

# Littlegreen School

Compton, Chichester, West Sussex, PO18 9NW

**Inspection dates** 29–30 November 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Littlegreen offers a very effective school experience for its students. Students feel safe and make excellent improvements in their behaviour. They engage in learning far more than they did in previous schools and, as a result, make good and at times outstanding progress.
- The quality of teaching is good and at times outstanding. Teachers know the students very well and are successful at encouraging them to work hard in lessons.
- The marking of students' work is exceptionally good throughout the school. This means students know how well they are achieving and what they need to do to improve further.
- The headteacher and his deputy have placed a strong focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning. Recent improvements have included a much greater focus on improving boys' handwriting in all subjects.
- The governing body uses the professional expertise of its members extremely well in the way it checks how well the school is doing and in contributing to improving teaching and student achievement.
- The involvement of the school in its federation has proven very beneficial in sharing staff expertise between the staff teams of each school.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In a few lessons, teaching assistants are not as effective as they could be in supporting students in their learning.
- The older students, who are now able to stay at the school to the end of Year 11, only have a few opportunities to sit and pass external examinations.
- The newly appointed middle leaders, although clearly demonstrating signs of early effectiveness, have not been in post long enough to have had the strongest possible impact on improving the quality of teaching and the academic achievements of students.

## Information about this inspection

- On the school site, the inspectors observed teaching and learning in 10 lessons, taught by 10 of the school's teachers, and undertook a 'learning walk' at the college site where they sampled teaching and learning and reviewed behaviour in four lessons.
- Inspectors checked on behaviour in lessons and at break and lunch times.
- The inspectors held meetings with students and members of staff. Meetings were also held with three governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors looked at students' work, teachers' lesson plans and achievement data showing students' progress.
- School policies were sampled and the minutes of recent governing body meetings reviewed.
- Eight parental comments on the online Parent View survey were considered.

## Inspection team

Charles Hackett, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Jo Curd

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Littlegreen School caters for boys who have statements of special educational needs because of behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Some students have additional learning difficulties and an increasing number of students are on the autistic spectrum.
- A below-average proportion of students are known to be eligible for free school meals and a small number of the current school population are entitled to additional funding through the pupil premium.
- A much lower-than-average proportion of students come from minority ethnic groups.
- A small number of current students are in the care of the local authority.
- The school has a small residential unit where students can stay during weekday evenings. This was not reviewed as part of this inspection.
- At the time of the previous inspection, students left at the end of Year 9 at the age of 14. From 2010, students have been able to stay at the school for Years 10 and 11. Most of these older students are taught in facilities set up at Chichester Further Education College, some 10 miles away from the school.
- The headteacher and deputy have just started their second term in post, although both held senior positions in the school previously. A new staffing structure introduced this term has seen the creation of three posts, the occupants of which are known as middle leaders, to manage the three different age groups (key stages) that the school caters for.
- The school is part of a federation with another special school and shares the same governing body, although each school has its own management committee.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- During the current academic year, improve the quality of teaching further by ensuring that teaching assistants always play a full part in supporting the learning of students in each class.
- In time for the next academic year, increase the opportunities older students have to take and achieve well in external examinations.
- Over the next year, develop and embed the roles and responsibilities of middle leaders to enable them to have a strong impact on checking students' achievement and the quality of teaching in their sections of the school.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Students often make rapid progress in engaging in learning from low starting points. Almost all students have previously experienced difficulties in engaging in learning in a school setting. At Littlegreen, they respond very positively to the school's high expectations and supportive environment and successfully close the gap with nationally expected standards.
- Students develop their skills in reading, writing and understanding and using numbers well. Primary students begin to develop an interest in books and improve their reading through the school's teaching of phonics (the teaching of letter sounds to form words).
- The school tracks the progress of students in great detail. It has an excellent range of data to show their achievements in all subjects and uses this well to identify any subjects where progress might start to slow.
- Good action is taken if achievement in any subject or age group is not at least good. For example, older students in the primary department did not do as well in mathematics last year. Additional support has now been provided and students are now making good progress.
- In almost all lessons, students make at least good progress. There are a few times, though, where progress is not as good as it could be because teaching assistants are not fully effective in supporting learning.
- Progress for the new group of older pupils, Key Stage 4, on the school's roll is good. They enjoy the challenge of the more age-appropriate environment of the college site. Many sample a wide range of practical courses such as bricklaying and achieve well.
- Achievement in examinations last year included almost all Year 11 students achieving their expected GCSE grades in both biology and mathematics and a Year 9 student achieving a B grade pass in mathematics. However, the opportunities to take external examinations are limited, and this reduces the opportunities students have to show how much progress they have made.
- Progress is very similar for all groups of students in the school, including the increasing number on the autistic spectrum. Those for whom the school receives the pupil premium funding benefit from the extra individual support they receive and, as with those students in the care of the local authority, they enjoy and engage well in learning activities.
- The excellent progress of a few students is also shown by the possibility of them returning to a mainstream school. A few are now sampling education back in mainstream schools on a part-time basis, with the aim of returning full time in the near future.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers use their excellent relationship with the students to encourage them to try and enjoy different activities. For example, a primary group of boys successfully interviewed each other using microphones with the aim of extending and analysing their speaking and listening skills.
- Teachers use good systems to check how well students are achieving in each lesson. They set targets and regularly review the achievement of these with the students. Students themselves have good opportunities to assess how well they have done.
- Teachers are very good at matching work to the different ability levels of students in their classes. They plan the work well to ensure that all students are building on previous learning. This was the situation in a primary mathematics lesson where students used what they had learnt in previous lessons to find ways to divide numbers into groups.
- The excellent verbal and written feedback given to students about the quality of their work is highly effective. All teachers make it very clear to students what standard their work is and

give them ideas for what are referred to as the 'next steps'.

