



St Philip's School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 102622
LEA Kingston Upon Thames LEA
Inspection number 276745
Inspection dates 6 February 2006 to 7 February 2006
Reporting inspector Melvyn Blackband AI

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

Type of school	Special	School address	Harrow Close
School category	Community special		Chessington
Age range of pupils	9 to 19		KT9 2HR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8397 2672
Number on roll	108	Fax number	020 8739 1969
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Terry Way
Date of previous inspection	18 September 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Helen Goodall

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

St Philip's School provides for pupils with moderate learning difficulties. Since September 2004 the school has also provided for a small number of pupils with significant learning needs and others with complex social and communication difficulties. There are many more boys than girls. The pupils are mainly White British with a small number from other minority ethnic groups. An average number of pupils are eligible for free school meals. There are four pupils in public care.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

St Philip's has accurately evaluated itself as a good school. The pupils enjoy being there and make outstanding progress in their personal development. Parents are very happy for their children to attend, knowing the standard of care and support is excellent and that the children will be safe, free from bullying and make good progress. Because of their learning difficulties, the standards reached by pupils are below national averages but all pupils do well in their studies. The school's monitoring of the pupils' overall progress is good but assessment does not always clearly identify the next steps in pupils' learning and planning is not as sharp as it should be. The progress of pupils in post-16 provision is good. The curriculum is outstanding in its richness and appropriateness for the pupils' needs. There is a very good range of extra activities which pupils greatly enjoy. The school is well led and managed. The headteacher provides very good leadership and is supported effectively by a committed senior team and energetic governors. The school is aware of its strengths and weaknesses and has made good improvement since the last inspection. There is a good capacity to improve further. The school's finances are well managed and the daily routines are efficient. The school gives good value for money.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 2

The achievement of pupils in the post-16 provision is good. Pupils reach their potential through a range of suitable nationally accredited courses. Good teaching results in the pupils making good progress. The pupils benefit from the high quality vocational education and they apply their studies effectively to gain experience of college and work. The pupils' personal development is very good. Their independence skills are strongly promoted and staff effectively promote an adult ethos and mature behaviour. The pupils make good progress in key skills such as literacy, numeracy and information and communications technology (ICT). Leadership and management of the department are good.

What the school should do to improve further

* Make better use of assessment to more clearly identify the small steps in pupils' learning and to sharpen up some aspects of teaching and planning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards of attainment are low because of pupils' learning difficulties but pupils of all ages and abilities make good progress. The school's good strategy for measuring and tracking pupils' attainment helps them to achieve well. The good use of data enables teachers to ensure that no individual or group is underachieving but some assessments are too general. Results show that most pupils reach their targets,

culminating in the success of pupils in Year 11 who gain a wide range of qualifications. Pupils in post-16 build on this good progress. Pupils throughout the age range do particularly well in mathematics and in English in Years 10 and 11. They make good progress towards meeting individual education plan (IEP) targets especially in terms of improving their social skills and behaviour. The pupils with significant and complex needs achieve very well. They are set challenging targets in literacy and numeracy linked to high expectations in their personal development.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils behave very well, reflecting the school's strong management of behaviour and the emphasis on moral and social values. Pupils' spiritual development is good. Similarly they are well aware of a range of other cultures and practices. Their care for one another is excellent and this was observed several times during the inspection, for instance when a boy made sure a younger girl was warmly wrapped up before she went out to play. The school is calm and the pupils work and socialise happily because they know what is expected of them. The pupils feel safe and confident. They have a very good understanding of healthy lifestyles and their own personal safety and their learning is especially good in aspects of sex and relationships education. They enjoy opportunities to take part in a very good range of physical activities. The pupils develop appropriate social skills through regular visits into the community. Their good progress in literacy and numeracy helps to prepare them for adult life and older pupils learn work related skills through a rich variety of well planned activities, some linked to promoting good economic understanding. Pupils in post-16 are effectively prepared for leaving school. Pupils effectively make their views known through circle time and their Annual Review of progress. Attendance is very good and carefully monitored. Parents made many positive comments about their children's progress such as one who praised the staff for 'giving me back a happy child who now looks forward to going to school each day'.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and they know their pupils well. This enables them to plan interesting well paced lessons. There are very good relationships between classroom teams. The competent teaching assistants support pupils effectively. The pupils like and respect their teachers so their behaviour is very good and they work hard and do their best. The performance of pupils in a Year 7 drama session was effectively raised by the enthusiastic teacher who had an excellent relationship with the children and gave them the confidence to respond well. Teachers' use of assessment is variable. While some teachers regularly record progress, often in discussion with the pupils, other teachers do not maintain detailed records and thus they are less effective in planning and adapting work for

individual pupils, relying instead on their general knowledge of the pupil's abilities. Teaching is good in post-16 provision and is very good for the pupils with autism. Parents make a good contribution to pupils' progress through the well established homework system.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 2

