

# St Philip's School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102622
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kingston upon Thames
<b>Inspection number</b>	376744
<b>Inspection dates</b>	5–6 October 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Mike Kell

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>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	137
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	22
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jonathan Edwards
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jude Bowen
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 April–1 May 2009
<b>School address</b>	Harrow Close Leatherhead Road Chessington KT9 2HR
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8397 2672
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8739 1969
<b>Email address</b>	phs@rbksch.org

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Fourteen lessons were observed, each taught by a different teacher. Meetings were held with two groups of students, the Chair of the Governing Body, all members of the senior leadership team, all department heads, a range of other staff members, and representatives of the local authority. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a variety of documentation, such as assessment and attendance data, safeguarding procedures and incident logs. The 51 questionnaires returned by parents and carers were analysed, as were those completed by staff and students.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- It analysed the procedures for tracking students' learning, and leaders' use of this information in evaluating their progress.
- It examined the extent to which staff use assessment of students' previous achievements to promote independent learning through planned and tailored activities that meet individuals' needs.
- It reviewed leaders' analysis of data to check the rate of progress made by different groups of students.
- It investigated the effectiveness with which all department heads and members of the governing body carry out their roles in driving forward school improvement.

## Information about the school

St Philip's is a larger than average special school which is organised into four departments: Key Stage 3; Key Stage 4; post-16; and a specialist resource base. All students have a statement of special educational needs, which is for moderate learning difficulties in approximately two thirds of cases. Of the remaining students, the vast majority are identified as having autism or severe learning difficulties. These two groups of students are taught in the specialist resource base. There are slightly more boys than girls on roll. A fifth of students are known to be eligible for free school meals, and a very small minority are looked after children. The very large majority of students are of White British heritage, and very few have English as an additional language. Approximately a third of students are admitted from neighbouring local authorities. A number of students transfer from other schools into the post-16 department at the end of Year 11.

There have been significant changes in the leadership of the school since the previous inspection. Both the headteacher and assistant headteacher have been appointed since that time, and the heads of the Key Stage 3 and post-16 departments have both taken up their posts in the past year.

**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?**

**3**

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

**3**

## Main findings

St Philip's is a satisfactory school with satisfactory provision for post-16 students. The specialist resource base serves its students well. Overall, students make good progress in many aspects of their personal development. They make significant gains in acquiring confidence, self-esteem and independent skills. Students enjoy going to school. Their attendance is above average. They behave well and have positive attitudes to learning.

Attainment is broadly average, and students make satisfactory progress overall. A few students in Key Stages 3 and 4 learn at a good rate, and students in the specialist resource base make good progress. Post-16 students' achievement is satisfactory. This variability is linked to inconsistency in the quality of teaching. While some lessons are good or outstanding, teaching is typically satisfactory. In the less successful lessons, teachers' imprecise planning is the main hindrance to more rapid learning because insufficient use is made of assessment information when determining what different groups of students are expected to learn. As a result, the activities and resources teachers provide are not always closely in tune with students' learning needs and styles. That said, the curriculum is of good quality, matching the ages and interests of different student groups well and contributing significantly to students' good personal development. Students receive good quality care, guidance and support. Parents, carers and staff agree that students are safe in school, and the students themselves confirm this. Safeguarding arrangements are adequate. While students' safety is not compromised, sometimes the roles of different staff are not defined sufficiently clearly.

The school has good links with partner organisations, such as local schools and colleges, and with parents and carers. Leaders and managers monitor students' learning and examine the progress that they make. The new headteacher has determined a clear sense of purpose and direction for the school. However, these aspirations are not always reflected routinely in classroom practice. Thorough reviews of each department have contributed to satisfactory self-evaluation processes, and these have led to appropriate school improvement planning. There is satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement. Despite the headteacher's growing influence, not all others with leadership and management responsibilities are as effective, and a governing body which does not currently have a full membership does not gain enough first-hand knowledge of the school's work through a planned programme of visits.

