

# 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
DCSF number: FOCUS number:	801/6027 603
Inspection team:	Reporting Inspector: Peter Jones  Supporting Inspector: Eileen McAndrew  Lay Inspector: Douglas Siderfin
Dates of inspection:	17 <sup>th</sup> – 19 <sup>th</sup> November 2009

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## SCHOOL DETAILS

Name of school: Prospect Senior School

Address of the school: Tramway Road, off Bath Road, Brislington, Bristol  
BS4 3DS

Email address: [richard.smith@focus-school.com](mailto:richard.smith@focus-school.com)

Telephone number: 0117 977 2271

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Proprietor: Prospect Education Trust

Name of Chief Executive Officer: Mr R H Smith

Name of Senior Teacher: Mrs L Sherrin

DCSF number: 801/6027

FOCUS number: 603

Type of school: Independent school affiliated to the Focus Learning Trust

Age range of pupils and students: 11 - 18

Gender of pupils: Male and female

Total number on roll: (Full time) Boys: 32 Girls: 24

Number of post-16 students: Boys: 13 Girls: 4

Number of pupils with statements of special educational need:  
Boys: 0 Girls: 0

Annual fees: No fees payable

Type of inspection: Section 162A of the Education Act 2002

Inspection Team: Reporting Inspector: Peter Jones  
Supporting Inspector: Eileen McAndrew  
Lay Inspector: Douglas Siderfin

Dates of inspection: 17<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> November 2009

## **PART 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 and agreed with the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). 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 is a small independent day school of Christian character for boys and girls aged eleven to eighteen. It is situated in the Brislington district of Bristol and serves pupils from the Greater Bristol, south Gloucestershire and north Somerset areas. It was registered as an independent school with the DfES in August 2003. After being visited by an inspector from the Office for Standards in Education it received its final registration in April 2005. Prior to the current inspection the school was last inspected in January 2007. Prospect Educational Trust also runs a primary school on a separate site and that school did not form part of this inspection.

At the time of the current inspection the school had 54 pupils on roll (32 boys and 24 girls) of whom 17 (13 boys and 4 girls) were in the sixth form. The school has no pupils with statements of special educational need.

### **Summary of main findings:**

Prospect is a successful school which fulfils its aims and offers pupils a good quality education well suited to their future needs. The curriculum is broad and balanced. The teaching is good and on occasions excellent, using skilful strategies to ensure pupils are fully involved and enjoy their lessons. The school makes outstanding provision for the welfare, health and safety of its pupils. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is excellent. The school has appropriate procedures for staff recruitment, and all trustees, staff and volunteers have been subject to clearance with the Criminal Records Bureau. The Single Central Register complies with regulations.

### **What the school does well:**

- it provides a well balanced curriculum;
- its good, imaginative teaching strategies, modelled by senior staff, ensure that pupils enjoy learning;
- its teachers' high quality marking helps pupils understand their learning targets;

- its pupils make very good progress and achieve well in public examinations;
- its pupils develop into confident and socially aware young people who know their own minds and their responsibilities in society; and
- it is helped significantly in its work by the support given by its parent body and its community.

**What the school must do to comply with the regulations:**

- The school is compliant with regulatory requirements.

## **PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH REGULATIONS FOR REGISTRATION**

### **The quality of education provided by the school**

#### **The quality of the curriculum**

The curriculum is of good quality providing an effective framework within which pupils learn purposefully and make outstanding progress. The curriculum is well managed and effectively organised by the senior teacher. Although the school is very small the curriculum ensures that pupils have a wide learning experience throughout all key stages. At Key Stage 3 the curriculum includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum, personal, social, and health education, citizenship, Bible studies, Latin, French and Spanish. The creative arts are fostered through provision for art, textiles and work with resistant materials.

This broad provision is continued into Key Stage 4 so that pupils are able to maintain their study of a wide range of subjects with a good balance of academic, creative and vocational courses. The school gives continuing attention to extending the choices it provides so as to offer pupils of differing abilities courses which are intrinsically interesting and worthwhile. All pupils take English, mathematics and double award science at General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) level and most pupils are expected to undertake eight or more subjects. Results consistently exceed those achieved by students nationally. The Awards Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) bronze, silver and gold awards offer a good range of practically based courses for those pupils most likely to benefit from skills-based learning. The communication, literacy and information technology course (CLAIT) provides a secure introduction to the acquisition of essential skills in information and communication technology. Careers education is directly supported by a member of the Brethren community and all pupils in Year 10 undertake a week of work experience in a variety of business settings.

The curriculum in the sixth form succeeds in providing a range of academic subjects including English, mathematics and French alongside the more vocationally orientated subjects of law, business studies, accounting and product design. In discussion, pupils in the sixth form felt that considering the size of the school, they were offered a good range of subjects which allowed them scope for individual choice.

