

Philpots Manor School

West Hoathly, West Sussex, RH19 4PR

Inspection dates

19–21 September 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Sixth form provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of teaching and learning is inconsistent, particularly in key stage 3.
- Assessment information about what pupils know and can do is not well used, particularly in key stage 3. As a result, adults are not ambitious enough.
- The impact that adults, other than teachers, have on pupils' learning is too variable.
- Planned learning is not engaging or interesting enough, particularly in key stage 3. Pupils' time in lessons is not used sufficiently well.
- Pupils' progress is too variable. Pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable in key stage 3. They make less progress in key stage 3 than in key stage 4.
- The teaching of writing and science is inconsistent. In mathematics, pupils do not develop their reasoning skills well enough.

The school has the following strengths

- The new leadership team has had a positive impact on the quality of education. It has acted swiftly to identify all the significant weaknesses in the school and rectify them. As a result, the school meets all of the independent school standards.
- Leaders have changed the culture in the school for the better. Teachers are now held to account for the quality of pupils' learning. As a result, the weakest teaching has been quickly eradicated.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. The development of their personal skills and well-being is exemplary.
- The sixth form is outstanding. Teaching is highly effective and the support for students' personal development is life changing. As a result, they achieve very well.
- Safeguarding is highly effective. Leaders have created a culture of good information-sharing and close working with outside agencies.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and learning by ensuring that:
 - pupils are given greater opportunities in mathematics to develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills
 - the new schemes of work for science teaching are well taught
 - staff have a consistent and effective approach to teaching handwriting, spelling, punctuation and grammar
 - in lessons, adults other than the teachers have a clear role in developing pupils' learning.
- Improve pupils' progress in key stage 3 by ensuring that:
 - teachers use assessment information more effectively to ensure that planned learning is not too easy or too difficult
 - staff have high expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - time in lessons is used effectively to maximise pupils' learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The school has been through a significant period of change since the last inspection. The long-standing and very well established education coordinator retired in spring 2017. Since then, the deputy education coordinator has been leading the school because the newly appointed education coordinator has been absent due to ill health. The acting education coordinator works very closely with the care coordinator and together they form the senior leadership team.
- Leaders have a very accurate view of what the school does very well and which aspects of the school are not good enough. Improvement planning has a clear focus and ambitious timescales.
- Leaders have acted with great speed and ambition to rectify a number of significant weaknesses in the school. As a result, the independent school standards are met, safeguarding is highly effective and the weakest teaching in the school has been improved. The management of staff underperformance has been effective.
- Leaders have significantly changed the culture in the school in a short period of time. The work of teachers is now evaluated by leaders' thorough reviews of pupils' performance, observations of learning during lessons, looking at the progress that pupils make in their workbooks, and through examining assessment information. All staff recognise this change in culture, and most welcome the feedback they now receive.
- Leaders' analysis of pupils' personal development, welfare and behaviour is exemplary. As a result, leaders have absolute clarity about the school's strengths. For example, they have adapted timetables and lunchtime provision in response to their evaluations of patterns of behaviour over time.
- Leaders have a clear complaints policy, which includes the steps that complainants can take if they are unhappy with leaders' responses. The small number of complaints are recorded clearly, including all communications with relevant parties. Pupils' concerns are dealt with respectfully and with sincerity.
- Leaders provide a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum. Leaders know the needs of pupils very well and consequently have made appropriate curriculum adaptations. For example, older pupils now study a mathematics curriculum with greater coursework, in recognition that they are better able to demonstrate what they know and understand over time, as opposed to during single examinations. Lunch clubs, such as gardening and chess, have a positive impact on pupils' personal development and their behaviour.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. The schemes of work ensure that pupils are given good opportunities to think and reflect about the wider world and what history has taught society. Concepts such as empathy and tolerance are well taught. The school's values, such as teamwork, are clear. These values are celebrated in the recited daily 'verse' and evident in pupils' behaviour around the school.

