

Prospect School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	133581
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	381516
Inspection dates	22–23 February 2012
Lead inspector	Sarah Mascall

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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	53
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Cooper
Headteacher	Marijke Miles
Date of previous school inspection	25 February 2009
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Telephone number	02392 485140
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Age group	11–16
Inspection date(s)	22–23 February 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Sarah Mascall

Additional inspector

Bob Pugh

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors visited 13 lessons and observed 11 teachers. Meetings were held with staff and members of the governing body. Discussions were held with eight individual students about their work and their views of the school.

The inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' work and information on their progress, safeguarding policies and other documents. Questionnaires from 34 parents and carers were scrutinised, along with those from staff and pupils

Information about the school

Prospect is a school for students who have statements of special educational needs for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. A large majority of students have been statemented with additional special needs including autistic spectrum disorder, attention deficit and hyperactive disorder, communication and learning difficulties. A small minority of students are in the care of the local authority. Most students are from White British backgrounds. The school has a very small number of students on roll who have severe mental health problems. These students are educated on a part-time, one-to-one basis, often at home, dependent on the advice provided by medical professionals. The school makes use of a small number of alternative providers to support students in developing their academic and personal and social skills.

Since the previous inspection, the school has had a large turnover of teachers and senior staff.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- Prospect School is a satisfactory school. Its strengths lie in strong leadership and management that are ensuring a good pace to improvements. Systems for managing behaviour are used effectively and ensure that students improve their behaviour well. The school is not yet good because there are aspects of teaching and governance that need further improvement. Provision for mathematics is not ensuring that students make good progress in the subject.
- Students’ achievements are satisfactory. In subjects such as English and science, strong subject leadership is ensuring that students’ progress is now good. In mathematics, the curriculum is too narrow and teachers’ subject knowledge is not always secure.
- Teaching is improving rapidly and has a number of good features. Monitoring of teaching has resulted in a more consistent approach. All teachers ensure that students know what skills they will learn in each lesson. However, not all ensure that the work set is matched to the wide range of ability in each class.
- Behaviour is good. Students are very positive about the impact the school has had on helping them improve their personal and social skills. They clearly enjoy school and say they feel safe. A small number of parents and carers do not feel that behaviour is good but there is clear evidence in the reduction of incidents and exclusions that the school’s behaviour systems are effective.
- Leadership and management are well focused on ensuring that students are effectively prepared for life when they leave school. There has been a rigorous approach to improving the quality of teaching. This includes the setting of challenging targets for each teacher linked to raising pupils’ achievements. The governing body is supportive but does not have sufficient information about the school’s actions in improving students’ progress to enable it to challenge senior leaders effectively.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- During this academic year, improve the rate of students' progress in mathematics by:
 - extending the curriculum for mathematics to provide a broader range of experiences
 - ensuring that there are more specialist teachers teaching the subject
 - using a wider range of teaching strategies and resources.
- By the end of this academic year, improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good by ensuring that the work set is matched more closely to students' wide range of abilities.
- With immediate effect, provide the governing body with more information on the success of the school's actions in raising students' achievements to enable it to be in a better position to monitor and challenge the work of the school.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Although attainment is low, most students are making progress in line with their peers nationally. The school's high expectations for students are reflected in the increasing number of GCSEs, entry-level qualifications and other accreditation that students are gaining. Good awareness of students' capabilities is ensuring that this present year's cohort is predicted to achieve well in English and science. Year-on-year results are improving in these subjects. In mathematics last year, too many students did not achieve their predicted grades in examinations. Expectations for students have improved this year and they are now predicted to make at least satisfactory progress over time. Students' achievements in art are excellent and are reflected in the very high quality work they produce. Students make good progress in their personal and social skills and are gaining appropriate accreditation through the Certificate of Personal Education course.

Many students feel that the school does all it can to help them do well. Parents and carers agree, although not all feel that their children are making good progress. Inspection findings show that achievement is satisfactory and that students are making increasingly good progress. Many students are proud of the fact that they are achieving their targets, for example in making sure sentences are punctuated and have capital letters. In lessons, students show considerable interest in their work. For example, in science, they were very keen to find out the outcomes of an experiment on different inks to discover who had written a letter. Their enthusiasm for some subjects, such as art, is very evident. One young person talked in depth about his present project and how he is basing it on the work of Jackson Pollock.

The school has developed thorough systems for tracking students' progress as well

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as the progress of the different groups within the school. As a result, staff are quick to identify any areas of underachievement. For example, the school recognised that progress in mathematics was not improving at the same rate as English and science. Changes in leadership have brought some improvements and increased support has ensured that progress is satisfactory. This, though, is recognised by the school as not good enough and further actions are being taken. There is no evidence of any group of students achieving less well than their peers, including disabled students, those with special educational needs and those who are in the care of the local authority. Students with severe mental health issues make the same progress as their peers.

