield School has changed its designation. It still caters for all-age boys and girls with severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties. However, it also caters for 22 primary-aged pupils with behaviour, emotional and social difficulties, based at the offsite Chestnut Unit at Brixham. There is full-time early years provision for children from the age of two.
- A few pupils have an autistic spectrum disorders and a few have sensory and/or physical disability. Most pupils have a statement for their learning difficulties.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is very low, and a very few pupils come from families who speak English as an additional language.
- Around a third of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which is about average. This is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or those children who are looked after by a local authority.
- The sixth form students have opportunities to attend the nearby Combe Pafford School to undertake work-related courses.
- Pupils come from all parts of Torbay and a few come from adjacent authorities. They all travel to school in buses or taxis.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase e-safety preparation for all secondary-aged pupils and ensure that the display of e-safety guidance is available in word and symbol form.
- Ensure that a few pupils in the Chestnut Unit, and the least able pupils at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form, speed up their progress, by teachers:
 - ensuring that tasks are set at the right level to meet their needs
 - providing clear explanations of what is expected of them
 - checking pupils' tasks regularly to make sure pupils are engaged and completing enough work in the time allowed.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders have successfully incorporated the new offsite unit fully into the life of the school. They have worked effectively to ensure that almost all pupils maintain good levels of progress, despite the high level of disruption caused by the changes. The headteacher, together with governors, other leaders and staff, has improved provision and ensured good achievement by improving the quality of teaching.
- Leaders and managers, including middle leaders, have high expectations of staff and students. Middle leaders have developed the curriculum so that it is well-balanced, providing good quality education, health and care. The curriculum is linked closely to most pupils' individual needs, ensuring that the pupils enjoy their tasks.
- Leaders and governors model good professional standards in their work. They have created a positive atmosphere for learning in which pupils thrive. Leaders are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Policies are linked closely to the needs of pupils, ensuring that the vast majority make at least good progress in literacy and numeracy.
- The wide range of subjects provided engages most pupils' interests. It also contributes well to their academic achievements, physical skills and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As a result of effective teaching, pupils behave well and their learning flourishes. Just occasionally, tasks are too difficult for the least able pupils in the class. This is particularly so at Key Stage 4, where there are also some sixth formers and, as a result, the learning of the least able pupils dips
- Systems for checking pupils' progress are effective in enabling leaders to check pupils' progress regularly. This ensures any pupil falling behind is helped to improve quickly.
- Pupils eligible for additional government funding achieve as well other pupils, and sometimes better, because of the additional support and therapies they receive. The school does not receive any other additional funding.
- Careers guidance for pupils in Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form is effective and linked well to pupils' work-related studies.
- Parents who responded to the on-line questionnaire are extremely pleased with the all aspects of the school's work. A few parents who wrote to the inspectors expressed their delight at the way the school looks after their children and helps them to improve.
- Partnerships with local schools are strong. Close links with Combe Pafford School help sixth formers to undertake, for example, a wide range of work-related courses which helps them prepare for their futures.
- Leaders monitor the progress, attendance and behaviour of all pupils rigorously.
- Procedures for setting targets for teachers are fully established. Leaders ensure that improvements in salaries are not awarded unless staff have met their targets, based on their pupils' progress. Regular monitoring of learning by leaders, along with and support from speech, language and physical therapists has led to teachers' skills improving.
- Leaders ensure that all staff have regular training in the safeguarding of students. Courses in manual handling and in the use of communication aids ensure consistent practice in all areas of the school.
- The experiences offered by the school support British values and contribute well to pupils' preparation for life in modern Britain. For example, the pupils have many opportunities to visit places of interest further afield and the local shops.
- Equality of opportunity is ensured for all pupils at the school through the study of different faiths and cultures, ensuring that there is no discrimination of any kind.
- Older pupils have even greater opportunities to learn about different cultures, such as a recent trip to China by four pupils with some staff. The school also has close links with a school in Africa.
- The school receives good guidance from the local authority, who is very supportive of the school's work and has guided them well in the development of the Chestnut Unit. Links with the wider community are good.
- Leadership of the Chestnut Unit is relatively new, but a good start has been made in ensuring that pupils attend school regularly and and that most of them now make at least the progress expected of them.
- Safeguarding procedures meet current requirements on both school sites. Safety checks are undertaken regularly and whole staff training is rigorous. Leaders ensure that staff are able to identify any students at risk of harm through high quality, frequent training.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body has recently increased its skills through additional training and provides good

