

SCHOOL INSPECTION SERVICE

Independent professional inspection of schools affiliated to the Focus Learning Trust

INSPECTION REPORT

**INSPECTION CARRIED OUT ACCORDING TO SECTION 162A
OF THE EDUCATION ACT 2002**

Name of school:	Prospect Primary School
DfE number:	803/6303
FOCUS number:	602
Inspection team:	Reporting Inspector: Mrs Eileen McAndrew Supporting Inspector: Mrs Meg Buckingham Lay Inspector: Mr Philip Hutchinson
Dates of inspection:	20th to 22rd June 2011

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SCHOOL DETAILS

Name of school:	Prospect Primary School
Address of school:	The Old Chapel Swineford Bristol BS30 6LN
Telephone number:	0117 9327976
Email address:	marian.page@focus-school.com
Proprietor:	Prospect Education Trust
Name of Chief Executive Officer:	Mr Chris Nunn
Name of Senior Teacher:	Mrs Helen Furlong
DfE number:	803/6303
FOCUS number:	602
Type of school:	Independent school affiliated to the Focus Learning Trust
Age range of pupils and students:	7-11
Gender of pupils:	Male and female
Total number on roll: (Full-time)	Boys: 18 Girls: 22
Number of pupils with statements of special educational need:	None
Annual fees:	N/A
Type of inspection:	Section 162A of the Education Act 2002
Inspection Team:	Reporting Inspector: Mrs Eileen McAndrew Supporting Inspector: Mrs Meg Buckingham Lay Inspector: Mr Philip Hutchinson
Dates of inspection:	20 th to 22 rd June 2011

SECTION A: INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

Purpose and scope of the inspection:

This inspection was carried out by the School Inspection Service in accordance with Section 162(A) (1)(b) of the Education Act 2002, and it follows the inspection framework laid down by the Service and the Focus Learning Trust (FLT) and agreed with the Department for Education (DfE). It was conducted by independent professional inspectors who looked at all aspects of the school's provision as required by the current regulations. The professional inspectors were accompanied by a trained lay inspector who looked at agreed aspects of the school's management and ethos and reported on these to the Focus Learning Trust. His findings are summarised in Section C of this document, but this section is not a statutory part of the inspection process.

Information about the school:

Prospect Primary School is an independent day school affiliated to FLT for girls and boys aged seven to eleven from the Brethren community in and around the city of Bristol. The school was established on its current site in Swineford in South Gloucestershire in 2008 following the earlier successful establishment of the secondary school in Bristol. There are currently forty pupils on roll in Years 3 to 6. There are two classes, one for pupils in Years 3 and 4 and one for pupils in Years 5 and 6. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs. The school aims are *'to provide students with a well balanced and fulfilling education, to bring out the potential of each student, to promote respect for authority, other persons and property and the ability to get along with others'*.

The school was last inspected in June 2009.

Summary of main findings:

Prospect Primary School succeeds in providing a good quality of education for its pupils. Pupils of all abilities make good progress as a result of good teaching within a well-planned and good quality curriculum. Assessment is good and support for pupils with special needs is very effective. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good; their behaviour is excellent and they enjoy coming to school. Procedures to safeguard pupils' welfare are satisfactory, pastoral care is good and pupils feel safe in school. Nonetheless, the most recently appointed member of staff has not undertaken training in child protection, as required. Strategies to safeguard against bullying are in place and effective, but the school has not implemented the updated FLT policy which has regard to the most recent DfE guidance. In its recruitment of staff, Trustees failed to obtain a written reference to support one appointment. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and believe their children make good progress.

The school meets all but three of the regulatory requirements.

What the school does well:

- it provides a broad and interesting curriculum supported by effective teaching;
- its support for individual pupils is consistently good;

- its pastoral care is good; and
- it develops good relationships between adults and pupils.

What the school must do to comply with the regulations:

- ensure that all staff receive training in child protection in accordance with DfE guidance *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (2007) (SCSRE)*;
- implement the written FLT policy to prevent bullying which has regard to the DfE guidance *'Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools'*; and
- ensure that written references are obtained prior to appointment for all members of staff.