- Teachers successfully encourage students' interests by using a range of different strategies to involve them in learning activities. For example, in an English lesson, students' writing was promoted very well through being required to write a comic strip story, describing the action with speech and thought 'bubbles'. In humanities, students enjoyed reviewing paintings as part of their work looking at Henry VIII. As in a number of other topics, this work supports students' cultural development very well.
- The management of students' behaviour is very effective. If students start to step out of line, there is a very well-established warning system that students understand and respond to positively.
- There is a very strong emphasis on supporting students' reading, writing and number work in the teaching of all subjects. This is supported well by a focus each term on one particular aspect. This term it is handwriting, and many examples of staff giving useful help and reminders to students about their handwriting were seen during the inspection.
- In a few lessons, teachers do not always make effective use of teaching assistants. Teaching assistants are not always clear how best they can support students' learning, although they are consistently effective in the management of students' behaviour.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are outstanding

- Students make excellent progress in improving their behaviour. This results in their experiences at Littlegreen being far more positive than any of their previous experiences in a school setting. It shows clearly that their moral and social development is being very well supported by the school.
- Students' behaviour is constantly being checked and supported by the school. Effective use is made of the school's system of having cameras recording each classroom. Students and parents are fully supportive of the use of these and know how helpful they are in discussing any incident of inappropriate behaviour with students.
- Students respond extremely well to the school environment and the very high expectations there are for their behaviour. Staff act as excellent role models for students, eating with them and enjoying lunchtime activities and after-school clubs. For example, a Monday night football club organised by one of the teachers has become a very popular activity.
- The school knows many students have experienced bullying in previous schools. Excellent attention is given to ensuring that bullying is eliminated and that, if incidents do occur, prompt and appropriate action is taken. Stringent monitoring and supervision arrangements ensure that students can enjoy participating safely in activities both in and out of class.
- Each school day has a consistent structure to it that very successfully helps students meet expected standards of behaviour. Very good opportunities are included where the whole school comes together and the achievements of the day are celebrated. This promotes students' spiritual development very well.
- Older students quickly settled into the environment of the college site. They develop their confidence and self-esteem as they learn how to operate in a much more challenging environment than that of the school site.
- Students' attendance is good. Last year they recorded the best figures for any special school in the local authority and these compare very favourably with mainstream schools.
- The school ensures that students travel safely to and from school. Staff drive and escort the students and this is very effective in providing a consistency of approach in the management of students' behaviour.
- Students show high levels of respect for the school environment. School displays are left untouched and there are no signs or evidence of either graffiti or damage around the school.

**The leadership and management** are good

- Littlegreen is led and managed very well by its senior staff and board of governors. Although relatively new in post, the headteacher and his deputy have had a positive impact on the school's work and the support it provides for its students. All leaders, managers and staff are fully committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all students and robustly tackling any form of discrimination.
- There has been a strong focus on improving the effectiveness of teaching and learning and this is already having an impact on students' achievement. For example, students' handwriting is improving as a result of the attention given to it in all subject teaching, and numeracy skills have been increased by class enterprise schemes to raise money for Christmas events.
- Much has been done to ensure that the quality of teaching is consistently high throughout the school. Where weaker staff performance has been identified, effective action has been taken. Teachers paid on the highest salary levels have had their roles enhanced to reflect this and are now making increased contributions to whole-school developments.
- The creation of three middle leader posts is very new but is already showing signs of being effective. The staff are already playing key roles in the pastoral support offered to students. They have not, though, been able to have a significant impact on students' achievement or the quality of teaching in their departments.
- The school offers a good range of activities that have helped address students' previous weaknesses in remaining in the classroom. The introduction of older students has been well organised through the use of the accommodation at Chichester College. School staff manage this resource well and work very effectively with specialist staff employed by the college to ensure students achieve well both academically and personally.
- The school has made effective use of its links as part of the federation. Staff expertise is shared and governors report how the arrangement allows them to put the work of each school into perspective.
- The school manages its finances well. Good use has been made of the additional money as part of the pupil premium to provide additional individual support for the students involved. An excellent example of this was seen when an older student received individual mathematics support at the college site.
- The local authority has provided the school with effective support in the checking of students' achievements and the induction of the new headteacher.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body shares the same desire as the staff team for the school to be as effective as possible. It makes very effective use of the professional skills of its members to check on how well the school is performing and how it compares to similar schools nationally. Financial control is stringent and governors are fully aware how the additional money for students entitled to the pupil premium is being used. They have recently approved new procedures for checking the performance of staff and are very aware of how the senior team is ensuring that teachers on the highest salaries are making positive contributions to the management of the school. They regularly attend training to broaden their knowledge and skills and give very careful consideration to school policies, ensuring that they are up to date and relevant.

## 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 pupil's 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 pupil's 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	126156
<b>Local authority</b>	West Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	403760

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>	7–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	63
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jane Wilkinson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rob Hatherley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26–27 May 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	02392631259
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