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Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

- Increase the pace at which students learn by developing consistent practice across the school, ensuring that:
  - teachers routinely make effective use of students' prior learning when planning lessons
  - planning always focuses on precisely what teachers expect individuals or small groups of students to learn
  - all students are given activities and resources that are matched to their capabilities and learning needs and styles.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - making safeguarding procedures more streamlined by specifying the roles of those members of staff with specific responsibilities, in order to guarantee that all policy guidelines are always applied efficiently
  - requiring the governing body to develop greater first-hand knowledge of the school's work
  - ensuring that all senior leaders and department heads take more responsibility for challenging staff and raising standards.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

Students in the specialist resource base achieve well, as evidenced by the good progress that they were seen making in developing their comprehension of texts. They make good progress in acquiring key literacy, numeracy and communication skills as their confidence and ability to participate in social interactions increase. Elsewhere, students' achievement is satisfactory. There is no significant variation in the progress made by different groups of students, such as those known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and those with different ethnic origins or whose first language is not English. Students make sufficient progress to follow accredited courses in Years 10 and 11, and in a minority of cases their level of success represents significant achievement. In the lessons observed, students' rate of learning was variable. For instance, highly effective teaching enabled one class to make exceptionally good progress in developing understanding of punctuation, while the development of another group's reading skills progressed much more slowly because of the limited range of activities available and weaknesses in lesson planning.

Students show good awareness of how to stay safe and of what constitutes potential danger. They have a good understanding of how to live a healthy life, appreciating the importance of diet and exercise. Students are proud of their school and make a good contribution to its day-to-day running. They are equally willing to help in the

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wider community insofar as they are able. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They mature into respectful and helpful young people who are generally caring of each other and who have very clear views about what constitutes right and wrong. Despite not developing literacy and numeracy skills at a rapid rate, students are very well prepared for leaving school in other ways. Learning to travel independently and to arrive punctually, and to work with limited supervision or collaboratively, represents good preparation for transfer into continuing education or, in some cases, to supported training and employment.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective is the provision?**

Very good relationships and appropriate praise and encouragement are common features of all lessons. Teachers have good subject knowledge and they use information and communication technology (ICT) appropriately to engage learners. In the most effective lessons, teachers build on this and exploit students' punctuality, positive attitudes and good behaviour to accelerate their learning. At these times, staff plan lessons skilfully so that each student is provided with work that presents the right degree of challenge to enable them to tackle it independently or with different levels of prompting by adults. However, in a minority of lessons plans do not routinely pay sufficient regard to individuals' learning needs when students span a wide range of attainment. Plans identify what students will learn in broad terms rather than indicating exactly which new skills or knowledge teachers expect different students or groups to acquire. As planning in these lessons lacks precision, the activities and resources provided do not always meet all students' learning

<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

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requirements fully, such as text that is beyond the reach of some students without adult support. The pace of learning suffers as a consequence.

Despite the variation in the quality of teaching, each department's curriculum is planned well to meet the personal and learning needs of the group. Students in Years 7 to 9 follow a broad and balanced curriculum which prepares them for entry into Key Stage 4, where the curriculum comprises a vocational education programme and options to study a good balance of accredited courses. In addition to gaining qualifications in English, ICT and mathematics, they can obtain accreditation in subjects as wide-ranging as Workplace Hazard Awareness, the Junior Sports Leader Award, and a variety of land-based qualifications. Students in the specialist resource base follow broadly the same curriculum as other departments, but it is adapted creatively to meet their particular needs. The curriculum is enriched well by educational visits, visitors into school and clubs.

