

# PASS: Positive Alternatives for Southampton Students

Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	133675
<b>Local Authority</b>	Southampton
<b>Inspection number</b>	354225
<b>Inspection dates</b>	15–16 November 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Helen Barter

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>School category</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	82
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The local authority
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Jane Smith
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 March 2009
<b>School address</b>	18 Melbourne Street Chapel Southampton SO14 5FB
<b>Telephone number</b>	02380 215 320
<b>Fax number</b>	02380 215 329
<b>Email address</b>	head@pass.southampton.sch.uk

---

<b>Age group</b>	11–16
<b>Inspection dates</b>	15–16 November 2010
<b>Inspection number</b>	354225

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester  
M2 7LA

T: 0300 1234 234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2010

## Introduction

When the school (then known as Southampton PRU The Melbourne School) was last inspected in March 2009 it was judged to require special measures because it was failing to provide an acceptable standard of education for its students. Subsequently, inspectors have made a series of monitoring visits to assess the school's progress.

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector visited 10 lessons and held meetings with staff, students and representatives from the management committee and local authority. The inspector observed the work of the school and looked at its self-evaluation and records demonstrating the progress made by students and the pastoral care given by staff. The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work, looking in detail at the following.

- How well students are challenged to make academic progress?
- The effectiveness of strategies to improve attendance and reduce persistent absenteeism.
- The quality of the curriculum for all students in the school and how well it is adapted for the specific difficulties of students at this school.
- The capacity of leaders and managers to ensure that strategies for improvement are sustained and effective in improving outcomes for students.

## Information about the school

PASS: Positive Alternatives for Southampton Students educates students with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. They have either been permanently excluded from mainstream schools or are at risk of permanent exclusion. PASS has reorganised and increased its provision and now comprises:

- The Melbourne School for Key Stage 4 students who are permanently excluded. It also provides an outreach service for students who refuse to attend school.
- The Satellite School (located at The Melbourne School) for up to eight Key Stage 3 and 4 students awaiting alternative placement or appeal or requiring tuition following the sixth day of an exclusion. It also serves as an alternative provision for vulnerable students at The Melbourne School.
- The Compass School is for Key Stage 3 students, who learn for half of their time at the school and half at Millbrook Youth School. Most students are on a nine-week programme in preparation for return to mainstream school, while some are permanently excluded.

In all parts of the school, there are more boys than girls. The majority of students are from White British backgrounds, with an increasing proportion from mixed White and Black Caribbean backgrounds. A significant proportion of students are looked after. Many students have experience of economic deprivation and some older students have an offending profile. The headteacher was permanently appointed from 1 November 2009. The deputy headteacher at The Melbourne School was appointed from 1 September 2009. The deputy headteacher at The Compass School was appointed from 1 September 2010. From 5 July 2010 the 0.6 Deputy Headteacher (SENCo) was made permanent to work across both schools.

**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**

**2**

## Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures. The school has made an impressive amount of progress over the past year. All aspects of its work have improved, so that the school now provides a satisfactory and improving standard of education and is well placed to sustain further development.

There has been a remarkable change in the school's culture and ethos. The students' personal needs are supported very well and their relationships with staff are positive because they know that genuine care and interest is shown in them. Students say they feel much safer and well cared for. However, the biggest shift has been in the school's drive to ensure that students' academic needs are of an equally high status. Students say they enjoy their lessons much more because they are engaged in activities that are purposeful and relevant. The curriculum is increasingly imaginative and tailored to individual needs. As a result, standards in Year 11 rose this year in all subjects from an exceptionally low point in 2009. While attainment overall is still below average, many more students are on track to reach their targets and gain more, and a greater range of, GCSE and equivalent qualifications than in the past.

The majority of students are now making the progress expected of them. Some are making very good gains in their learning in subjects such as information and communication technology and art and are closing the gap on what is expected of students of their age. The school's tracking of students' academic progress is now accurate and fit for purpose. As a result, the school has already identified that further improvements are required in teaching and provision for mathematics and science if students are to do equally as well in those subjects. While teaching has improved well and is satisfactory overall with some significant strengths, for example in physical education, there is not yet enough consistently good teaching to ensure that students' learning and progress are equally good in all lessons.

Tremendous improvements have been made in the care, guidance and support for students' welfare. A major strength of the school is the way in which staff identify and meet the particular needs of individuals. They are proactive in ensuring that additional support from specialist agencies is 'joined up' so that the needs of vulnerable students are met in the most effective way. All staff go out of their way to help students manage difficulties in their lives and to keep them safe. The school is a calm place because students behave satisfactorily and disrupt lessons less frequently because they want to learn. Concerted efforts have been made to improve students' attendance and there have been some notable successes amongst individuals, some of whom regularly achieve 100% attendance. The number of exclusions has drastically reduced since the start of the year and there is far less persistent absenteeism because students are offered choices for

**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

learning which engage their interest and commitment. The poor or erratic attendance of a minority of students means that attendance remains below the national average overall.