Pupils enjoy well constructed and interesting activities which are adapted to their needs. The curriculum is rigorously monitored by subject leaders and the senior team. There is a good curriculum for post-16 pupils and especially good provision for all aspects of work related learning. Pupils with significant and complex needs make very good progress because staff skilfully adjust their teaching to provide support which helps to break down the barriers in pupils' learning. Pupils benefit from the appropriate emphasis on communication skills coupled with very good provision in mathematics and ICT. At all stages, learning of basic skills is developed very effectively through a varied and stimulating curriculum which incorporates elements of all National Curriculum subjects. Provision for personal, social and emotional development has a significant positive effect in developing the pupils' personal skills, their knowledge about personal safety and the advantages of a healthy lifestyle. There is a wide range of activities to take pupils out of the classroom, teaching them that new things can be learned in a variety of situations. The pupils especially enjoy the residential trip to the Isle of Wight and the chance to take part in challenges at outdoor centres.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Parents recognise that the school provides an exceptionally safe and caring environment for the pupils, a view shared by inspectors. Child protection procedures are exemplary and there is rigorous monitoring of risk assessments and health and safety issues. The pupils are encouraged into leading healthy lifestyles and they respond well to the exercise programmes and healthy food offered. The pupils, where necessary, are helped by an immensely valuable school initiated system of 'student support'. The adult in charge operates an excellent service which incorporates counselling and role play to help pupils identify and resolve their problems. If appropriate, these sessions are referred to a wide range of outside agencies. Pupils are aware and proud of the progress they are making through the successful merit system and the teachers' good use of praise and encouragement. Parents confirm that communication with the school is excellent and that they and their children are very well informed about progress and future targets at annual review meetings. Pupils receive high quality advice and support about careers when they are about to leave school for work or college.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership of the school has established a safe happy environment which supports all learners, promoting good progress in terms of their core skills and outstanding progress in personal development. The headteacher leads with passion and has a very strong commitment to school improvement. She is well supported by a competent senior team. The governing body is able to both support the school and hold the leadership to account, led by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable chair. Communication within the school is excellent. Staff are fully consulted and they feel involved and valued. The quality of professional training is very good and closely tailored to the personal development of individual staff and the needs of the school. Because of this the opportunities for pupils to succeed have been enhanced. The school leadership has developed extensive monitoring of each aspect of the school's provision. Subject leaders, for instance are effective, because their work is closely reviewed by the senior team. The tracking and analysis of pupils' achievement is very well developed and this has a significant impact on the pupils' good progress. The recording of each small step in the pupils' progress is not however, well used and managed. This detracts from teachers' ability to focus on each aspect of their pupils' achievement. Parents feel involved and they and all staff have a good understanding of the school's aims and development. The school has demonstrated its capacity to maintain improvement since the previous inspection by gaining three national achievement awards. It has good capacity to improve further. Senior staff are well informed about each aspect of the school's performance and evaluate its performance accurately. There are robust systems to evaluate and improve on the school's work.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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?	2	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	Yes
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The behaviour of learners	1	
The attendance of learners	1	
How well learners enjoy their education	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	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	1	

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	1

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	
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 are deployed to achieve value for money	1	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	Yes

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Not long ago I came to the school to see how you were getting on and whether there was anything I could suggest that would make the school better. You made me very welcome and I enjoyed meeting some of you. Thank you and well done!

I was with you for two days. That was long enough for me to realise that you get a good education. You make good progress in learning to do things for yourselves. I particularly enjoyed visiting you in the classrooms and talking to a group of pupils about school life. There were lots of other things that I liked. Here are a few: * You obviously enjoy coming to school; * The many different people working at the school look after you very well; * You are as independent as possible; * You show how well you care for each other and you behave very well.

The thing that I felt would make the school better is: * Teachers should agree on the best way to help you make progress in every lesson.