The school complies with the Equality Act 2010.

Next Steps

While not required by the regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- to review the scheme of work for history;
- to provide more opportunities for pupils to write extended pieces of work across the curriculum;
- to implement the FLT marking policy consistently so that all marking reflects the quality of the best practice; and
- to organise training for staff in the use of cognitive ability tests (CATs).

SECTION B: COMPLIANCE WITH REGULATIONS FOR REGISTRATION

PART 1 - The quality of education provided by the school

The quality of the curriculum

The curriculum is of a good quality ensuring that all pupils have a wide learning experience which includes all subjects of the National Curriculum except information and communication technology (ICT). Personal, social and health education (PSHE), citizenship and French add significant breadth to the curriculum.

Planning is constructively informed by the programmes of study of the National Curriculum, curricular guidance from published schemes of work approved by FLT and a range of other good quality published resources. This includes informative guidance specifically designed to support planning for mixed-age groups in order to help avoid unnecessary repetition or omission across subjects. This is used very effectively to design the two-year cycle of topics for each class. Long-term planning outlines briefly but clearly what will be taught across the year in each subject in each class. Medium-term planning specifies in greater detail how topics will be developed each term. Planning for progression in pupils' learning within specific subjects is generally very effective but in history the non-chronological topics result in a rather fragmented and piecemeal learning experience. Teachers are aware of the need to review this area of learning. Teachers use the schemes of work to plan in slightly differently ways but both modify and adapt them skilfully and flexibly to meet the needs of the pupils in their classes. From the medium-term planning, good quality lesson plans are produced taking into account information from assessment. In addition teachers are adept at identifying links between subjects helping pupils to understand how learning in one subject can help them to understand and extend their learning in another.

Literacy and numeracy are given a consistently high priority and this strong emphasis contributes to the pupils' good progress in these areas. Personal development is fostered in PSHE and citizenship lessons and extended through assemblies, contributing significantly to pupils' good personal development.

The number of pupils who are identified as having special educational needs is unusually high. Provision for these pupils is good. They are very effectively supported in lessons or in small withdrawal groups by teaching assistants who are well briefed by teachers and have a clear understanding of individual pupils' needs. Currently the school has no qualified special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) with overall responsibility for this provision.

Enrichment activities have been introduced to extend and enhance the curriculum since this was identified as a weakness at the last inspection. Aspects of the creative and expressive arts such as drama, cookery, craft, sewing and gardening are highly valued and greatly enjoyed by the pupils who expressed their satisfaction in discussion with inspectors. This enrichment provision also gives pupils some opportunities to research areas of particular interest and present their findings to the other pupils.

The school makes good use of visits to museums, cultural centres and sites of historical interest to make learning more immediate, exciting and varied. These

activities add substantially to the quality and depth of pupils' learning through direct experience of the world around them.

The quality of teaching and assessment

The quality of teaching and assessment is good. Almost all the teaching is good, supported by effective lesson planning that takes account of prior assessments and the teachers' good knowledge of individual pupils. As a consequence pupils make good progress and achieve well. Lessons are well structured and make effective use of the available time. Teachers make clear to pupils what they are expected to learn and how this relates to previous work. The tasks are generally well matched to the pupils' differing abilities in the mixed-aged classes. Pupils develop positive attitudes to learning: they enjoy their work, show interest and engagement and are able to concentrate on the tasks they are given. Their excellent behaviour contributes to the brisk pace of lessons and to their good rate of progress.

Teachers use an appropriate range of strategies to ensure that pupils have opportunities to learn in different ways. Pupils collaborate effectively in paired and small group work sharing their knowledge and contributing to their own and each other's understanding. This is supported by the good relationships between teachers and pupils and between pupils themselves. Pupils are eager to participate in lessons because teachers establish good routines, make their expectations clear and plan effective support for groups and individuals.

