

The Lighthouse Group (TLG) Centre

Independent school standard inspection report

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.^{1, 2}

Information about the school

The Lighthouse Group (TLG) Centre, in Harpurhey, Manchester is an independent day school providing personalised programmes of learning and development for students who are either excluded from their mainstream school or who are at risk of being excluded due to behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. It provides education for up to 20 students aged from 11 to 16 years. Most are dually registered with another school. Students attend for either two or four days each week and complete courses organised in blocks of 12 weeks. Students may enter the 12-week programmes of learning at either week one or week seven. Some students successfully reintegrate back to their mainstream school after a short stay while other students complete several 12-week blocks. Currently, there are nine students on roll. Three students have statements of special educational needs, are funded by their local authority and attend part-time.

The school is part of the national Lighthouse Group which runs eight similar TLG centres. The national group provides support for staff development, quality assurance and curriculum development through a centrally employed staff who make regular visits to the school. A partnership board provides local management and is represented by members from TLG, the local church and 'The Message', a Christian charitable group. The Manchester TLG is located in a parish hall situated in a residential area. The hall is leased from the diocese of Manchester. This is the first inspection of the school since it was registered in October 2010.

The school aims to: 'tackle the issues that underpin behavioural difficulties and to develop learning skills, leading to qualifications and re-integration into schools, further education or employment.'

Evaluation of the school

Overall, the quality of education provided by the school is good. The school successfully meets its stated aims. Leaders have ensured the school provides a good, well-matched curriculum for students which, combined with good teaching, enables students to make good progress overall. Many students make outstanding improvements in their behavioural, emotional and social development. The

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents.

² www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents.

arrangements for safeguarding meet the requirements. The school meets all but one of the independent school regulations.

Quality of education

The curriculum and other activities are good in meeting the range of needs and interests of students. The distinctive strength of the curriculum is the seamless way in which students' personal development needs guide the way that academic skills and knowledge are taught by the staff team. Curriculum planning sharply identifies the objectives necessary to improve students' social and behavioural skills and meets the aims of developing their functional skills in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT). Students are provided with tasks and activities which are interesting, suitably challenging and are well-matched to their needs. Students are rigorously assessed on entry to ensure that the curriculum builds well on their individual starting points. Students with statements of special educational needs receive good support and guidance. Their needs are regularly reviewed and students, parents and carers, staff and external agencies work well together to identify and to target areas for improvement. Several accreditation programmes are provided for students including the Foundation Learning Initiative, the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) and the Functional Skills scheme. Accreditation is available in both functional skills, and personal and social development. For many students, this complements other external qualifications provided by their mainstream school. The school occasionally provides additional support for those preparing for GCSE examinations such as in child development. For some students, the accredited courses provided at TLG are the sole qualifications studied, and for these students the range of opportunities provided for accreditation is a little narrow.

The school has a significant number of partnerships with the local community and these make a very good contribution to enrich the curriculum. For example, a local youth worker, who is employed by the church and based in the school, teaches some additional art lessons and supports work to promote students' social and emotional development. Several volunteers from the local community give generously of their time to support curriculum activities. The Police Community Support Officers are regular visitors to school and good relationships are established with students. There are a number of community-led activities available after school including drop-in sessions to play pool and badminton and a girls' self-esteem group. Students enjoy a range of trips and visits including to the Lowry gallery and to a local outdoor adventure centre. Additionally, the school arranges a number of visitors to share their experiences with students; these have included the local Member of Parliament and the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Teaching and assessment are good as they meet the full range of students' needs. The staff team is strongly led by the headteacher whose outstanding teaching provides a model for others to follow. Lessons are delivered in turn by the headteacher, an assistant teacher who also acts as a learning mentor and a youth worker who also acts as a teacher. As one team member leads a lesson, the other

staff provide high-quality support and guidance to individual students. Several volunteers give additional support. In this way, staff learn from each other's strengths and the quality of teaching improves. Lessons are characterised by very good relationships between staff and students, highly effective behaviour management strategies which are consistently applied and the excellent use of a wide range of classroom resources. The classroom learning environment is first class. It provides a spacious and well-organised place where academic learning and social activities take place simultaneously. There is good use of ICT to engage and interest students. In the best lessons, the teacher frequently varies the style of learning to maintain students' concentration.

The school uses a good range of assessment procedures regularly to monitor students' attainment and progress. At the midpoint of each 12-week block the school reviews the progress of every student. A whole-school profile of progress records students' achievements in improving their behavioural, emotional and social skills as well as their acquisition of functional skills. Suitable targets are set for students' progress in each 12-week block but the school does not specifically set targets for the longer-term progress of those students who stay longer than 12 weeks.

Overall, students make good progress in their learning. Students in conversation unanimously praised the school for helping them to improve. The school has successfully enabled the vast majority of past students to reintegrate to mainstream school or to enter further education, employment or training. Current students make good progress in their learning and outstanding progress in their personal development.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The quality of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Outstanding strategies are in place to ensure that students learn to improve their behaviour by managing anger, controlling impulsiveness and developing increasing tolerance towards others. Consequently, while there remain some instances of challenging behaviour, overall, behaviour is good. The staff provide excellent role models for students to mirror, in the courteous and patient way they deal with any conflicts. Relationships between staff and students are founded on high levels of trust and respect. Students' achievements are praised and celebrated and this does much to increase students' self esteem and confidence. The curriculum provides many opportunities for students to reflect on their work and their behaviour. As a result, students develop increasing maturity in their personal development.

