

Philip Southcote School

Addlestone Moor, Addlestone, Surrey KT15 2QH

Inspection dates 10–11 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The majority of students achieve well during their time at Philip Southcote School. Achievement in English, mathematics and personal development is good.
- Students in Year 11 regularly attain good quality accreditation, including some GCSEs in mathematics and art, and entry-level qualifications in English and mathematics, as well as some BTEC qualifications in other areas by the time they leave the school.
- The sixth form is outstanding and students make outstanding progress in their accredited courses, benefitting from high-quality vocational opportunities which prepare them extremely well for their futures.
- Teaching is good, with some that is outstanding. In the best, tasks fully meet the individual needs and abilities of each pupil and teachers make very good use of questions to extend pupils' skills.
- Pupils behave well and benefit from the effective behaviour management system and the consistent way in which staff apply it. Pupils feel safe at school.
- Parents are pleased with the school and say that their children enjoy coming.
- The strong curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. This is enriched through visits.
- The headteacher has a clear vision for the future and with other leaders and governors places a strong focus on raising achievement and improving the teaching and the performance of staff, which has been successful through high-quality training and regular monitoring.
- The governing body manages the budget well and has an accurate view of the school's work. Governors make sure that pupils who receive additional funding fully benefit from it.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In a very few lessons, pupils do not do enough work, tasks are not fully matched to individual needs and pupils are not given enough independence in their learning.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 15 lessons, some jointly with senior leaders. In addition, inspectors made a few short visits to observe pupils learning and playing, and listened to a few students read.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior staff, members of the governing body, a representative from the local authority and some students.
- The inspection team observed the work of the school and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information about students' progress, planning and monitoring documents, safeguarding information and some students' books.
- The inspectors took account of the 25 responses to the online survey (Parent View) to provide a helpful picture of parents' views of the school.

Inspection team

Denise Morris, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Gary Kirkley

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school caters for secondary-aged students with learning difficulties from across Surrey and a very small number from adjacent authorities. All students have a statement of special educational needs for their moderate learning difficulties.
- A very high proportion have additional speech, language and communication difficulties and/or autistic spectrum disorders.
- The school has a county resource base for seven deaf students with learning difficulties, who are fully included in the life of the school.
- Most students are White British. The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is about average, although only a very few speak English as an additional language. There are more boys than girls.
- The proportion of students for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional funding for certain groups, including students known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority) is well above average.

The school has a sixth form catering for students up to the age of 19. These students undertake courses in conjunction with the nearby Brooklands and Richmond College as well as students from the main school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teaching enables students to make even better progress in their lessons by:
 - making sure that all groups of students do more work in the time allowed
 - planning tasks that precisely meet each student's individual abilities and needs so that they can achieve to their highest standard
 - developing more opportunities for all groups of students to find things out for themselves so that they become more independent in their learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students' attainment on entry to Philip Southcote School is usually well below average for their age because of their moderate learning difficulties or other associated difficulties. Most students settle quickly into school and begin to catch up because of the high-quality support that they receive. As a result they achieve well in all areas of learning.
- All groups of students make similar progress in English and mathematics, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds, those with autistic spectrum disorders, speech, language and communication disorders deaf students and those who receive pupil premium funding.
- More-able students, including some who are deaf, make good progress in English. They read confidently by Year 9, and by Year 11 a few students write extended essays. Because of their good progress, students achieve well and many acquire entry-level and level 1 qualifications in English by the time they leave.
- In one outstanding lesson, for example, pupils in Year 8 improved their confidence in speaking aloud as they planned and delivered a role-play task linked to the study of *Treasure Island*. The challenging activity was exceptionally well planned to meet all the needs and abilities of the students in the class, resulting in very successful outcomes.
- Almost all students achieve well in mathematics and science and enjoy the practical tasks that are provided. This is evident in the way that several attain GCSEs in these subjects.
- Students in the sixth form make outstanding progress in all areas. They do particularly well in their vocational courses, preparing them extremely well for further training and employment. All students who left the school last year went into training, employment or education.
- Students eligible for the pupil premium funding make similar progress to their classmates in English and mathematics, and better progress in information and communication technology.
- Just occasionally, students do not make as much progress in lessons because tasks are not planned well enough to meet their individual needs and abilities. At these times they also lack opportunities to develop independent learning skills by searching for information and finding things out for themselves. As a result, students do a little less work than they could and they do not achieve as well as in other lessons.

