

Prestwood Lodge School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110577
Local Authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	356774
Inspection dates	22–23 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Stuart Charlton

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	68
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Philip Wallace
Headteacher	Ian McCaul
Date of previous school inspection	6 December 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Teaching and learning were observed in 13 lessons covering 12 teachers. Meetings were held with the Chair and Vice-chair of the governing body, the School Improvement Partner, a representative of the local authority, staff and students. The work of the school was observed and inspectors scrutinised the school improvement plan, the minutes of the leadership team and governing body meetings, a range of other documentation, including that for safeguarding, and 32 questionnaires from parents and carers.

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

- The effectiveness of the management structures at all levels in ensuring good quality provision for all students.
- The quality of systems to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning to determine if these are effective in ensuring that all students achieve as well as they can.
- Curriculum planning to ensure that it provides a balance between meeting the wide range of students' needs and their entitlement to an appropriate mix of academic, vocational and work-related provision.
- Patterns and trends of improvement to determine the impact of care, guidance and support on the outcomes for students.

Information about the school

Prestwood Lodge provides education for boys who have a statement of special educational needs for behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The vast majority have secondary and multiple needs often related to communication difficulties. Most students come from within the Buckinghamshire local authority. The overwhelming majority of students are from White British backgrounds with a very few of Mixed White and Black Caribbean and Asian origin. The school is designated to provide residential accommodation for students but at present this is not part of the statement of any student. The school operates an extended day up to 21:00 Monday to Thursday for about one third of its cohort. The school holds Healthy Schools status, the Sport England, Worklife Support and Swan awards. A new headteacher was appointed in April 2008 and a new senior management team was developed for Prestwood Lodge. In September 2010, the school formed a hard federation with another local special school with a new governing body. The present headteacher of Prestwood Lodge was appointed as the executive principal of the federated schools. The operational details of the federation are still under review and consequently, Prestwood Lodge continues to be managed by the senior management team established in September 2008.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Prestwood Lodge provides good education for its students. Since the appointment of the headteacher in April 2008, it has improved significantly and continues to do so. The care, guidance and support provided by all staff are excellent so students make very substantial gains in their confidence and self-esteem through developing strategies to manage their own behaviour. The school has excellent systems which are operated consistently by all staff and supported very effectively by the Behaviour Support Team. As a result, behaviour around the school and in classrooms is good and, for the vast majority, greatly improved from when they first started. This sets an ethos in which the majority of students make good progress in their academic learning and for some, progress is excellent. Students contribute extremely well to the school and the wider community and indicate that the school's safeguarding procedures provide a secure environment. The school has very good systems in place which are effective in promoting attendance and encouraging punctuality so that attendance is average. This represents excellent improvement compared with students' previous performance. Most parents and carers are pleased with the school and the positive effect it has on their children.

The curriculum is well balanced and gives a clear focus to the development of students' social and independent life skills. Students value highly the wide range of opportunities for physical activities and a good number explained how they have changed their lifestyle and become more health conscious. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers and support staff establish excellent relationships with the students and these are the basis of the excellent guidance and support for students' personal development. The staff know each student well and use this knowledge effectively to address students' personal needs, particularly those related to behaviour. However, in a few lessons, teachers do not use this information to best effect to adapt their teaching to maximise the progress made by each student in developing their subject skills.

The headteacher leads by example with vigour, enthusiasm and determination. He has a clear vision for the development of the school in the context of the newly formed federation. In communicating this to staff, he is well supported by the senior leadership team. Together they have established a stable staffing base, mapped out a clear path for improvement based on honest self-evaluation and developed effective teamwork across the teaching, support and administrative staff. The systems which have been implemented to determine attainment on entry, set challenging targets and monitor students' progress are rigorous and robust. They provide high quality information which gives a clear overview of the school's performance and provide a secure base for the Federation. The school has recognised that it does not use the skills of its senior managers to best effect in monitoring and evaluating its provision to further drive up the quality of teaching and learning. Recent changes to the governing body in terms of personnel and systems have enabled it to act more effectively to support and challenge the school's leadership and that

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of the federation. The school's work with parents and carers is good and partnerships with other professionals are used extremely well to meet students' needs and promote their well-being. The improvements which the school has effected on students' achievements, their behaviour and attitudes to learning during a period of considerable change and the effectiveness of its self-evaluation show that the capacity for further sustained improvement is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that in all lessons, teachers clearly adapt their teaching to maximise the development of each students' subject skills.
- Use the skills of senior managers to best effect in monitoring and evaluating the provision to further improve the quality of teaching and learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

All students gain nationally recognised qualifications which are well matched to their needs and aspirations. Attainment is broadly average. Given their below average starting points on entry, this represents good progress and achievement. There are no differences in the progress made by students with different needs or between different ethnic groups. The comprehensive range of behaviour management strategies used consistently in all lessons ensure that students make excellent progress in recognising what is needed to manage their own behaviour. In an excellent mathematics lesson for Year 7 students, the teacher used a very wide range of teaching styles and behaviour management strategies to ensure that all the learning needs of each individual were fully met. However, this exemplary practice is not consistent in all lessons.

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is based on the high expectations established by all staff and the role models they present to students. Students develop an excellent awareness of the need for a healthy lifestyle and this is recognised through the Healthy Schools award. They explained how they learn to keep fit both through timetabled physical education lessons and by participating in the extremely wide range of out-of-school activities. All feel safe and many explained how much this increases their enjoyment of school.