Quality of teaching

The vast majority of parents and carers feel that teaching is effective. The inspection team considers there are a number of strengths in teaching but, overall, it is satisfactory because not all teachers are ensuring the needs of individuals are being met. The school has been successful in ensuring that teachers are consistent in many aspects of their teaching. Behaviour is managed well. The strong relationships with students and good use of humour do much to encourage students to stay on task. Subject knowledge is good in the majority of subjects, as seen in the high-quality artwork and good teaching of basketball skills. In mathematics, where it is less secure, work is sometimes unchallenging and does not always build on students' prior knowledge. Effective curriculum planning ensures that there are often good links between subjects, such as between history and art on the topic of castles.

Literacy is promoted well in many lessons and staff make good reference to key words. Students feel their reading skills are developing well and many are confident to read out loud in lessons. Personal development lessons are effective in promoting students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, in discussing the dangers of smoking, students learnt about the historical and cultural background of tobacco, as well as the social and moral dangers of secondary smoking.

Questioning is used effectively to check students' understanding, and teachers frequently refer to the learning objectives for the lesson to check that students know how well they are doing. Occasionally, work is not matched to students' abilities. This was evident, for example, in a science lesson when the plenary activity was the same for all. The marking of work is up to date and of generally good quality. There is good evidence of detailed verbal feedback to students about how well they are doing.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Students respond rapidly to staff's expectations and say their behaviour has improved since attending the school. This is very evident in the behaviour of the older students, who are usually sensible and mature and have a good understanding of how they should behave. Students say there is very little bullying of any kind and that on the rare occasions that it does occur, it is effectively dealt with. They are convinced that the school is a safe place. This is confirmed by parents and carers.

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Students are confident about who they can go to if they have concerns and show considerable faith in staff to help them. They are very proud of their achievements in improving their behaviour. One young person, for example, explained how he no longer got into fights anymore. When asked why not, he explained how he had learnt to manage his anger and knew when to walk away. The number of exclusions and incidents has reduced considerably since the previous inspection and is clearly on a downward trend. The success of the school's strategies is evident in that nearly all students successfully go on to college, training and employment when they leave school.

Many students have, in their previous schools, refused to attend or have been poor attenders. The vast majority of students now have very positive attitudes to learning and this is reflected in the fact that they improve their attendance considerably. Students clearly appreciate the trust staff have in them. Their behaviour on school trips such as to London and abroad is said by staff, students and governors to be excellent.

Leadership and management

Staff and governors are full of praise for the headteacher and her ability to empower staff to take on responsibilities and develop their skills. Several referred to her as inspirational. The headteacher has established a strong senior leadership team that is clearly focused on raising expectations among staff. The systems for checking on the quality of teaching are robust and consultants are used to make sure the school's judgements are accurate. Good links with mainstream schools have led to some effective initiatives, such as peer observations and the monitoring of lessons in a mainstream school which have extended senior leaders' skills. Good practice is shared and quick action taken where weaknesses are identified. As a result, the quality of teaching is often good and is improving at a fast rate. Issues from the previous inspection have been addressed well.

Equality of opportunity is assured and discrimination is not tolerated. Data are monitored regularly to check on students' progress. Meetings are held with staff about the progress of any individuals who may be at risk of underachieving. Teachers are now setting challenging long-term goals for each student to achieve by the end of the academic year. This, in turn, is resulting in students now making faster progress in their learning. Systems for self-evaluation are clear and identify areas for development well. Although the school improvement plan is closely monitored by the governing body, it does not always challenge the school about the impact of initiatives to improve students' progress. In all other aspects, the governing body challenges senior leaders well and has a high level of involvement in the school. Arrangements for safeguarding are effective and the vetting of staff is thorough. All these factors ensure that the school has a good capacity to continue to improve at its present pace.

The school is continually looking to improve. This is particularly evident in the curriculum which is satisfactory rather than good because it is in the process of being

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extended further to incorporate a wider range of vocational and college courses. The curriculum in mathematics is in the process of being developed but, in some lessons, is too dependent on a commercial on-line programme of study. The range of accreditation which students can obtain has improved since the last inspection and is far more challenging. The school is working closely with mainstream schools to set up other courses such as in outdoor pursuits. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through the curriculum. For example, students study Japanese as a modern foreign language, which has done much to raise their awareness of different cultures.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



24 February 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of Prospect School, Havant PO9 4AQ

Thank you so much for being so friendly and helpful when we came to visit you recently. We very much enjoyed meeting you and a special thank you to those of you who took time to come and talk to us and show us your work.

We found that your school is satisfactory and improving quickly. You told us how safe you feel and that you think behaviour is good. We think the systems that are in place to help you improve your behaviour are good. We were pleased how many of you knew about your targets and that you feel you are doing well. Teachers make sure you know what you will learn in lessons, but we have asked them to make sure that the work you do is more closely matched to your abilities and not too easy!

Staff are committed to do the best for you. Your progress in mathematics, though, is not as good as it is in English and science, and we have asked the staff to make sure they improve the subject. Your work in art is brilliant and we very much enjoyed looking at all that you have done in the art room. The governing body is very supportive of the school, but we have asked it to make sure it checks that the school is making good progress in its efforts to ensure you achieve well.

You can help the school to improve by always trying your best and maintaining your good attendance.

We wish you all well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Mascal
Lead inspector

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