Curriculum planning is effectively informed by the National Curriculum programmes of study and the policy and guidance provided by the Focus Learning Trust (FLT). At Key Stage 3 the curriculum is strongly supported by schemes of work for each subject developed by individual departments. Good use is made of national guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) as well as published materials in compiling this essential level of planning. The format of the schemes of work varies, as does the amount of detail included, but all are satisfactory and some, for example, English and mathematics, are very good. Long term planning specifies the topics which will be studied during the year by pupils in each year group. The most effective medium term planning identifies the time allocated for each unit of learning and includes key elements such as pupils' prior learning, objectives, outcomes, assessment opportunities, and links to other subjects, the range of resources and the next steps.

The planning is based effectively on the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and these aspects are given a high priority. This strong emphasis contributes to the pupils' rapid progress in these areas. Personal development is effectively fostered through personal, social and health education (PSHE) together with citizenship which contributes significantly to pupils' outstanding development.

Provision for the small number of pupils with learning difficulties is good. The procedures to identify their needs are thorough and the special needs coordinator works closely with good quality specialist support from FLT.

The school makes good use of visits to museums, exhibitions and sites of historical and geographical interest, as well as to locations such as the car production plant near Oxford to study manufacturing techniques or a major department store to find out about business management and accounting. The interest and engagement of pupils in these visits was evident to inspectors from the quality of their accounts and their wholehearted enjoyment of them. These first-hand experiences bring the curriculum to life, adding immediacy and relevance to pupils' work in class. Similarly, well chosen visits from organisations such as the Royal Air Force and the Red Cross add a further dimension to the quality of pupils' general knowledge and understanding.

### **The quality of teaching and assessment**

The quality of teaching is good overall and in some lessons outstanding. However, there is a small proportion of teaching which is no better than satisfactory. The high quality of teaching in English in particular does much to support pupils' progress in other subjects. Teachers usually show confident and often strong subject knowledge and a thorough understanding of how to teach their subjects. Teaching is generally well planned. The most effective teachers use skilful strategies to ensure very good learning. For example, in a Year 7 geography lesson on map reading the teacher used pupils' prior experience to make sure they understood the interesting and challenging tasks set for them. This gave them clear targets to achieve, maintained a brisk pace and checked on their understanding at the end of the lesson. It was reinforced with homework which built on and consolidated their progress in map reading. This good quality teaching creates an environment which actively supports learning. Support for pupils with learning difficulties is good. For example in a Year 8 English lesson teaching was very precisely targeted, providing well chosen next steps and specifying time frames, building the confidence of less able pupils in their ability to succeed.

Where teaching is less effective, lessons do not fully exploit the possibilities of the subject, pupils are not sufficiently challenged and the pace of the lesson slows. In these lessons progress, though satisfactory, is not as good as it could be given the attitudes and abilities of the pupils.

Teachers have good knowledge of the requirements of the National Curriculum and public examinations, and this helps pupils achieve consistently high levels of success in public examinations. Thinking skills are developed carefully by teachers through well-considered class discussions which challenge pupils, including those in Key Stage 3, to think 'on their feet'.

Marking is almost invariably good. It usually gives clear indications to pupils of what they have achieved and what they need to do to improve. Marking often includes

very full written comments to explain and correct specific points and give guidance to pupils for further work.

The school makes very good use of assessment. Teachers make accurate assessments of pupils' work, and good records of progress over time are kept. This information is consistently shared with pupils to help them understand how well they are doing, and how they can improve. The pupils' understanding of levels and grades is noticeably strong and consistent across the subjects, and this is very effective in helping them to make excellent progress. The small numbers involved in examinations means that the school is readily able to discern trends and patterns in examination results over recent years and to plan and adjust their teaching accordingly to maintain the high standards achieved.

All pupils are entered for national tests at the end of Key Stage 3 and for GCSE at the end of Year 11. Sixth form pupils take appropriate AS and A level examinations together with vocationally-oriented subjects including business studies and accounting.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes.

**The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils**

Pupils' personal development is outstanding as a result of the school's rich and well-considered provision. The ethos of the school supported by Bible study, the work of teachers, the curriculum in PSHE and citizenship and the tenor of every day life in the school combine to create a harmonious atmosphere where pupils can thrive. Pupils' moral development is supported by the same means and encouraged by the role models of the staff and community.

Relationships within the school are very good. Pupils and staff treat each other with respect and good humour. Pupils increasingly develop their sense of self worth and a belief in their ability to achieve because teachers strive to foster good habits of working and the expectation that they will use their talents to good effect. Pupils of all ages and abilities respond with alacrity, and make rapid progress.

The school celebrates achievement and effort and pupils appreciate the recognition of their efforts through the award of house points. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding in lessons and around the school. They have positive attitudes, taking responsibility for their learning and for wider school activities within the house system, the Council or in fund raising. They study the achievements of ancient cultures and learn about their cultural heritage from which society benefits. The school values the creative arts extending this understanding through aspects of work in art, design, textiles and resistant materials. In history, pupils study the twentieth century and consider the effects of global conflict on different communities. Visitors, some of whose work centres on those in need, contribute to pupils' wider understanding by helping them to appreciate the dangers of stereotyping those people whose circumstances are very different from their own. Work in citizenship contributes significantly to pupils' understanding of life in Britain and to developing increasing awareness of life in a wider diverse society.