Most students have erratic attendance patterns when they first arrive at the school. However, because the first-day absence procedures are operated with rigour, but sympathetically, by staff, attendance rates improve rapidly. Students make an extremely positive contribution to their community through the student 'Forum', participation in staff recruitment panels, undertaking shopping trips with elderly residents and involvement in community events such as the local drama productions. The literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology qualifications students achieve, together with the gains in their personal skills, prepare them well for life when they leave the school.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

¹ 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 very supportive relationships established by staff with their students are strengthened through individual mentoring and tutorial sessions. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and in their planning they always identify the needs of each individual. However, in a few lessons, this does not extend to adapting their teaching approaches fully in order to ensure students make maximum progress in developing their specific subject skills. Generally teachers use resources, particularly interactive whiteboard technology, well to interest and engage students. In most lessons, the activities are well matched to students' levels of understanding, especially in design and technology, mathematics, science and information and communication technology.

Since the previous inspection, the school has radically overhauled its organisational structures. Students in Year 7 are taught in class groups by their own teacher and support assistants. From Year 8 and up to Year 11, students move to a secondary model and are taught in subject groups. This has been instrumental in allowing the school to overhaul its curriculum to give a good balance between academic, vocational and work-related opportunities. These changes have been relatively recent but set a very firm base for the move into federation with consequent increases in student numbers and better on-site facilities. Students are able to access a much wider range of qualifications than in the past, particularly those for functional skills in English, mathematics and information and communication technology.

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Staff make sure that all students, including those who arrive at different times, settle quickly and happily into life in the various aspects of the school's provision. Transition arrangements for those moving into the school and for those who move to further education or work are excellent and contribute extremely well to reducing students' anxieties. The highly consistent and successful approach taken by all staff to behaviour management ensures students make rapid improvements to their attitudes to school. Staff spend a great deal of time listening to students, giving them advice and promoting their well-being to overcome difficulties in their personal circumstances. They are given excellent guidance about careers and opportunities available when they leave the school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has brought a clear sense of purpose to Prestwood Lodge which is now driving the development of the federation and influencing the local authority provision for students with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The close working partnership with the senior leadership team has enabled them to ensure that effective systems have been implemented to monitor and evaluate provision at a whole-school level. However, the school has recognised that it can make better use of the skills of its senior managers so that all play a more active role in monitoring and developing classroom practice to improve the teaching and learning of subject skills. Staff are clear about what they need to do to improve and approach key developments enthusiastically, for example the introduction of vocational and work-related programmes in Key Stage 4. The changes in personnel on the federation governing body have enabled it to include a wider range of skills, particularly in terms of financial management. Streamlining its operational systems and structures has enabled it to be much more effective in supporting and challenging the school's leadership and ensuring that all statutory requirements are met.

An extremely strong feature of the provision is the link which has been established with other professionals, particularly social services and the police, which are extremely effective in reducing students' feelings of isolation and enhancing their self-esteem. The school's partnership with parents and carers ensures that they can be fully involved in their children's education if they so wish. Through its work, the school successfully challenges all aspects of discrimination and ensures that all students, including those who are most vulnerable because of their personal circumstances, have the opportunities they need to succeed in their lives after school.

Safeguarding and child protection procedures are good. They are top priority on everyone's agenda and effectively meet national requirements and guidelines. Risk

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assessments are thorough and detailed, reflecting the highly effective systems to manage behaviour. Recent amendments to these procedures have addressed concerns raised by parents and carers. The school's promotion of community cohesion is excellent. Highly effective links at local level are enhanced by work with higher education and mental health organisations in a national context. These have been extended into the international arena through interchanges with a school in Berlin.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

About half the number of parents and carers completed a questionnaire, which is above average for schools of this type. The vast majority are very satisfied with the school and the way in which it helps their children to develop the skills they will need in their future lives. Comments such as: 'My son is now performing very well academically and is receiving more help and encouragement to help him achieve and flourish both at home and school' reflect the findings of the inspection team. The school makes every effort to address the concerns of parents and carers and a significant proportion of the few negative comments reflect placement issues which are outside the remit of the school. The inspection findings clearly show that the negative comments do not accord with the overall good education and extremely high quality care, support and guidance that all students receive at Prestwood Lodge.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Prestwood Lodge 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 32 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 68 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	3	9	22	69	6	19	1	3
The school keeps my child safe	10	31	17	53	3	9	1	3
My school informs me about my child's progress	12	38	18	56	2	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	8	25	17	53	6	19	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	14	44	16	50	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	11	34	16	50	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	11	34	15	47	4	13	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)	11	34	18	56	1	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	9	28	20	63	2	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	41	15	47	3	9	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	38	16	50	2	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	12	38	17	53	1	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	14	9	14	4	2	6	1	3

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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



24 March 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of Prestwood Lodge School, Great Missenden HP16 0QQ

Thank you for all the help you gave us when we inspected Prestwood Lodge. We particularly enjoyed being able to talk to a good number of you. We agree with you when you told us that Prestwood Lodge provides you with good education and is extremely effective in helping you to manage your behaviour. Staff provide excellent care, guidance and support. We were able to see how the school enables you to have a 'second chance' in education and how you are helped and supported to gain qualifications which prepare you well for life after school. The small group sizes are a real help and, as one of you said, 'Lessons are fun and help me to get good qualifications'.

In a few of your lessons, we want teachers to make better use of the information they have about your needs so that they adapt the ways in which they teach you and maximise the progress you make in developing subject skills. We also want the school to make sure that better use is made of the skills of the senior managers in helping teachers to improve their lessons even further.

I know that you will try your very best at all times to help the staff to make the school even better.

Yours sincerely

Stuart Charlton Lead inspector

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