The improvements at PASS have been brought about through the determined and methodical leadership of the headteacher and other senior leaders, who have been well supported by the local authority. Through good self-evaluation, all have ensured that the school has remained focused on its prime purpose: to improve the outcomes for its students. Importantly, they have forged a vision for the future of the provision which is now understood and shared by local schools and other providers. The school is now well placed to build on its successes and can look forward confidently to the future.

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

- Improve students' attainment and ensure all make consistently good progress by:
  - improving the quality of teaching and provision for mathematics and science at both key stages
  - ensuring that the best practice which exists in teaching is spread so that teaching is consistently good in all parts of the school.
- Further improve the attendance of a minority of students by:
  - persevering with the agreed policies and procedures
  - ensuring that they and their parents and carers fully understand them.
- About 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.

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

**3**

Many students have had great difficulties at other educational settings and a history of a lack of success has affected their confidence and enjoyment of learning. Great strides have been made in turning students' attitudes to school around. While attendance remains below average, it has improved by 20% in one year. Many students have improved their attendance considerably because they want to come to school to learn and gain qualifications. In the past year, the number of students not going on to further education, employment or training has halved. Almost all leave the school with a clear idea of their future direction.

Students enjoy learning much more because lessons are increasingly adapted to meet their needs and they are offered courses in and out of school which they see as relevant for their future lives ahead. This enthusiasm for learning was seen in lessons such as food technology where students applied themselves with great concentration to make cheese-crust pizzas and chicken curry, which they then readily reproduce at home, and in construction, where students persevered to make accurate joints in wood in preparation for future projects. At a previous monitoring visit by the inspector, students who were persistent absentees were observed totally absorbed in learning brickwork skills at a local college. The outcome was so positive that they are now succeeding at the college on a higher-level course. In discussion, students demonstrated their improved attitudes, saying such things as 'lessons are fun with the teacher' and 'teachers really help you to learn'.

**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

Most students are now making the progress that they should be and some are moving forward quickly. Accurate assessment of need and bespoke literacy support programmes are helping students with particular additional needs to make good progress in reading and spelling, bringing them closer to expected levels for their age. Although the attainment of students remains below average, the increased range of publicly accredited courses offered improved attainment significantly this year. The school's tracking of students' progress shows that progress is accelerating in most subjects and is good in new courses such as construction and the BTEC Rock School Music course. Progress is satisfactory but slower in mathematics and science because there have been instabilities in teaching and less recent focus on developing the provision in these two subjects.

Students say that the school is much calmer now and they know they are safe because staff deal well with any problems. Students generally behave sensibly and most conform to the school's high expectations of them. Students love sport and physical activities, taking part eagerly in activities such as trampolining and in the new Compass School football team. Other aspects of healthy living are not embraced so enthusiastically, but some are responding well to encouragement not to smoke and there are fewer exclusions for this reason as a result. The students make a satisfactory contribution to the school community, not least in their improving social skills and better understanding of positive relationships and attitudes towards others, as seen when Compass students talked to Millbrook youth workers about the impact of bullying on others. Students are increasingly encouraged to express their views and opinions about all aspects of school life. Students nodded in agreement when one said, 'This school has really helped me to mature.'

**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

*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>	4
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>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	4
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</b>

<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

## How effective is the provision?

The transformation of the curriculum across the school has been the key to unlocking improvements in students' learning and progress. At The Compass School, the 'Challenge Me' curriculum combines different subjects in interesting and creative ways to meet students' needs in each cohort. It is carefully planned to ensure that curriculum requirements and basic skills are fully covered. Starting projects with a 'Wow' session, such as learning African drumming, rapidly engages and enthuses students. The SPICE programme, delivered jointly by teachers and youth workers, is proving effective in promoting students' personal development through properly planned learning activities.

At The Melbourne School, there is an increasingly strong vocational element and a good blend of academic and vocational choices through four pathways. The new BTEC courses are proving highly effective in engaging students' interest in learning while others are taking up new opportunities for early-entry examinations in mathematics and English. Work-experience placements suit the students' needs and aspirations and are much appreciated by them. The Satellite School curriculum is highly individualised to meet the students' needs and is particularly effective at keeping students in a learning frame of mind while changing schools or during a period of emotional instability.