Governance

- The sole proprietor knows, understands and meets his statutory responsibilities, including the requirement to keep pupils safe. He attends relevant training and uses his expertise to question leaders effectively.
- The proprietor works well to support and challenge leaders. He has brought in additional professional expertise from outside the organisation to give him even greater insight into the work of leaders.
- The proprietor is ambitious for the school and its pupils. He has responded swiftly to increase leadership capacity through providing access to accredited leadership training and by bringing in additional external support.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school has a safeguarding policy on its website. The proprietor, leaders and all adults know and understand the latest statutory guidance.
- Leaders have created a team which leads and coordinates safeguarding. The culture in the school ensures that concerns regarding pupils' safety and well-being are meticulously recorded, well communicated, and that swift action is taken. The school works well with other agencies, such as the police.
- Staff observe and listen to pupils carefully. When concerns arise they are diligently recorded and acted upon with haste, including those relating to the 'Prevent' duty.
- Leaders work well with designated leads who work for the local authority. Leaders act appropriately upon all advice and record all communications. Leaders make timely referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is inconsistent, particularly in key stage 3.
- In key stage 3, assessment information, including work that pupils have completed previously, is not used well enough to plan new learning. As a result, planned learning is too easy and staff are not ambitious enough in their levels of challenge for pupils.
- The teaching of writing is not good. Different teachers have significantly different approaches to teaching handwriting, spelling, punctuation and grammar. Too often, basic spelling and grammatical errors are repeated for sustained periods and teachers do not help pupils recognise and rectify their mistakes.
- In mathematics, pupils get limited opportunities to solve problems and develop their reasoning skills. Number and calculation is taught more systematically and as a result pupils make better progress in this aspect of mathematics.
- Leaders are clear that the teaching of science is inconsistent. The revised schemes of work have not yet been fully implemented.
- Classrooms have a high number of adults in them. In some classes, teaching assistants have a clear role in supporting pupils' learning. However, this is not consistent.

- The most effective learning takes place when adults are very clear with pupils about what they are doing and why. Tasks are clear, relevant and interesting. Adults take the time to check pupils' understanding before moving their learning on. However, some planned learning is not interesting enough and all pupils do the same thing for sustained periods. As a result, pupils are not challenged according to their ability, and time in lessons is not used as effectively as it should be.
- The teaching of art and history is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan learning that builds on what pupils know and can do. Large-scale and long-term art projects help individual pupils develop their resilience, perseverance and self-esteem.
- Information technology is used well to support learning. Older pupils use computers to access appropriately challenging mathematics opportunities, and younger pupils delight in hearing their spoken stories played back to them as they develop their listening skills.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils on entry to school have had significant and often multiple exclusions. Parents and older pupils describe the transformation in pupils' behaviour over time. Philpots Manor is highly effective in developing the personal and social skills of pupils.
- Leaders provide an extensive range of effective therapeutic services to support pupils' mental health and well-being. As a result, pupils are happy in school, behave well and are ready to learn.
- Pupils take immense pride in their achievements. Older pupils offer powerful examples of how the school has changed their lives for the better.
- The school's commitment to improving pupils' independence and life skills is exemplary. The oldest most vulnerable pupils are very well supported to undertake work experience, attend supported 'taster days' at local colleges and begin to use transport independently. Careers advice and support is highly appropriate. Consequently, the school has transformed pupils' aspirations for themselves.
- Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe, including when undertaking potentially hazardous tasks such as land maintenance and gardening. For example, pupils know that all tools can be dangerous if not used properly.
- Plans to support pupils' well-being, including newly arrived pupils, are highly effective. Leaders develop very insightful and holistic support plans for pupils. They work closely with parents, carers and therapeutic services to ensure that pupils settle quickly and make significant and rapid improvements in their behaviour.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Over time, the number of significant behaviour incidents reduces for each pupil because the development of their personal and social skills is exemplary.