Students enjoy school and make significant improvement in their rates of attendance. Social activities are an intrinsic part of each school day. Staff take a full part in joining in activities with students. For example, during the breakfast club, students often play pool with staff and it is common to see staff and students sitting on the sofas listening to music and talking about the day's activities. Staff take every opportunity to reinforce positive social skills during these occasions and are consistent in their expectations. For example, bad language is not accepted and

students cooperate by not eating sweets in school sessions. Students improve their cultural awareness through their many activities in the school and local community. For example, students are involved in an environmental garden project. However, there are few opportunities for students to gain a greater empathy with contrasting communities in the United Kingdom or through international links. For example, although students learn about different religions, there are no opportunities for them to visit different places of worship or to gain from visits from leaders of other faiths. Similarly, while there are links with other TLG centres, there are no partnerships or links with schools which have a different ethnic or cultural intake.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of students is good. The school fully meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. The school has a thorough set of procedures to ensure the safeguarding and well-being of students and staff. Risk assessments are regularly completed for the school premises and curriculum activities. Staff are vigilant in their duty to supervise students and pay very close attention to reminding students of any potential dangers. There is an agreed code of conduct for access to the internet. The school provides students with advice and guidance about the dangers of drugs and alcohol. Students say they feel safe in school and that they appreciate how well the staff look after their needs. Healthy lunches are provided and students enjoy the regular opportunities to participate in sport through social activities such as badminton which are available at several points each day. There are further sporting opportunities provided in basketball, football, outdoor adventures activities and visits to the gym. The indoor facilities enjoyed by the students are well maintained. The school does not maintain an admission register which meets regulatory requirements.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

All the required safeguarding checks on staff are made, such as those through the Criminal Records Bureau, and are recorded appropriately in a single central register.

Premises and accommodation at the school

The school's premises and accommodation enable students to learn effectively, safely and securely. The accommodation provides a good-sized hall adjacent to a spacious classroom and recreation area. The hall is used regularly for sport and as additional classroom space. The classroom includes a computer suite providing individual work stations for students to access on a continuing basis. There is a small room used for one-to-one work which also acts as a room for first aid. The office accommodation is spacious and well equipped. Outside, there is a good-sized hard surfaced play area with a basketball net and adjacent grassed areas. The school makes effective use of other local facilities such as a gym and outdoor adventure centre.

Provision of information

The school has an informative set of booklets and information for local authorities, and parents and carers. These provide all the required details. Reports are sent home and include detailed comments about students' attainment and progress. The school complies with all requests from Ofsted and the Department for Education for information about the school.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The school's complaints policy and procedures fully meets the requirements.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations'), with the exception of those listed below.³

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of provision for welfare, health and safety of pupils (standards in part 3) and must:

- ensure that an admission register is completed in line with the regulatory requirements (paragraph 17).

What the school could do to improve further

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

- set targets for the longer-term progress of students for beyond the first block of 12 weeks
- extend the range of accreditation for students staying at TLG for longer periods
- provide more opportunities for students to learn about contrasting schools and communities in the United Kingdom and abroad with different cultural or ethnic intakes.

³ www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/1997/contents/made.

Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education		✓		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		✓		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		✓		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		✓		

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		✓		
The behaviour of pupils		✓		

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils		✓		
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School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Special school		
Date school opened	October 2010		
Age range of pupils	11-16 years		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 7	Girls: 2	Total: 9
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 3	Girls: 0	Total: 3
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2,022 (per 12 week programme)		
Address of school	Parish Hall Water Street Harpurhey Manchester M9 5US		
Telephone number	0161 660 8678		
Email address	katy.hall@tlg.org.uk		
Headteacher	Miss Katy Hall		
Proprietor	Mr Simon Taylor		

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 November 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of The Lighthouse Group (TLG), Water Street, Manchester, M9 5US

Thank you for welcoming me into your school when I visited you recently. I thoroughly enjoyed my time with you and would like to share with you what I found out about your school. I judged that The Lighthouse Group is a good school. These are the main reasons why I judged the school to be good.

- The headteacher, staff and volunteers who help you are a very good team and provide you with a good quality of education.
- You told me that you enjoy school, you feel safe and that you think you are improving your behaviour and your learning. I agree.
- The teaching you receive is good and the lessons are helping you to gain accreditations in key functional skills which will help you in later life.

All schools need to develop and improve and I have asked that for those of you who stay longer than one 12-week block, you should be expected to make more academic progress. Additionally, I think that the school should make links with other, different schools and communities in the United Kingdom and overseas to give you a chance to find out at first hand what it is like in different communities.

Thank you once again for all your help. I wish you well in the future.

Yours sincerely,

John Coleman
Her Majesty's Inspector