Pupils of different ages made it clear in discussions just how very much they enjoy coming to school. Their good levels of attendance are a testimony to this. They

believe they make very good progress which will help them as they grow up. They take pride in their work, try hard to succeed at the tasks they are set and achieve well.

Pupils understand and value being part of a community and successfully develop a sense of their duty to contribute to the well being of others as, for example, in their presentations for each other and for their parents. They cooperate, communicate very effectively and readily support each other in class or in wider ventures such as the School Council or working in their houses to produce the newsletter for parents. Older pupils undertake work experience enabling them to learn something of life in the workplace and how their individual skills and talents may be put to use in their future careers. Similarly, aspects of financial management are studied in accountancy and business studies where their family experience contributes significantly to the level of pupils' knowledge and understanding.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes.

**The welfare, health and safety of pupils**

The quality of welfare, health and safety of pupils is outstanding. There are very clear written policies and guidance for staff on pastoral care which ensure the safety and wellbeing of pupils. The school has a very firmly established ethos of mutual respect and decorum, which, together with effectively organised systems of supervision, ensures that pupils feel safe and well supported. The very high standards set by the senior teacher, the conscientious work of the teachers and volunteers and the unique community-related aspects of the school strongly support this outstanding provision. Pupils are allocated to a form tutor who stays with the same group throughout their time in school and who also teaches PSHE to them, so is able to tailor these lessons to meet current pastoral care concerns. This builds up high levels of mutual trust and helps pupils feel safe and secure.

Pupils have good, positive and well informed attitudes to staying healthy. A programme of twice-weekly sport and physical education sessions for all ensures that they participate in regular exercise. Pupils learn about healthy eating in science and PSHE. The school has a suitable Child Protection policy, and the designated Child Protection Officers, who are the senior teacher and another teacher, have both had recent training in child protection organised through the local authority. The school has an appropriate plan which fulfils its duties under the Disability Discrimination Act 2002.

The school uses the Focus Learning Trust anti-bullying policy and deals quickly and effectively with any incidents. It has suitable arrangements for the provision of First Aid and two full-time members of staff are trained First Aiders.

Regular fire drills are carried out and logged, and the school has an up-to-date fire risk assessment provided by the local fire authority. The school has an appropriate risk assessment policy and procedures for out-of-school visits.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes.

### **Suitability of the proprietor and staff**

The school has clear procedures for staff recruitment and for the checking of trustees, staff and volunteers. All have been subject to satisfactory clearance with the Criminal Records Bureau. The Single Central Register complies with the regulations.

#### ***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes

### **Suitability of the premises and accommodation**

The premises and accommodation are of adequate quality and suitable for their purpose. The school is located on a small self-contained site mainly of tarmac surfaces but with some adjacent areas of grass and shrubs. The classroom blocks consist of several one-storey demountable buildings. These provide adequate if not generous teaching spaces and offices, and allow the school to deliver most of its curriculum, including design and technology in a workshop and science in a small laboratory which permits practical work but with limited space. The school does not have facilities for PE or games on site. The buildings are contained in a relatively small space but are generally well positioned and easy for pupils to access. The play spaces including a small paved yard and two grassed areas are just about adequate. The premises are well maintained and in good decorative order.

#### ***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes.

### **The quality of information for parents**

Relationships between the school and parents are very good and parents express very positive views about the school. The school issues an accurate and informative prospectus which provides a guide to its ethos and practice, including its curriculum. The prospectus explains how parents and prospective parents can access information about the school's policies, procedures and academic performance. A useful and practical handbook is also issued to parents providing further guidance on the workings of the school, including all its major policies. The school ensures that parents are kept fully informed about their child's progress at school through two progress reports and an annual full report each year, all of which are very thorough and keep parents up-to-date with their child's progress. Parents also have the opportunity to discuss their child's progress with teachers at annual parents' evenings.

#### ***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes.

### **The effectiveness of the school's complaints procedure**

The school uses a standard complaints procedure authorised by FLT and used in all its schools. There have been no formal complaints in the last year.

#### ***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes.

## **PART C: ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT**

*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**

Prospect School is a good school operating successfully in not the easiest physical environment. However, the facilities available have been made more than adequate for the 56 students. The staff all seem to be well satisfied. The overall picture is of a well ordered and controlled school, showing up effectively on close inspection.

The nine trustees, the Chief Education Officer and the senior teacher, along with her team of staff work well as a co-ordinated unit. There is clear evidence of mutual trust and respect. FLT guidelines are followed closely in all areas. The trustees meet monthly with an agenda distributed beforehand and minutes after. They are kept fully informed of developments, financial and otherwise. Cross communication is good with the full assistance of e-mail.

#### ***Could the organisation and management of the school be improved?***

Although the school runs smoothly, the trustees have in mind to up-grade the management structure chart to show individual responsibilities clearly. This will appear in a future prospectus.

**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](http://www.schoolinspectionsservice.co.uk)**