

Philip Southcote School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125480
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	315245
Inspection dates	19–20 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Greg Sorrell

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	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	90
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr D White
Headteacher	Mr R Horton
Date of previous school inspection	3 November 2003
School address	Addlestone Moor Addlestone KT15 2QH
Telephone number	01932 562326
Fax number	01932 567092

Age group	11-16
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Philip Southcote School provides for 90 pupils aged 11 - 16. All have a statement of special educational needs (SEN) relating to learning difficulties and other needs including behaviour, communication, autism and sensory impairment. The school believes that its intake is becoming more complex in relation to SEN. The school works in partnership with a number of local schools. It has gained the Healthy School Award and was re-awarded Investors in People status in 2006. The new headteacher has been in post for nearly one term.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Philip Southcote School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and provides well for their personal development and well-being. They make satisfactory progress in a wide range of subjects and gain accreditation that prepares them well for leaving school.

The pupils' behaviour is good as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The good curriculum enables the pupils to know about staying safe and healthy in an environment where they enjoy lessons. The teachers and teaching assistants know the pupils well and most lessons are well planned, reflecting the good specialist subject knowledge held by staff. Relationships with all staff are excellent. However, in some lessons the lack of pace and challenge leads to a lack of engagement by pupils and limits their progress.

Vocational programmes, work experience and attendance at a local college of further education prepare older pupils well for leaving school. The curriculum is enriched greatly by the outstanding extra curricular provision that includes lunch-time clubs, a thriving after school programme and residential trips. This provision has a significant impact on the pupils' personal development and well-being.

The overall quality of care, guidance and support provided for pupils is good. School procedures ensure their well-being is appropriately safeguarded. Pupils receive good support for their special educational needs particularly from specialist staff.

Leadership, management and governance are satisfactory. In a short time, the new headteacher and senior staff have identified the need to improve self-evaluation procedures; particularly, improved analysis of pupils' achievement data by all subject leaders. This is required to provide a more accurate identification of what intervention is needed to ensure all pupils achieve as well as they can. The governing body gives good support on personnel, premises and finance issues, although their role in evaluating pupils' achievement is underdeveloped. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure all lessons have sufficient pace and challenge to engage all pupils and to help them make progress.
- Improve subject leaders' analysis of data to identify strategies that will enable individual pupils to achieve as well as they can.
- Extend the governors' role in self-evaluation and particularly their monitoring of pupils' progress in all subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils make satisfactory progress in relation to their abilities and the targets set for them. The standards attained are inevitably well below average given the nature of the pupils' special educational needs.

At the end of Key Stage 4, pupils achieve accreditation in a range of subjects including English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT), art, design and technology, food technology and textiles. The majority of examination is at GCSE entry level, although, when appropriate, pupils take foundation level GCSE examinations in mathematics

and science. Accreditation of work experience and personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) has been introduced this year. Vocational awards at Bronze and Silver levels are gained within the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN).

Pupils also make satisfactory progress towards targets in their individual education plans (IEPs.) The school's analysis of recent results shows some differences in achievement between Key Stage 3 and 4 pupils and some hearing impaired pupils. This analysis is at an early stage and requires further investigation to enable reliable conclusions to be drawn.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils greatly enjoy school and are always pleased to be there. On arrival, they readily exchange greetings with peers and staff. Attendance is satisfactory and absenteeism has fallen over time. During lessons, breaks and visits off-site, pupils' behaviour is usually good. Occasionally, some pupils lose concentration in lessons and this has a short term adverse effect upon their learning and that of others. Both they and their parents report that the school is a safe place to be where incidents are rare and fully investigated to everyone's satisfaction. The recently introduced "buddy" system works well and friendships are evident in the playground. Through experiencing the music, cultures and faiths of others, pupils develop good spiritual and cultural understanding. Their overall contribution to the community is good. All pupils have responsibilities, for helping the school run smoothly and membership of the school council is taken very seriously. They support national charities and host performances for a local day centre for the elderly. Pupils know that they should be eating healthy food and learn about staying away from drugs. They understand moral issues such as re-cycling and the need to preserve the earth's resources for future generations.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Most teachers and teaching assistants have a good knowledge of pupils' different needs and reflect this in their planning. Appropriate account is given to prior attainment when setting up learning groups and involving students in an assessment of their work. Teachers and assistants work well together as a team, often with assistants taking on specialist teaching roles. Most lessons involve practical and purposeful activities, for example using electronic sewing machines or drafting written accounts from residential experiences. Pupils receive explicit praise for taking the time to compose their thoughts and phrase their answers. Occasionally, the pace of lessons is too slow for pupils and this limits the progress they make and encourages silly behaviour. Appropriate and effective use of interactive whiteboards and other new technology is now routine by some teachers, yet this is not commonplace throughout the school. The teachers' use of assessment to plan lessons is satisfactory overall. However, subject leaders have yet to undertake a thorough analysis of pupils' progress to check whether all are doing as well as possible.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school offers the full national curriculum, with the exception of a modern foreign language. There is a strong focus upon literacy and numeracy in all subjects in addition to PSHCE. A

well-planned vocational programme, including work experience, makes a significant contribution to the pupils' personal development.