Where the teaching is particularly effective, well-targeted questioning challenges pupils of different abilities to think independently and pupils are actively encouraged to express their ideas to clarify their thinking and to listen to the contributions of others to increase their understanding. In a Year 5 and 6 literacy lesson, pupils were confident in expressing their opinions while increasingly appreciating that they must be able to justify their views from the close reference to the text they were studying. In the small minority of lessons where teaching was satisfactory rather than good, pupils spent too long on routine tasks which demanded too little of them so that although they carried out the task, their rate of learning declined. Pupils have some opportunities to write extended pieces of work but in some subjects, such as history, valuable opportunities are missed through the overuse of published worksheets. These materials often restrict the scope for pupils to demonstrate, through extended responses, precisely what they know and understand.

Teaching assistants are well briefed by the class teacher and provide effective support to those pupils identified as needing additional support, particularly with literacy and numeracy. Teachers make effective use of the interactive white boards which facilitate a swift rate of targeted instruction supported by good quality diagrams, illustrations and notes to support pupils' learning. In a Year 5 and 6 lesson, the skilful use of the whiteboard contributed significantly to the range of examples the teacher was able to use to introduce, practise and reinforce a complex mathematical concept. Pupils' learning is further supported with good quality resources including textbooks, a suitable range of fiction and non-fiction books in the library area, practical mathematics materials and equipment for physical education (PE).

The school has identified sixteen out of the forty pupils on roll as having special educational needs. The majority of these pupils have been assessed by external professionals resulting in diagnoses including a range of learning, emotional and behavioural difficulties. However, only a small number required specialist support.

Five pupils have received support for speech and language difficulties through a six-week course in school and one pupil is to receive a ten-week course in occupational therapy. The remaining ten pupils are supported appropriately through the routine classroom provision of well-planned differentiated teaching with effective small group support from teacher assistants. This small group support within lessons and through withdrawal groups is of good quality, with a strong emphasis on developing literacy and numeracy. Such in-class support continues in other subject lessons, helping pupils to access learning across the curriculum.

Procedures for monitoring and assessing pupils' progress are generally good. Teachers' marking is generally methodical but some is more cursory and inconsistent in quality. Where marking is most effective pupils are given a clear indication of what they have done well and how to improve, as noted particularly in pupils' books in Year 3 and 4. Detailed written comments tell pupils precisely why their work is good and in the best examples draw their attention to what they need to do next. The tone of such comments is affirming and likely to encourage the pupils to continue their efforts and try hard in future. On occasion, pupils' work is not marked up to date and some untidy presentation goes without comment. Effective use is made of the school's colour-coded system to help pupils assess their own work and identify where they need support.

The use of National Curriculum attainment levels to assess pupils' progress is well established and effective. The school currently has no reliable baseline on entry from which to measure pupils' progress as information from pupils' previous schools is incomplete. This matter is being addressed. Teachers undertake routine assessments from the beginning of Year 3 using the National Curriculum levels of attainment and continuing each term. In this way the school is building up a record of each pupil's attainment over time. This is an improvement since the last inspection. In addition, the school administers the end of year tests required by FLT. Targets are set for pupils in literacy and numeracy and pupils' progress is tracked with the help of parent volunteers who withdraw pupils from lessons on a weekly basis. Volunteers are well briefed in this task by the class teacher and pupils are increasingly able to show how they are achieving their targets with direct reference to the work they are doing. Teachers are adept at assessing pupils' progress in specific learning during lessons through their own observations and through the support work carried out by well-briefed teaching assistants.

The school carries out CATS in Year 4 and Year 6 in accordance with FLT practice. These tests assess pupils' capabilities in key areas and in addition, provide teachers with valuable predictions of pupils' likely levels of attainment by the end of Key Stages 2 and 3 and at GCSE level. They are a valuable source of information on individual pupils to use alongside other assessments. However, the tests are not yet utilised by the school because staff have not received appropriate training.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes

PART 2 - The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They enjoy school, as their positive attitudes, excellent behaviour and high levels of attendance testify. The school is small and pupils know each other well and relate together harmoniously showing encouragement and care for one another.