Concern for the individual's care and welfare is a primary focus throughout students' time in school. There are good transition arrangements for admitting students into the school and post-16 department, and for managing their departures. Good links with other agencies and strong contacts with home, carefully managed by the student support worker, provide a good package of guidance and support.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Community cohesion is promoted well. The school has a good understanding of students' families and home circumstances and it is successful in extending students' horizons through their involvement in community projects. These include introducing students to communities in other parts of the country as well as internationally, such as via a charity in South Africa. These initiatives form part of the school's good contribution to students' appreciation and acceptance of differences between people. They are indicative of its determination to eradicate all forms of discrimination and to provide equality of opportunity for all. It has robust procedures to deal with rare instances of unacceptable behaviour, including racist and sexist instances. As a result of well-targeted actions, students in the specialist resource base thrive especially well and the gap between their progress and that of others has narrowed significantly. Personal development outcomes for all students are good. Safeguarding procedures are satisfactory. All staff are suitably trained and the school has in place appropriate risk assessment and health and safety procedures.

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The headteacher has strong ambition and a determination to drive forward change. A small minority of staff are dissatisfied with the way in which the school is developing and question the effectiveness of school leaders and the governing body, but the school is taking appropriate steps to improve areas of weakness. The governing body gives clear backing to the headteacher and is fully involved in school improvement planning. Some members of the governing body have a high presence in school. The senior leadership team and department heads provide the headteacher with routine practical management support, but not all of them are yet equally effective in raising the quality of teaching.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Sixth form

Post-16 students receive a satisfactory quality of education. They receive a good curriculum which is structured around the development of functional literacy, numeracy and ICT skills, such as the use of money and telling the time, and the promotion of those personal skills that will stand them in good stead in the future. These include the ability to travel independently and to find their way around. Students make good progress in their personal development. Satisfactory teaching results in students making satisfactory progress in their work. Lessons are calm and students are enthusiastic, but the learning activities provided are not always closely matched to the range of ability within the groups.

*These are the grades for the sixth form*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the sixth form</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	3

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Outcomes for students in the sixth form	3
The quality of provision in the sixth form	
Leadership and management of the sixth form	3

## Views of parents and carers

Most parents and carers are generally supportive of the school, as typified by the comment, 'The school is an entirely happy and positive experience for my child.' On the other hand, a small minority expressed dissatisfaction with some aspects of its work via the questionnaires and comments added to them, such as 'This seems to be a good school but it does not seem to extend my son sufficiently.' This mixed picture aligns broadly with the judgements of the inspection team, which is that while some elements of the school function well, such as students' personal development, in other respects it is less effective, such as the rate at which students make progress.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Philip's 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 51 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 137 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	29	57	20	39	0	0	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	22	43	25	49	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	21	41	26	51	1	2	2	4
My child is making enough progress at this school	16	31	25	49	3	6	2	4
The teaching is good at this school	22	43	25	49	0	0	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	21	41	21	41	4	8	3	6
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	19	37	28	55	2	4	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)	19	37	25	49	3	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	24	47	20	39	3	6	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	16	31	25	49	5	10	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	33	27	53	2	4	3	6
The school is led and managed effectively	22	43	24	47	0	0	2	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	25	49	19	37	3	6	1	2

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 all 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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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 pupils' 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.**



7 October 2011

Dear Students

### **Inspection of St Philip's School, Chessington KT9 2HR**

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school. A special thanks goes to those of you who gave up your time to meet with us. We enjoyed our time with you. St Philip's is a satisfactory school.

We were impressed with how well you grow up into friendly and helpful young people. You behave well and enjoy lessons. You obviously like going to school and most of you attend as often as you possibly can. You told us that you feel safe in school and that you know how to avoid situations that might put you in danger. The staff take good care of you and I know that there is always someone you can talk to if you have a problem. Lessons are satisfactory and you make satisfactory progress in your work.

Leaders and managers of your school are doing a sound job. They have ideas about how to make the school even better and we have asked them to do the following in order to help them achieve this.

- Make sure that teachers always provide you with work that is set at just the right level so that you can tackle it on your own as often as possible.
- Know about everything that is going on in the school and how well every one of you is doing.

You can help them to do this by continuing to go to school as much as possible and by continuing to behave so responsibly while you are there.

Finally, thank you once again for welcoming us into your school and I wish each of you every success in the future, especially if you are doing examinations this year.

Yours sincerely

Mike Kell  
Lead inspector

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