Teachers now plan lessons carefully to take account of students' needs and use teaching assistants well to support learning. However, some teachers are more skilled than others at pinpointing what students should learn by the end of the lesson and at helping them to

**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

understand precisely, in dialogue or marking, what they need to do next in order to meet their targets. These inconsistencies in teaching mean that not all students consistently make the best possible progress. All staff are skilled at managing the students, using humour, warmth and their understanding of individuals when dealing with them. Students appreciate this saying, for example, 'The teachers are sensible but know how to communicate with you on your level.'

Thoroughly planned and regularly reviewed pastoral provision is at the heart of the school's journey to success. Staff across the school reflect carefully on the needs of each student and how best to address them and they are quick to engage the services of other agencies and institutions where appropriate. The school works very well with parents to support the students' wider well-being but recognises they need to persevere with strategies to improve low attendance which remains an issue. Much good work is done to help students move successfully on to college or jobs or back to mainstream schools. Transition between the Compass and Melbourne Schools is now well planned and organised so that no time is lost in learning upon transfer.

*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?

Since her appointment, the headteacher has clearly articulated a vision for the school's role at the heart of Southampton's educational provision for students who are excluded or at risk of exclusion. All members of the senior leadership team are pulling together to achieve this vision and, together, are a powerful force for change. All have a firmly embedded ambition to provide the very best education and know that there is no room for complacency now that the school has been removed from special measures. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and there is a secure understanding of what needs to be done next to ensure that outcomes for the students are good in all aspects. The leadership team have drawn on all available resources to put in place a good quality curriculum and have developed secure systems for ensuring good quality care and guidance of students. They have driven forward improvements in the quality of teaching and learning and already know, from focused monitoring, that they have not yet secured consistently good teaching across the school. The local authority has been supportive and challenging and has offered effective support to the management committee to now take on this role fully.

The school's systems and procedures, including those for safeguarding students and assessing health and safety risks, are thorough and clear. Staff are well trained and alert to safeguarding issues across the school and respond quickly and effectively if needed. The inadequacies of a year ago have been eradicated.

**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

As a result of the close attention to individual students' needs the school ensures that equality is promoted. There is no evidence of discrimination. Senior leaders have rightly focused on creating a cohesive community across the school and are now starting to build on this to extend the impact of this in the local area and further afield. The work to develop positive partnerships with mainstream schools and other educational provisions demonstrates the school's ability to move forward in this area. A remarkable change has taken place in helping mainstream schools understand the role of PASS in supporting their students towards re-integration or an appropriate alternative placement. The school has positive relationships with most parents and carers and has developed effective methods of communication with them through cards, letters, calls and regular meetings to discuss their children's progress.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<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>3</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Views of parents and carers

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for inspections conducted under Section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

However, the school had undertaken a survey of parents' views at the student progress reviews in October. Parents who responded to this were positive about the school, with nearly all saying that their children were happy to come. All respondents said that they found the progress reviews helpful and all cited positive feedback from the school, in a variety of ways, including phone calls and letters, about their children's progress. All parents felt that the school dealt with any problems that arise.

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

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

## 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are 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 and spring terms 2009/10 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 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.**



23 November 2010

Dear Students

**Inspection of PASS: Positive Alternatives for Southampton Students, Southampton SO14 5FB**

I am sure by now that you will have heard the very good news that your school is no longer in special measures. When I visited recently, I was impressed by all the improvements that had taken place and judged that the quality of education you receive is now satisfactory and improving quickly. It was a pleasure to meet you and see you in lessons and around the school. I can see that the school is a calmer and more positive place to be. You are enjoying lessons more and making progress in your learning. Your behaviour is better and you say that you feel safe in school. I hope that you will keep safe outside school too and work hard to lead healthier lifestyles. Well done to those of you who have worked hard to stop smoking.

Things have improved so much over the past year that the school can now stand on its own feet and knows what to do to improve things even more for you. Your headteacher and senior staff are ambitious for the school to be a place of excellence. They are going to start by making sure that teaching in mathematics and science is given a priority so that you can make better progress in those subjects. They are also going to make sure that you and the staff know exactly what you should be learning and what you need to do to reach your targets so that your progress speeds up even more.

You have a part to play in this. I hope that you will continue to work well and take up all the opportunities available to you, but there is one important thing that needs improving, that is attendance. Although some of you have excellent attendance and have really improved this, overall the attendance at the school is not good enough. You must all make every effort to attend, whether at school or on college or work places as you cannot make good enough progress if you do not turn up.

Thank you all for the welcome that you extended to me on my visits to the school and for answering my questions patiently. I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Helen Barter

Lead Inspector

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**