

Inspection of a good school: Prospect School

Freeley Road, Havant, Hampshire PO9 4AQ

Inspection dates:

20 and 21 June 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. Inspectors are recommending the next inspection to be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel understood in this inclusive school. This helps them to quickly form trusting relationships with staff. Staff take the time to identify and plan support to overcome pupils' barriers to learning. Pupils quickly form new friendships. They mix happily together at breaktimes, playing football with staff or looking at fossils foraged from trips to the beach. Expectations of behaviour are clear. Pupils value reward points they get for showing good manners. They proudly spend their reward points in the 'Star Shop' to buy new books. Pupils report that while bullying is not common, their peers often use derogatory language. There is currently not a consistent approach used by all staff to ensure that pupils understand why this language is unacceptable.

Recently, leaders have become more ambitious about what their pupils will learn and achieve. Pupils now enjoy a curriculum designed to teach them the skills and knowledge they need for later life. However, a significant number of pupils struggle to read confidently and fluently. Staff absence has meant that phonics and reading support is not consistent. In addition, staff do not always have the expertise required, nor do they fully utilise high-quality texts, to deliver the daily reading practice effectively. Therefore, not all pupils have the reading skills they need to access the school's curriculum.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

There have been significant changes to leadership as well as a high level of staff turnover. New leaders have taken this opportunity to take a fresh look at the provision offered, including reconsidering the curriculum. Pupils now follow a balanced curriculum, similar in breadth to the national curriculum. At key stage 4, they study suitable qualifications in subjects like English, mathematics and science. Leaders have formed strong links with local colleges and alternative education provisions. Pupils attend these establishments to study qualifications in animal care, falconry or mechanics. This broadens pupils' aspirations for their post-16 education, training or employment.

The work to review the curriculum is not yet complete. In most subjects, leaders have identified what pupils should know and do at each stage of learning. However, this is not yet the case in some subjects such as art and design and technology. Pupils enjoy making and designing projects. However, teaching is not designed to build on past learning. This means pupils do not learn as well as they could.

When pupils join the school, leaders quickly gain detailed knowledge of pupils' needs. Class tutors use education, health and care plans (EHC plans) to inform short-term progress targets. These plans are co-written with pupils and parents. However, teachers do not purposefully incorporate these targets into their planning. Opportunities to work towards these targets can be incidental which limits their effectiveness.

Leaders are clear with pupils that derogatory language is never acceptable. However, some staff do not address these behaviours with the same rigour. Consequently, some pupils do not understand the importance of respecting protected characteristics. This is not preparing them well for life in modern Britain.

Changes to leadership and the disruption caused by COVID-19 have been unsettling for some pupils. Leaders have recognised this, and therefore have focused on establishing clear routines and rules. As a result, pupils and staff report a much calmer and more settled school.

Pupils enjoy a vast range of visits and activities each week such as paddleboarding or sailing. They can also learn new skills and hobbies such as playing guitar or cooking. This helps develop pupils' confidence and resilience. While pupils do get regular impartial careers advice such as attending 'Futures Day', the careers provision is not yet fully comprehensive. Experiences do not link together to help pupils form a wider picture of their future options. Leaders also do not evaluate the effectiveness of the careers programme.

The local authority and governors support and challenge leaders rigorously. They have established clear lines of accountability. They ensure leaders are taking action. Staff speak highly of the training they have received to help them deliver a more effective curriculum. They report that leaders have been considerate of their workload through this period of rapid change.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders regularly communicate with external professionals to keep abreast of the risks that some pupils may face outside of school. They ensure that all staff have daily updates about these risks. Staff quickly identify and report concerns about pupils' welfare and safety. Detailed records indicate the swift steps that leaders take to seek further additional support from services like the police.

Regular visits from external speakers provide pupils with strategies they can use to avoid

risks such as knife crime. Age-appropriate relationships and sex education helps pupils learn key information, such as the meaning of consent.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum in some subjects does not yet clearly identify the knowledge and skills that pupils need at each stage of learning. This means teachers do not always shape learning to help pupils achieve learning goals. Leaders must ensure that they precisely identify what pupils need to know and when so teachers can more precisely check for gaps in learning and address these.
- The reading curriculum is not yet well implemented. This means that pupils who need support to read are not getting the support they need to read confidently and fluently. Leaders must ensure that all staff have the expertise they need to implement the reading strategy.
- Not all staff insist on the highest expectations of behaviour. Therefore, not all pupils speak respectfully to their peers or see the value of reporting discriminatory language. Leaders must ensure that all staff follow the behaviour policy so that pupils learn to speak respectfully to members of the community both inside and outside the school.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in February 2014.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	133581
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10256539
Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	85
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Russell Kew
Headteacher	Michèle Aldridge
Website	www.prospectschoolhavant.com
Date of previous inspection	2 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- All pupils have social, emotional and mental health needs. Many have an additional diagnosis such as autism. All pupils have an EHC plan.
- There have been a number of changes in leadership and governance since the last inspection. The headteacher joined the school in April 2021. Since then, a number of new senior appointments have been made to the leadership of the school.
- Pupils are placed on roll by Hampshire local authority. A small group of pupils have been placed in the school by neighbouring local authorities.
- The school uses one registered provision to provide alternative vocational education for pupils in key stage 4. They also use four unregistered provisions for a small number of pupils.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic

began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders in the school. The lead inspector met with governors and representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors also considered the views expressed by parents and staff through Ofsted's surveys.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in these areas: English, mathematics and personal, social and health education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited classrooms and spoke to teachers and pupils. They also considered examples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of safeguarding records and documents, including the single central record. They also met with the designated leader to review safeguarding records.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school site during lunchtimes and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils and groups of staff to hear their views. Inspectors also spoke to pupils and staff informally around the school.

Inspection team

Michelle Lower, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Alan Johnson

Ofsted Inspector

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