In Key Stage 4 the curriculum increases the amount of vocational education and preparation for life after school. The schemes of work are supplemented by accredited ASDAN modules, which enable the pupils to achieve success in the use of key skills and work experience. The scheme of work for PSHCE requires additional work to fully integrate its programme for sex education.

The extra curricular provision is excellent. A wide range of clubs is offered at lunchtimes and opportunities for competitive sport are regularly taken. The weekly 'Out of School Hours Learning' programme, including the "Chill Out Zone", provides rich experiences, including many outdoor adventurous pursuits such as water-skiing. Residential trips also offer extensive adventurous activities including canoeing, climbing and abseiling. The breakfast clubs are increasingly popular and have a positive impact upon the pupils' well-being and understanding of health related matters. Good use is also made of the local community, for example, visits to local museums and places of interest.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school pays close attention to the pupils' individual special educational needs, personal development and well-being. The co-ordination of SEN provision is good. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are robust. The health and safety of the whole school community receives good attention. Risk assessments are regularly undertaken and child protection procedures are well understood. The school deploys its therapy resources well. Staff from the Deaf Pupil Provision provide excellent support to enable such pupils to access the curriculum. Where appropriate the provision of physiotherapy and occupational therapy improve the pupils' mobility and physical access to learning. Counselling for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties is very effective in ensuring their welfare.

Pupils are given appropriate support and guidance to meet individual targets, although not all targets are sufficiently well focussed. Annual reviews of pupils' statements of special educational needs involve all professionals and fully include parents. The pupils' own reflections add much to the process. Subject reports are mostly good although a minority have too little information about progress, tending to focus more on pupils' attitudes and effort. Assessment and reports made by therapists and specialist teachers from the Deaf Pupil Provision are of high quality.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership, management and governance are satisfactory. The newly appointed headteacher has worked well with senior managers and an external consultant to quickly identify and implement improvements to management procedures. These include re-establishing systematic performance management for teachers and reviewing self-evaluation procedures to enable the school to have a clearer view of its effectiveness than at present.

Essential staff re-structuring is nearing completion and has resulted in a greater clarity of managerial roles. Subject leadership is good overall due to high levels of specialist knowledge

that has a positive impact on teaching. The routine gathering of evidence and use of progress data by all managers is insufficient to provide a complete view of overall effectiveness.

The school has good systems to induct new staff and effective support is given when appropriate. Monitoring procedures are effective in enabling the school's management to have an accurate evaluation of the quality of teaching and planning. The school's commitment to inclusion and equality of opportunity is excellent. The deployment of teaching assistants, especially those with specialist roles, is particularly effective in supporting pupils with additional communication and behavioural needs. Financial matters are well managed and appropriately audited.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

3 December 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Philip Southcote School, Addlestone, KT15 2QH

Thank you for helping me to get to know your school last week and for giving me such a warm welcome. I found that your school gives you a satisfactory education and there are some good things too. One of the main strengths of the school is the good effect it has on your personal development and well-being.

The headteacher is new to the school and has been busy working with your teachers to see how the school can be even better in the future. The teaching you receive from the staff is satisfactory and sometimes good. The additional support to help you all communicate and enjoy lessons is good. It is clear you become more confident as you get older.

I really enjoyed watching the presentation assembly and could see you had a really good time at Sayers Croft. The range of lessons and other activities you get to do is good. I know you enjoy the lunch-time clubs and the weekly after school club. You get the chance to do lots of exciting things such as water-skiing, climbing and going on residential trips. These experiences and your time on work experience and at college prepare you well for leaving school. You get on well with the staff and generally do your best to see that everyone can get on and learn in class. Sometimes, the behaviour of a few of your fellow pupils can be a bit silly. I was pleased to see how well you get on with each other at break-times in the playground.

The school works hard to keep you fit and healthy. The breakfast club gives you a good start to the day and the swimming and games lessons help you a lot. The wall displays of recent work in art and technology show that you achieve well in these subjects. In order to improve the school further, I am asking teachers to ensure that all lessons gain your interest and help you make progress. I am also asking the headteacher to extend the ways in which staff and governors can assess more fully just how well you are doing so that they can choose the best methods to help you improve.

I wish you lots of luck in the future.

Greg Sorrell

Lead Inspector