Pupils' social development is good. They look after each other in classrooms and at playtimes and say that the 'buddy bench' is often used to make friends. Their attitude to work is good, and they are prepared to be interested and involved in their work. In paired and group work they listen well to each other and take turns without fuss. Members of the school council are able to explain its purpose and they take their responsibilities seriously. Pupils make a contribution to the school community and are also learning to understand how decisions are made to benefit everyone. Pupils show an increasing awareness of their responsibility to help others in the wider community and do so through collections for charities such as the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association, the local air ambulance service and the Royal National Lifeboat Institution.

Pupils' moral development is good. The family background within the Brethren community gives pupils a strong moral sense with a Bible-based foundation of Christian beliefs. Throughout the school moral development is fostered effectively as pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions. They grow in understanding of right and wrong and appreciate that the choices they make have consequences. The rewards system of merits encourages pupils to behave well and they respond with positive attitudes. In conversation with inspectors, pupils of all ages said that they like school and it is 'a happy place' where they feel safe and where children get on well together.

The pupils gain a broad understanding of public institutions and services through exploring a wide range of interesting topics in lessons in citizenship and PSHE. Their cultural development is good and is extended as they are introduced to progressive learning experiences in literature, art and music. Topics in geography, supported by a good selection of books in the library, introduce pupils to peoples of different nationalities and cultures, helping them to develop their understanding and appreciation of others whose lives may be different from their own.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes

PART 3 - The welfare, health and safety of pupils

Provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is satisfactory. Pastoral care is good and pupils feel safe and well looked after. The child protection policy and procedures are satisfactory and training has been undertaken by all but the most recently appointed member of staff. There are effective anti-bullying procedures. Pupils said in discussion with inspectors that there was no bullying in school but should it occur they knew what to do and were confident it would be swiftly addressed. Nevertheless, the school does not implement the most recent FLT policy which includes additional required guidance from the DfE. The policy supporting visits out of school is comprehensive and risk assessments are carried out rigorously.

Fire safety is carefully considered, thorough fire risk assessments are carried out and fire-fighting equipment is regularly checked and maintained by specialist providers. The first aid policy is supported by qualified members of staff.

Aspects of nutrition and healthy eating are explored in science and PSHE and reinforced through encouraging pupils to include healthy options in their lunch and snacks. They understand that exercise is an important part of healthy living and enjoy their PE and games lessons.

The admission and attendance registers comply fully with regulations.

The school fulfils its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

No

What does the school need to do in order to fully meet the requirements?

In order to comply in full with the Independent Schools' Standards Regulations 2003, the school should:

- *ensure that all members of staff receive child protection training (paragraph 7); and*
- *implement the FLT written policy on bullying which has regard to the most recent DfE guidance (paragraph 10).*

PART 4 - Suitability of the staff, supply staff and proprietors

All staff have been subject to satisfactory clearance with the Criminal Records Bureau at an enhanced level. The school carries out other essential checks on staff prior to the confirmation of staff appointments but in one case did not request written references prior to appointment even though the FLT recruitment policy makes explicit the need to do so. The single central record otherwise fully meets requirements.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

No

What does the school need to do in order to fully meet the requirements?

In order to comply in full with the Independent Schools' Standards Regulations 2003, the school should:

- *ensure that written references are obtained prior to appointment for all members of staff (paragraph 19(2)(b)).*

PART 5 - Suitability of the premises and accommodation

The school occupies what was formerly a Victorian chapel with immediate access to fields. The premises and accommodation are only just adequate in size for the current numbers on roll and trustees are actively seeking more spacious premises. The good quality refurbishment, of the accommodation provides a safe, well maintained environment with all the requisite facilities for effective learning. The two classrooms provide attractive and interesting learning environments where pupils' work is displayed and celebrated, though the Year 5 and 6 classroom is barely adequate in size. Good use is made of the outside space which is well suited to physical activities with an all-weather surface and grassed area. Older pupils are able to work in small groups outside so as not to disturb each other, using the picnic benches and the small pergola as a natural extension of their classroom. Similarly, the immediate countryside is used for first-hand ecological work, as in a Year 3 and 4 science lesson when pupils searched for mini-beasts as part of their investigations on habitats. A small garden area with raised beds created by pupils during enrichment time currently shows a healthy, well-tended crop of salad vegetables.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes

PART 6 - The quality of information for parents

The school provides a good range of information through its prospectus and handbook, which are given to every parent. These give details of the curriculum, organisation and day-to-day work of the school and the policies which underpin provision. The weekly colourful newsletter keeps parents informed about current activities and events. Meetings for parents are held twice a year with frequent additional opportunities for ad hoc discussions. There is also a Friends of Prospect Primary group set up by parents and staff who meet and agree fund raising for specific items of expenditure. Three reports are written for parents each year to help ensure that they are kept well informed about their children's progress. These are generally of a good standard but in some cases lack specific detail about a pupil's strengths and areas for improvement in a particular subject. They also invite comment from parents. Almost every parent responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire and these confirm the overwhelming satisfaction of parents with the school and with the information they receive on their child's progress.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes

PART 7 - The effectiveness of the school's complaints procedure

The school has formally adopted and implemented the FLT complaints policy. No complaints have been received during the past year.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes

SECTION C: ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT, AND MAINTENANCE OF THE ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL

This section is not a requirement of the Education Act 2002. The business organisation and management of the school were inspected by the Lay Inspector, who has written this section of the report.

The quality of the organisation and management of the school

The school provides for primary pupils from Bristol and has a Senior Teacher supported by one qualified teacher, one HLTA and one teaching assistant. The Trust is responsible for this primary school as well as a secondary school on a different site and comprises ten Trustees, one of whom is specifically responsible for this primary school. More attention to detail is required in the overall management of the school to ensure legal compliance with all aspects of regulations. A closer management overview would help to ensure that in future, all policies and guidance relevant to regulation which are sent from FLT are appropriately disseminated and implemented. In another area of management, the Trustees should make clear what authority and areas of responsibility are delegated by them to the Senior Teacher.

The accommodation is adequate for the present roll and the pupils enjoy coming to school in well-resourced surroundings.

A section of the main Trust meetings is reserved for matters concerning this school. These meetings have an agenda, but the minutes should be signed off at subsequent meetings as a true record.

It was noted that some specific delegated responsibilities of Trustees in the Trust do not appear to be applied to Prospect Primary. Pastoral care arrangements are working well in the school but regular attention should be given to this by a Trustee.

In the light of the restricted staff accommodation and the need for privacy and personal working space, as well as accommodation for any increase in roll, the Trust should continue their efforts to relocate the school to more spacious premises.

Could the organisation and management of the school be improved?

The Trustees might like to take into consideration the following suggestions as to where specific improvements could be made:

- ensure legal compliance of statutory and FLT policy requirements as a matter of urgency. To assist in this, a more structured use of the secretarial resource could be utilised to support the Senior Teacher and to ensure that the school is aware of, and acts upon, ongoing changes to these requirements;
- ensure that all staff have the training and qualifications for the responsibilities assigned to them, in particular setting out clearly and thoroughly the individual responsibilities of the Senior Teacher and providing a detailed job description so that the Senior Teacher and the Trust understand the division of responsibility. Further to this, strengthen the decision making process to support the Senior Teacher more effectively and ensure that she has the necessary training to fulfil the responsibilities of her role. It would be a beneficial step towards helping her to carry out her duties to set up opportunities for observing how other successful FLT primary units are managed; and

- extend Trust minutes to indicate that items with an 'action' requirement have been followed up at the subsequent meeting(s), and sign off all minutes as a true record.

This report has been prepared by the School Inspection Service, which provides independent professional inspection of all schools affiliated to the Focus Learning Trust. Further copies of the report are available from the Operations Manager of the Focus Learning Trust, Siskin House, Siskin Drive, Coventry, or from the School Inspection Service website: www.schoolinspectionsservice.co.uk