challenge to leaders. Members are regularly involved in checking the quality of teaching and learning and were fully involved in the decision to incorporate the new Chestnut Unit into the school. Members visit the school and the unit regularly, and receive regular reports from staff and leaders about pupils' achievements. They fully understand the information about pupils' achievements and how it compares with other similar special schools. Governors manage the finances available to the school well, so additional government funding is used to help pupils who are eligible to receive it. This funding is used well to provide additional support, so that these pupils achieve at least as well as their classmates. Governors ensure that the best teachers and staff are rewarded. They know the importance of setting targets for teachers.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils in the main school behave well in lessons and show positive attitudes to learning.
- Pupils in the off-site unit are placed there by the local authority because of their challenging behaviours, and social and emotional difficulties. Once at the unit they gradually settle and begin to respond to the rewards and sanctions offered. Behaviour is sometimes volatile, but records show it is improving rapidly.
- Behaviour and incident logs are fully in place and up to date. There have been no permanent or fixed-term exclusions on the Mayfield site in the past two years. On the Chestnut Unit site, there has been a small number of fixed term exclusions in the past year, but records show that these are decreasing.
- Pupils understand what bullying is. A few pupils at Mayfield said they did not think there was bullying at the school. Pupils spoken to said they know what to do if bullied. There is no evidence of bullying at the unit.
- Pupils' mainly positive behaviour and attitudes are fostered well by the good range of learning and high quality support. Case studies show good evidence of improvements to behaviour over time.
- Pupils' personal development is promoted well. Leaders promote tolerance for all pupils. This helps them to be well prepared for life in modern Britain through their study of different faiths, cultures and lifestyles.
- Effective provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils includes a wide range of trips and performances. The vast majority of pupils know right from wrong and there is a balanced approach to pupils' broadly Christian religious education which encompasses world faiths.
- Pupils are prepared well for their lives after leaving school through their good achievements, work experience, and their accreditation.
- Pupils show that they enjoy school by their good, and improving, attendance on both sites.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good, both in the main school and the Chestnut Unit.
- Intimate care procedures for students with multiple and profound learning difficulties are very sensitively managed. Staff provide high levels of care and support for all students meeting their welfare needs very well. Evacuation procedures are clear and are practiced regularly.
- Pupils say that they feel safe at school. Leaders ensure that pupils are safe through creating a safe environment. Good quality risk assessments are fully in place. Routines are clear and well established.
- Case studies show that safeguarding of pupils is rigorous. However, some sixth formers told inspectors that they did not know where to find the e-safety information to help them stay safe on the internet. This is the reason why safeguarding is not outstanding.
- Pupils' behaviour and safety at the off-site provision are regularly monitored and are at least good.
- Children in the early years provision and the sixth formers are safe and secure.

The quality of teaching is good

- There have been several changes of staff in the past two years, but through effective training and rigorous checks by leaders, teaching is at least good. As a result, pupils make good progress in most subjects, including English and mathematics.
- Teachers have high expectations and challenge pupils well, so that most improve their knowledge and make at least good progress. There is a clear balance between education and therapies.
- Speech and language therapists for example, provide good quality training for staff in the use of signs and

symbols to support pupils' learning. Similarly physiotherapists work closely with staff for the benefit of pupils, particularly those with profound and multiple learning difficulties, who require their support.

- Reading and writing are mainly taught well, although learning for a few older pupils can slow because tasks are sometimes too difficult for them. In the unit, a few pupils are not challenged to complete enough work. These are the reasons why teaching is not outstanding.
- Because of some pupils' low abilities, these pupils are helped to communicate through the use symbols, photographs and/or technology, to offer ideas and have their say. As a result, many of those with profound and multiple difficulties could respond to inspectors questions through the use of technology. Pupils use this technology well to find information and to ask and answer questions in lessons.
- The teaching of mathematics is typically good. This was very evident at Key Stage 3 where pupils were engaged in purchasing items from the class shop with real coins. They were challenged to find the correct money, and most able pupils were able to give and receive the correct change. This task engaged pupils exceptionally well so that they made rapid progress.
- Effective levels of support in literacy lessons help pupils to improve their skills. This is because teaching assistants spend time explaining what is expected and helping them to achieve well. Questions are used well to encourage responses and build pupils' confidence.
- Teaching in the Chestnut Unit is good, enabling most pupils to start to improve their skills quickly. Just occasionally, expectations are too low and, at these times, pupils do not complete enough work in the time allowed.
- Pupils' work is regularly marked. This is often verbal, but is always typically helpful, giving examples of how pupils can improve their skills. This is mainly evident in English and mathematics.
- Teaching in the early years provision and in the sixth form is good.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Most pupils' attainment on entry is well below that which is typical for their age, because of their learning and/or behaviour difficulties. However, once they start at the school, they begin to develop confidence and make at least good progress. This is because of the strong support and exciting tasks provided for them.
- All groups of pupils at the Mayfield site, including those who receive additional government funding, achieve well. Pupils with additional special educational needs, such as autism, sensory or physical difficulties, also achieve well in English and mathematics because of good quality guidance from staff and therapists. Daily links with parents through home/school diaries ensures that each pupil has all round holistic support, helping them to achieve well
- The progress of pupils at the Chestnut Unit is improving rapidly. Leaders are aware that there is more to do to ensure that each pupil completes enough work, so that learning improves further.
- The learning of a few pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties at Key Stage 4, including a few low attaining sixth formers, dips occasionally. This is because tasks are too challenging and they over reliant on staff to complete the work. As a result, achievement is not outstanding.
- Achievement in mathematics is particularly strong. Pupils enjoy tasks that engage them well.
- The most able pupils are very well challenged by the work set in mathematics lessons. Almost all pupils benefit from a broad range of exciting resources that encourage them to improve.
- Pupils benefit from effective links across subjects. Literacy and numeracy skills are used well in many other areas of learning. Those who are able to read benefit from a good range of age-appropriate books and activities to improve their skills.
- Pupils of all abilities develop good independence skills as they move through the school. They regularly offer help at lunch times. Older pupils help younger ones or those who require support. Almost all pupils are able to make choices, either vocally or through signs, symbols or technology about what they want for lunch or which activity they want to try.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is similar to, and sometimes better than that of, other pupils, so that gaps between pupils are closing. This is because of the additional experiences and support they receive.
- Pupils with additional special educational needs make similar progress to their peers because of the wide range of music, art, and speech and language support.
- Pupils are challenged to work at a fast rate in physical education lessons. They learn about the link between exercise and healthy lifestyles and are keen to have a go at most activities.
- Students in the sixth form achieve well on their courses and on their off-site work-related courses.
- Children in the early years provision achieve extremely well.