- Classrooms are mostly calm and purposeful, particularly in key stage 4. When the quality of teaching is less than good, some pupils can find it difficult to remain focused and on task.
- Pupils move around the very large rural site calmly and sensibly. Older and younger pupils mix well, including at breaktimes when behaviour continues to be good.
- Behaviour at lunchtime is good because pupils are led and managed very well. Adults create a family feel, as small groups of pupils and adults sit around a table together. Adults show pupils how to engage in conversation, and pupils join in freely. Pupils are allocated tasks at the end of the meals, for example washing up or returning items to the kitchen. Adults also use this time of the day to play board and card games and further develop pupils' personal and social skills.
- The whole-school 'gathering' at the beginning of each day is warm and welcoming. Consequently, pupils settle quickly and are ready to learn.
- Pupils' attendance is good.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils in the school currently make variable progress because of very weak teaching historically and inconsistent teaching currently, particularly in key stage 3.
- Assessment information and work in books shows that pupils make inconsistent progress in English and mathematics, particularly in key stage 3.
- Pupils do not make good progress in science. Pupils over time who have taken GCSE science have not made good progress and as a result have not achieved as well as they should have.
- Pupils make better progress in key stage 4, with the exception of science. Current pupils are making good progress through their functional skills levels and GCSEs. As a result, pupils are ready to attend appropriate college placements.
- Pupils make good progress in art. Pupils over time have attained well at GCSE.

Sixth form provision

Outstanding

- Sixth-form leaders are ambitious for students.
- Teaching and learning are highly effective because staff use what they know and understand about students' learning to plan appropriately. As a result, students who need specific support with spelling, punctuation and grammar are taught well and make strong progress.
- Older students are extremely well behaved and are good role models for younger pupils.
- Students speak with confidence, pride and gratitude about the difference the sixth form has made to their lives. Students value the 'extra mile' that staff go to in attending college assessments and open days with them, and accompanying them to lessons when they first begin college.
- Careers advice and guidance is very good. As a result, students are able to access the

appropriate level 2 or level 3 qualifications.

- Staff help secure appropriate work experience and provide varying support and assistance to ensure that this is successful. Some students are in paid part-time employment and/or apprenticeships as a direct result of the skills they have developed during their work experience and life skills work in school.
- All students who left the sixth form in the summer remain in appropriate further study. Current students, including those who are highly anxious about leaving the sanctuary of the sixth form at Philpots Manor, are making strong progress on the right courses to meet their specific needs.

School details

Unique reference number	126141
DfE registration number	938/6219
Inspection number	10039159

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent residential special
Age range of pupils	7 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	38
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	12
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Steven Ogilvie
Chair	None
Headteacher	Darin Nobes (Education Coordinator)
Annual fees (day pupils)	£58,539–£65,001
Telephone number	01342 810268
Website	www.philpotsmanorschool.co.uk
Email address	info@philpotsmanorschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	11–13 November 2014

Information about this school

- Philpots Manor School is an independent day and residential special school that caters for up to 60 boys and girls between the ages of seven and 19 years.
- The school caters for pupils who have a range of social, emotional and mental health difficulties. Many also have specific learning difficulties. All pupils have an education,

health and care plan and are placed at the school by local authorities.

- The school's ethos, values and curriculum are underpinned by the educational principles of Rudolf Steiner.
- The long-standing education coordinator retired in spring 2017. The appointed coordinator has not been able to take up post due to ill health. The school is currently led by the deputy education coordinator. Teachers are invited to join a body called the 'college'. This group advises leaders.
- The sole proprietor was the chair of the management group at the time of the last inspection. The school does not have a governing body.
- Pupils and students attend a range of registered colleges: Plumpton, Sussex Downs (Lewes and Eastbourne Campus), Brinsbury and East Surrey.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning across the school, almost always accompanied by a school leader.
- The inspector evaluated work in pupils' book with leaders and examined leaders' assessment information.
- Meetings were held with leaders and the proprietor.
- Staff views were considered during a meeting with over 20 staff. Several subsequent conversations took place with members of staff who sought time with the inspector.
- Pupils' and students' views were gathered from three questionnaires and a wide range of conversations with individuals over the course of three days.
- Parents' views were considered through 10 responses to the Parent View online survey and parents' free-text comments.
- A range of documents was evaluated, including improvement plans, curriculum documents, information regarding pupils' progress and complaints logs.
- Documents and processes relating to safeguarding were checked, including the single central record, case study files and risk assessments.
- All the independent school standards were checked during this inspection.
- The residential provision was evaluated as part of this inspection.

Inspection team

Mark Cole, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

Parent View

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2017