

Manor Green College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126157
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	328457
Inspection dates	4–5 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Charles Hackett

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	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	163
Sixth form	18
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mary Fry
Headteacher	Ric Turney
Date of previous school inspection	11 May 2006
School address	Lady Margaret Road Ifield Crawley RH11 0DX
Telephone number	01293 520351
Fax number	01293 535596

Age group	11–18
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Manor Green College is a school for students with a wide range of learning difficulties and disabilities. Many have moderate or severe learning difficulties, whilst there are a smaller number of students with more complex needs, such as autistic spectrum disorders or profound and multiple learning difficulties. The school opened five years ago, and is an amalgamation of two former special schools. Since 2008, the headteacher has also managed another special school. His title has changed to executive headteacher and his deputy has been given the role of operational headteacher.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Manor Green College is a satisfactory school. The quality of education it provides for its post-16 students is good. The school's strengths undoubtedly centre on the outstanding personal development of its students. 'The strength of the school lies in the development of self-esteem in all the pupils' is how one parent summed this up. This is very evident in their excellent behaviour around the college and the exemplary progress they make in developing their social skills. The quality of care and support is good. This contributes greatly to students being very happy in school and knowing that staff are there to support them. Relationships are outstanding and lead to students significantly improving their confidence, which, in turn, enables them to enjoy a wide range of experiences both in and out of college on activities, such as residential experiences. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. It is very evident from observing the school in operation that showing respect for each other is a fundamental philosophy of the school. Students readily celebrate the successes of each other and demonstrate through their friendship how they value each other. There are many occasions in and out of class when students, without prompting, provide support for their fellow students experiencing difficulties. The achievement of students is satisfactory. Older students achieve passes in GCSEs and other forms of external accreditation. Given their learning difficulties and disabilities, these are positive achievements and the school is aware that these compare well with similar students in the local authority. However, the school does not have sufficient information to know what students' achievements represent in terms of their rates of progress. This is because systems to track their progress and set a range of achievement targets to match the differing abilities of students are still in the process of being developed. The exception is in the post-16 department where more effective systems are in place. The curriculum is good because it is effective in supporting students' personal development, including opportunities to help them keep safe and stay healthy. The range of activities on offer promote community cohesion very well. The long-term planning of the curriculum is good but short-term planning is less effective because it does not focus sufficiently on ensuring students will make good progress. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Within the school, there are clearly examples of good teaching. This is particularly so in the way the teachers responsible for students with profound and multiple learning difficulties work together to enhance the effectiveness of their work. Students exhibit good attitudes in lessons in response to the very high quality of care all staff show towards them. Lesson planning, though, is often not effective because it fails to identify what it is that students will learn. This weakness contributes to the concerns about students' progress because it is often not possible to link the work a student has completed in a lesson to what this represents in relation to their overall progress. Teaching support assistants clearly care for the students and want to do the best they can for them. They are not always sufficiently actively involved in supporting their learning. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The executive headteacher and operational headteacher help create a school where staff and students feel very secure and show careful consideration for each other. They acknowledge that in the development of this school they have put a strong emphasis on providing for students' personal development. They have sought to empower all staff to take on responsibilities. In doing so they have not given sufficient importance to knowing what happens in classrooms to support students' learning and what students' achievements represent in relation to their progress. This has led to school development planning not being sufficiently focused on improving weaker elements of these important aspects.

Effectiveness of the sixth form

Grade: 2

The quality of education provided for post-16 students is good. This is because it is adapted well to support students' successful transition into adult life. Students' achievement is good. There is a clear framework for students' expected progress, with clear achievement targets for the end of each year. Teaching is well focused on encouraging students to be as independent as possible. The curriculum and guidance given to students are aimed at enabling students to build on their functional skills in school and to be able to transfer them to a variety of situations out of school. There are, though, a few times when activities such as regularly joining whole-school assemblies are not always appropriate, given the age of the students. The department is well led by a very forward-thinking manager who is moving the quality of this provision forward at a good pace.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that there is a clear understanding of what students' achievements represent with regard to the progress they are making and use this information to set challenging progress targets.
- Improve the impact teaching and learning have on students' progress by ensuring that lesson plans show what individual students are expected to learn and work set is matched to their differing ability levels.
- Give a higher prominence to the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and its impact on students' progress, and use information gained to influence school development planning.
- Increase the involvement of teaching support assistants in supporting students' learning.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Given students' learning difficulties and disabilities, it is understandable that standards are below the national average. Students' assessments and achievements are monitored and analysed by senior teachers and results of this show the achievements of all groups of students, such as students in care, are similar. Students in Years 10 and 11 have good opportunities to take examinations matched to their learning difficulties. For example, students with moderate learning difficulties take and pass GCSEs. The best results recently have been in science and art, with students doing less well in mathematics. Attempts have been made to compare these achievements with students in similar schools and a scrutiny of the data produced shows that the majority of students reach expected levels, which represents satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Students benefit considerably from the emphasis the school places on improving their understanding of adopting healthy lifestyles. They enjoy taking part in the many sports the school promotes through the sports partnership it has with a secondary school. Students' attendance is good, which for those students who have previously been in mainstream represents

