

# The Mark Way School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116641
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	338851
<b>Inspection dates</b>	5–6 July 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Stuart Charlton

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	75
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr T Wilcox
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr A Oakley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 February 2007
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. All 12 teachers were observed and 15 lessons were visited. The inspectors held discussions with the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority, the School Improvement Partner, staff and groups of students. The inspectors looked at the improvement plan, minutes of senior management and governing body meetings, a range of other documentation, planning and assessments of students' progress as well as questionnaires returned by six parents.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the effectiveness of leaders and managers at all levels in meeting the needs and aspirations of all students, parents and carers in driving the school forward
- the systems to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning and how these are validated
- how well the curriculum provides a balance between meeting students' specific needs and their entitlement to an appropriate mix of academic, vocational and work-related provision
- the systems to set and track challenging targets for all students to determine if these are sufficiently focused to ensure that all make the progress of which they are capable.

## Information about the school

Mark Way School provides for students with moderate learning difficulties. An increasing number have autistic spectrum disorders or behavioural difficulties as an additional need. All have a statement of special educational needs. A number of students are from neighbouring local authorities. There are nearly four times as many boys as girls. The overwhelming majority of students are from White British backgrounds. Since the last inspection, there has been a significant increase in the number of staff. This half-term, the roles, responsibilities and personnel in the senior management team have changed. The school holds Sportsmark, Artsmark Silver and Healthy Schools awards. It is a member of Andover Extended Schools' partnership offering students after-school, Saturday and holiday clubs. The present headteacher will retire in July 2010 and, during the inspection, the local authority finalised the appointment of an interim headteacher for two terms from September 2010.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**4**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**4**

## Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its students an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

Since the last inspection, Mark Way has taken on roll a significant number of students whose needs are much more complex than in the past, particularly in terms of behaviour. The school's systems and strategies for behaviour management have been stretched and have shortcomings. Consequently, behaviour in lessons and around the school has deteriorated and is inadequate. This has a negative impact on students' progress which is inadequate even though a minority of students do make satisfactory or better progress. The school is reviewing and updating its behaviour management policy, but this has not been completed. The present policy lacks clarity, and teachers and students do not feel that it is applied consistently; this has a negative impact on learning. In their completed questionnaires and in discussions, the overwhelming majority of students stated that they do not feel safe in school and behaviour is not good.

Attendance is low and systems for monitoring and promoting good attendance are weak. There are too few opportunities for them to make an effective contribution to the school or to the wider community. Provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is inadequate. Students speak confidently about the criteria for a healthy lifestyle.

During the inspection, a number of good lessons were observed, but the overall impact of teaching and learning on students' progress and their achievements is inadequate. The local authority and external consultants have provided good support to help teachers develop the skills they need to address students' needs. This training is too recent to have had significant impact on students' progress. The school's systems for setting challenging targets for students and tracking their academic progress and behaviour are weak. Teachers' lesson planning does not clearly identify students' needs. Staff feedback to students does not indicate clearly what they need to do to improve.

The curriculum is satisfactory with an appropriate focus on developing students' basic literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills. Staff are very caring and keen to do their best to support students. However, staff are not well supported by senior managers in achieving consistency in the application of the school's policies and strategies and, consequently, their work does not have sufficient impact.

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The quality of leadership and management at all levels has deteriorated since the last inspection and they are inadequate. Systems to monitor and evaluate the quality of provision are not sufficiently rigorous to give a clear picture of the school's effectiveness. The governing body does not provide the necessary challenge to ensure that all students make the progress of which they are capable. Consequently, the school has entered a period of decline and leaders and managers have not demonstrated that they have sufficient capacity to improve the school.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
  - implementing the very recently agreed interim management structure
  - establishing rigorous and robust systems to monitor all aspects of provision
  - improving governance through developing the skills needed to hold the school to account.
- Improve students' progress by:
  - developing and implementing consistently strategies to manage students' behaviour
  - promoting good attendance through the development and implementation of effective strategies
  - promoting good attendance through the development and implementation of effective strategies
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
  - ensuring that teachers' planning clearly identifies the needs of students and how these will be met in every lesson
  - making sure that feedback to students tells them what they need to do to improve their work and reach the next level or grade.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****4**

Students' behaviour is poor because changes to the school's systems to identify and manage their needs have not kept pace with the increasing complexity of their behavioural difficulties. In particular, behaviour targets set when students start at Mark Way are not sufficiently challenging to ensure they achieve their best. In lessons, there is insufficient emphasis on these targets and they are not used to drive progress. The students' poor behaviour, combined with a lack of interest or engagement in classroom activities, means that students' progress in their work and personal development is, for the majority, inadequate. The pace of their learning is too slow and in many lessons, teachers have to spend too much time reacting to disruptive behaviour. As a result, in lessons and around the school, students display negative attitudes, which often leads to them showing a lack of consideration for others. This makes many of them feel unsafe. Students' progress is further hindered by low attendance. This means students are not