The early years provision is outstanding

- Children in the early years get off to an excellent start to their school lives. They have spacious accommodation and a wide range of toys and activities. Children benefit from sharing their learning with some older children in Years 1 and 2.
- The learning offered is broad and covers the seven areas of learning. Staff have high expectations and activities are set at the right level for each child. For example, children regularly work with an adult individually on their own tasks and then join in with a group for social activities.
- Staff support children very well and check their progress regularly. Learning opportunities are well organised and fully meet individual needs. The planning contributes effectively to the development of children's physical and emotional health, safety and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The outdoor learning area is creative and children have many opportunities to explore.
- Children play games with phonics (the sounds letters make) regularly, ensuring that they have the opportunity to develop reading skills and learn to match letters and sounds through toy play.
- Staff work extremely well with parents keeping them well informed about their children's progress.
- Safeguarding and child protection policies are implemented very well so that children are safe and secure.
- Leaders have an accurate awareness of the importance of staff training and, as a result, staff have appropriate qualifications to support Nursery and Reception-aged children. Leaders regularly check children's learning and welfare.
- Children behave well and quickly start to interact with adults and other children.
- Excellent leadership of the early years ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.

The sixth form provision is good

- Students make good progress in the sixth form because courses meet their individual needs and abilities well.
- Effective relationships between students and staff ensure that students enjoy the sixth form. Staff are supportive and work to ensure that all students achieve their goals.
- Students are well looked after in lessons, as well as in their free time. They know that staff will listen to their problems and know that there is always someone to talk to.
- All students have personal targets following on from their achievement in Year 11. Their progress is carefully monitored and they have excellent opportunities to undertake work-related courses at a nearby school.
- All students in the sixth form met their expected targets and achieved their accredited courses last year. Progress overall is not outstanding however, because choices are more limited for a small number of lower attaining students. A few of these students do not have the same opportunities because of their health needs.
- The sixth form curriculum is broad and enables students to prepare well for life outside school. Staff know students well and are able to prepare work at an appropriate level.
- Careers advice starts from the moment students enter the sixth form and students are well supported in following their own choices.
- There is clear transition in place. Students achieve well in their personal development qualifications. The most able take Entry level qualifications in English, mathematics and personal skills.
- The sixth form curriculum ensures that students have good opportunities to learn about the wider world, and to develop their social skills. They have regular trips, for example into the local area and wider afield.
- Achievement in English and mathematics is good because of the strong focus placed on these areas of learning.
- Teaching for sixth formers is usually relevant to the ages of the students; although, occasionally, tasks for those taught in the main school are not always set at the right level. Social skills are promoted well and students enjoy their time in the sixth form.
- The behaviour of students is good. Students feel safe and secure in their accommodation.
- Leadership of the sixth form is good. Staff check students' work regularly. Moderation with a local school ensures checks on students' progress are accurate.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	113641
Local authority	Torbay
Inspection number	448928

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community Special
Age range of pupils	2–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	166
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	12
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Garside
Headteacher	June Palmer
Date of previous school inspection	June 2012
Telephone number	01803 328375
Fax number	01803 326761
Email address	admin@mayfield-special.torbay.sch.uk

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