a big improvement. Students are fully involved in the life of the college. They know their views are listened to and that they can contribute to what happens on a day-to-day basis. For example, additional playground equipment and a student honours board are direct responses to suggestions from the school council. Students' future economic well-being is good. Their improved social skills and belief in themselves means they leave school as independent young people with the confidence to deal with a wide range of situations.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The key strengths of teaching and learning are the very positive relationships staff have with students and students' positive attitudes to learning. Other strengths of teaching include good use of information and communication technology, such as interactive whiteboards. Displays are well produced and there is an excellent range of resources available.

Lesson planning is not always effective. Often plans are too general, not taking account of the different levels of students' ability. For example, in most lessons students are set the same work with little emphasis put on challenging the potentially more-able students. This is a weakness highlighted by a few parents. For example, one parent commented, 'When the child is more capable the pushing of homework and extra work is not evident.' There are examples of support assistants making positive contributions to lessons but in general they are not fully involved in students' learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The strong emphasis placed on promoting students' personal development ensures that the curriculum is effective. All the requirements of the National Curriculum are provided alongside very well thought out experiences to support students' emotional and social development. All students benefit from a good range of enrichment activities and theme weeks. For example, during the inspection, activities included a residential trip to the Isle of Wight and an African drumming workshop. There is a good balance across the school of giving students with different special needs opportunities to work in specialist groups and integrate with other students. The organisation of the curriculum provides good opportunities for all students to achieve well but the weaknesses in teaching and learning reduce the impact it is having on the progress students make in their learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Without doubt, the real strength of this school is the very effective care and support given to all students to improve their personal development. Tutors provide students with a consistent start to each day, ensuring that when they arrive each morning, they are well supported to engage in the activities for the day. There are, though, ineffective systems to guide students to achieve as well as they might. Samples of the targets within students' individual education plans show that these are not monitored regularly and are not effective in tracking students' progress. Targets are set but these do not always link to previous achievements. For example, a student, of whom an earlier report said could read up to 40 words, was set a target for the next term to read 10 words. When spoken to, few students knew their targets. All staff share

a strong commitment to boosting the confidence of students and extending their self-esteem. Considerable attention is given to ensuring students enjoy being in school and that they are safe. There are good policies in place and extensive safeguarding procedures. Students' health needs, including their emotional health, are managed well. Good procedures are in place to promote students' attendance and positive links with other agencies are used well to support this.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

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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	16-19
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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	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3	

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1	
The attendance of learners	2	
The behaviour of learners	1	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	
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 learners' needs?	3	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	2

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	2
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	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3	
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

6 June 2009

Dear Students

Inspection of Manor Green College, Crawley, RH11 0DX

Thank you for being so friendly when Mr Ward and I visited recently. We both very much enjoyed our two days in the college. We can see that you are happy and enjoy the company of each other and the staff, and that you like taking part in the many activities on offer. We know that your staff really care a lot for all of you. They are very good at helping you to become more confident young people and be proud of your achievements. As a result of this we judge your personal development to be outstanding. We were particularly impressed with the post-16 department where we think it is good.

Our report explains that your achievements and the college as a whole are satisfactory. The good things include community cohesion. This means we think the college is good at helping you to understand you are part of the big wide world and many of the differences there are in it.

To be an even better school we have recommended in our report that the college:

- has better ways of knowing how well you are doing and sets you all targets to achieve even more
- improves some of the ways teachers plan what you will learn
- makes sure that the headteacher and other senior staff know more about what happens in lessons and how they are helping you
- makes better use of the teaching support assistants to help with your learning.

We know that your school is very keen to keep improving and we can see you do your bit to help. This is especially so in the way you all help each other.

Keep up the good work.

Charles Hackett Lead inspector