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well prepared for life after school and, partly because there are few opportunities for them to do so, they make little contribution to the school or wider community. They say that little account is taken of their views because there are few formal systems through which they can express their feelings.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	*
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	4
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>4</b>

## How effective is the provision?

The central weakness in teaching is that classroom behaviour is not managed effectively. Teachers and support staff are therefore unable to satisfactorily promote pupils' learning and personal development. Teachers typically react to behavioural problems that they cannot fully control, rather than implement consistently an agreed approach to managing unacceptable behaviour. Teachers attribute this to lack of support from senior leaders in helping them to plan for the students' ever more complex and challenging needs. Nevertheless, some staff say there have been recent

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

\* In some special schools inspectors do not make a judgement about attainment in relation to expectations of the pupils' age.

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improvements related to support which has been provided by the local authority and external consultants. Teachers' planning usually identifies how subject content will be delivered rather than providing a focus on the needs of individuals and how these will be met. In effective lessons, such as a good music lesson with Year 10 students, staff used their knowledge of the students' needs very well to support their learning. Good relationships and effective use of the learning support assistant ensured that all students were actively engaged and learning was promoted. However, such lessons are the exception rather than the norm.

The curriculum provides an appropriate balance between academic, vocational and work-related activities. In the main, these are on-site and consequently, students are not given enough opportunities to experience work-based learning. Staff are committed to doing their best for the students in their care, and relationships on a one-to-one basis are often good. However, staff do not have confidence in the school's systems to support them and this severely limits the effectiveness of their work to improve students' personal development and well-being. Guidance from staff for the next stages in students' education is well intentioned but the qualifications that students achieve do not equip them sufficiently well for life after school.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>4</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The leadership of the school is not strong and does not provide clear strategic direction for the school's work. The imminent retirement of the headteacher and the recently agreed interim arrangements for two terms, signal a period of change. The senior team is inexperienced; most have been in post for a very short time and coherence has yet to be established. The school has no clear plans to adapt the provision to better meet the needs of students. The governing body is under- strength and has not provided the lead needed to hold the school to account for students' achievement and the quality of education it provides. Governors readily accept information provided by the school and do not provide the challenge or direction needed to secure better quality provision. They do ensure that statutory requirements, including safeguarding procedures are met.

The school's behaviour management strategies are not sufficiently rigorous to ensure that students feel safe when outbursts occur. Appropriate links have been established with parents and carers and these have helped a number of families to support their children's learning at home. However, the school has been slow to reach out and

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establish partnerships with other professionals in the immediate community to support the learning and well-being of students. Provision for auditing and developing community cohesion has not been a priority and this aspect of the school's work is inadequate. The school tries to tackle discrimination and provide equality of opportunity, but these efforts lack focus, and are not effectively monitored and are inadequate overall.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>4</b>

## Views of parents and carers

Very few parents and carers completed the questionnaire. The school has some data from its own questionnaires and this has been used to supplement the views expressed. Generally, parents and carers are reasonably happy with the school. However, the inspection evidence does not endorse their views and found that the school is failing to give students an acceptable standard of education that will enable them to move successfully on to the next stage of their education.



## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Mark Way School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 6 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 75 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	3	50	3	50	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	4	67	1	17	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	3	50	3	50	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	3	50	3	50	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	4	67	2	33	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	3	50	2	33	1	17	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	3	50	3	50	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	5	83	1	17	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	4	67	2	33	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	3	50	3	50	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	4	67	2	33	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	3	50	3	50	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	4	67	2	33	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



8 July 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Mark Way School, Andover, SP10 1HR

Thank you for the help you gave us when we came to inspect your school. We particularly enjoyed being able to talk to a good number of you about your work and a special thanks to the Year 11 students who came in even though they have left school. Most of you completed the questionnaire and we found the views you expressed to be very similar to our findings during the inspection. You told us that behaviour is not good and that the school is not well led. In discussions, you explained that teachers tried to help you but that lessons were often disrupted and the efforts of staff to manage these situations were inconsistent. Some lessons provide interesting activities, which engage and motivate you, but too often, your peers disrupt teaching and learning. We consider that the school requires special measures so that inspectors can regularly monitor the rate of improvement. This will help the newly appointed interim headteacher and the present senior management team to provide the vision and the structures the school needs to move forward .

We want the interim headteacher, the senior management team and the governors to work together and improve the following:

- all aspects of leadership and management
- the progress that you make in lessons and in developing your personal skills, particularly your behaviour and attendance.

We also want teachers to improve:

- the way they plan their lessons so that it is clear what support you need and how it will be given
- the feedback they give to you so that you know what you need to do to improve.

Everyone has to be committed to giving their best so that the school can become more effective. I hope each of you will do your bit in helping to achieve this.

Yours sincerely

Stuart Charlton

Lead inspector

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