The quality of teaching is good

- Students benefit from teaching that is almost always good, and some is outstanding. As a result, they make good progress. Teaching typically includes effective questioning and the use of resources that meet the needs and abilities of each individual student, helping them all to fully engage in learning.
- The teaching of English is always good because tasks are well matched to students' abilities and additional support is well tailored to extend and improve students' skills. Signing is used well where necessary to support deaf students. As a result, the vast majority of students make good progress in reading and writing.
- The teaching of mathematics is usually successful because teachers focus on engaging students practically in tasks, enabling them to work together to find answers.
- Effective questioning is a key strength of most lessons, helping to extend students' knowledge and help them think for themselves. An excellent example of this was observed in a Year 10 English class where students, including some with additional needs, were practising their creative writing tasks for their examinations. The teacher carefully questioned students about their topics, and this ensured they were able to prepare their ideas well.
- Assessment of students' work is typically helpful, providing examples of how students could improve; this is particularly evident in English.

- The use of teaching assistants to support learning has improved and they now play a valuable role in helping less able students and some of those who are deaf, in particular, to keep pace with their learning.
- The quality of teaching in the sixth form is outstanding because planned tasks are very relevant to students' abilities and needs.
- Just occasionally teachers across the school do not plan tasks that help pupils to be independent and think for themselves, or plan work that is closely linked to individual students' needs and abilities. At these times teaching is less successful and students do not make as much progress as in other lessons.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students' behaviour in and around the school is good. They are polite and helpful and regularly support each other. They say that they enjoy school. This is evident in their improving attendance and the very low rate of absences and exclusions.
- Students say they feel safe at school. Older students fully understand the importance of staying safe on the internet and in the community.
- Students in the sixth form and in the school told the inspectors that there is no real bullying at the school and that any teasing is dealt with by staff. Playground and classroom observations and scrutiny of school records showed this to be true. Their good behaviour is promoted well by the extensive grounds and the wide range of different activities provided for them.
- Just occasionally the behaviour of a very few students with emotional difficulties disturbs the learning of others, but this is very well managed by staff through the school's consistently effective behaviour management system.
- The promotion of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effective. Through the wide range of trips and visits to the community and the high-quality work-related opportunities for older students, they are all fully prepared for their lives after leaving the school.
- Students in the sixth form show outstanding personal skills, valuing their provision highly and benefitting from the extensive vocational opportunities. For example, they have good opportunities to learn about carpentry, motor mechanics and hairdressing.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has a strong vision for the school and drives improvement by ensuring that all students can be as successful as possible so that they can lead independent lives. He is ably supported by the senior leadership team and governors.
- Leaders make effective use of the national standards for teaching to improve teachers' skills. There are many good examples of staff at all levels progressing up the pay scales because of effective support and training, which has helped them to improve their skills and seek promotion.
- The governing body is fully involved in monitoring and checking outcomes and leaders are aware of which teachers deserve promotion.
- Leaders track students' achievements well. Data over the past two years shows that the school is successfully closing the gaps in achievement. A much greater proportion of students are now on target to meet their goals than in previous years.
- The school provides regular training for staff in aspects such as behaviour and safeguarding, ensuring consistent practice across the school.
- The local authority works well with the school and recognises that leaders do not require a high level of support because of their effectiveness in improving students' achievements.

- There are some good links with local schools, colleges and businesses, helping to develop students' academic and personal skills and providing experiences that will benefit students in the future.
- The good range of subjects and topics taught and the additional residential and daily visits provide well for the needs and abilities of students.
- Leaders successfully eliminate discrimination through their effective policies and procedures. They promote good relationships through their effective policies and procedures which make sure that all students have equal access to the experiences on offer.
- Leadership of the sixth form is outstanding because it promotes the learning and personal development of students extremely well and offers some excellent academic and vocational opportunities.
- Safeguarding procedures meet requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is supportive, providing good challenge to leaders. Despite being a relatively new governing body, they are already involved in monitoring provision, checking teaching and behaviour and looking at how well students are doing. They have a clear view of what is working well and what needs improving, including a good knowledge of published performance data and of the quality of teaching. Governors have a good range of skills which they use to benefit the school. Effective management of finances means that money is well spent to enrich pupils' learning, including the particular funding allocated for students eligible for pupil premium funding. This money is used well to provide additional speech and language therapy, support and experiences for these pupils, enabling them to make similar progress to their classmates. Governors know about performance management and work to ensure that the best teachers and staff are rewarded through promotion. They are aware of where underperformance has been tackled in the past.

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	125480
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	426401

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	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	112
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	24
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sue Wareham
Headteacher	Richard Horton
Date of previous school inspection	8–9 December 2010
Telephone number	01932 562326
Fax number	01932 563453
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