

# Lindsworth School

Monyhull Hall Road, Kings Norton, Birmingham, B30 3QA

**Inspection dates** 10–11 July 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Overall effectiveness of the residential experience		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Since the last inspection, teaching has not been good enough to bring about good achievement over time.
- Pupils' attendance, though improving, remains low.
- Behaviour is not consistently good, and in some lessons poor concentration prevents pupils from learning successfully.
- The major reorganisation of the governing body and leadership team and numerous staffing changes have meant that teaching and achievement have been slow to improve, and a few staff are not fully behind the leadership team's efforts.
- The revised role of the subject leaders is not yet having a full impact on improving key aspects of the school's work, such as teaching and learning.

### The school has the following strengths

- Teachers' skills are improving because of effective coaching by senior staff.
- Pupils feel safe in school, and there has been a fall in the number of incidents of poor behaviour due to the work of the intensive support unit.
- Consistency of practice and strong leadership in the residential provision mean that residential pupils make good progress in their personal and social development.
- Pupils supported by extra funding through the 'pupil premium' are catching up with their classmates.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons, one of which was observed jointly with an assistant headteacher.
- Inspectors made short visits to a series of work experience lessons with the headteacher.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read and examined in detail English and mathematics work in files and books.
- The inspectors took account of the school's procedures for safeguarding. They looked at the school development plan, leaders' evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses, curriculum and lesson planning, records of lesson observations, targets set for teachers, and documents that track pupils' academic and social progress.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, three assistant headteachers, head of care, administrative staff, work experience coordinator, youth offending social worker, two members of the local authority and other members of staff. A discussion was held with the Chair of the Governing Body.
- A meeting was held with the school council, and informal discussions were held with pupils during school and residential time.
- Inspectors took account of inspection questionnaires returned by 48 members of staff together with the school's own surveys of the views of pupils, parents and carers, and staff. There were insufficient responses to Parent View (the online questionnaire for parents) for these to be considered.

## Inspection team

Pauline Hilling-Smith, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Christine Fraser	Additional Inspector
Alan Radford	Additional Inspector
Martha Nethaway	Social Care Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Lindsworth School provides for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. It offers residential accommodation.
- All pupils have complex needs, including autistic spectrum disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and very challenging behaviour. Many experience other difficulties and social circumstances which affect their ability to trust adults and learn.
- All pupils have a statement of special educational needs and the very large majority are boys.
- About half of the pupils are eligible for the pupil premium. This is well above the national average. The pupil premium is an additional sum of money provided by the government to support the achievement of certain groups of pupils, such as those who are in the care of the local authority and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- Half of the pupils are from White British backgrounds, a quarter are of Caribbean heritage and the others are from a further seven minority ethnic backgrounds. Very few speak English as an additional language.
- The school has high levels of mobility. Pupils join at any time in their secondary school years.
- Eleven pupils stay in the residential accommodation for up to four nights a week to supplement their day-time education.
- The school uses 10 alternative providers. They are Sporting Edge, City United Lichfield, Fairbridge Programme, The Lighthouse Group, Bourneville College, Merlin Venture Limited, South and City College, Platinum Training, Hunter Hill School and Jericho.
- There has been a considerable change and restructuring of governors and staffing at all levels since the previous inspection. A quarter of the teachers have been replaced over the last year.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently at least good and more is outstanding, by making sure that:
  - work given to pupils matches their abilities so that all, particularly the more-able pupils, are effectively challenged throughout each lesson
  - all teachers communicate high expectations of what pupils can achieve, so that pupils reach their full potential
  - marking always gives pupils precise information about how well they are doing and how they can improve their work
  - pupils are always given the opportunity to respond to teachers' marking
  - outstanding practice in teaching is shared more widely across the school.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - further developing the role of the subject leaders so they provide more effective support to other teachers
  - making sure that all staff fully support the leadership's drive for improvement
  - making checks to ensure that school policies and procedures are consistently applied, particularly those for managing behaviour
  - ensuring that pupils' attendance continues to improve.
- Improve the effectiveness of the residential provision by integrating the pupils' placement plans with the school's procedures for monitoring and improving behaviour.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Previous disruption to learning as a result of their special educational needs means that pupils' attainment when they join the school, while wide ranging, is usually well below that expected for their age.
- Although many pupils are making progress at nationally expected levels, weaknesses in teaching in the past have meant that they have not achieved well enough over time and have significant gaps in their learning.
- The school's records and observations during the inspection show that there is little difference in achievement between most groups in the school, including pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds, although the more-able pupils make slower progress than other ability groups.
- Extra money from the pupil premium is used to fund initiatives to support eligible pupils' overall progress and well-being. These include one-to-one teaching support in mathematics and good-quality care in the residential provision. As a result, these pupils are doing well this year and catching up with their classmates in English and mathematics.
- Pupils' skills and understanding are assessed thoroughly on entry to the school in order to identify their difficulties. They are set targets based on the expectation that they will re-engage with learning and make at least expected progress for their age.
- Pupils' personal development is promoted well and this, combined with improved teaching, has resulted in some recent accelerated progress, especially in English. For example, in reading this year in Year 7, pupils have exceeded nationally expected progress. This is because the teaching of reading is seen as a priority and is consistently good.
- Progress in mathematics is slower than in English. There are early signs of improvement, but the subject has been taught less well in the past.
- Records show that a few pupils reach nationally expected levels in some practical or work-related subjects, for example art and design or motor mechanics. Sometimes pupils do particularly well in either off-site work experience placements or other alternative provision, and this prepares them well for the future.
- A small minority of parents who responded to a recent school survey rightly said that pupils do not make good progress, and were not taught well.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because it has not enabled the pupils to make fast enough progress over time. Many staff are new to the school and while there is still some inconsistency, teaching is improving strongly and no inadequate teaching was seen during the inspection.
- In less effective lessons the pace of learning is too slow and expectations are too low, so the more-able are not challenged well enough because they are not given more difficult work to do.

- Marking varies in quality. Teachers' written comments too often lack precision, so pupils do not understand what they are doing well or how to improve their work. Pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to respond to the teachers' written comments. In the best examples, however, marking is sharply focused. Teachers suggest ways to improve and make time for pupils to respond. Progress accelerates because in lesson after lesson pupils learn new skills.
- Teaching seen during the inspection was often good and occasionally outstanding because leaders have focused well on raising pupils' achievement. Effective training and coaching provided for all staff have improved their teaching skills, particularly in literacy and mathematics.
- Where teaching is outstanding, teachers' expectations are very high, and pupils are fully engaged in their learning throughout the lesson. The pace of learning is brisk and pupils are challenged to reach higher levels. This is shown in pupils' books, where there are examples of impressive work.
- In the best lessons teachers plan work well for different groups and make sure extra adults are used well. In a Year 9 English lesson, the teaching assistant supported the individual needs of the pupils expertly so all pupils were making good progress throughout the lesson.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** requires improvement

- Behaviour and pupils' attitudes to learning are not consistently good, because policies and procedures are not applied consistently by all classroom staff.
- Pupils' behaviour is mostly satisfactory, but in some lessons it does not contribute to successful learning. Some pupils have not developed the ability to persevere or concentrate for periods of time appropriate to their age. Where learning activities lack pace, pupils lose interest and find other things to occupy their time.
- Attendance is low, although it has risen as a result of the work of the school, including changes to the plans made for pupils. For example, increasing the range of possible off-site alternative places for pupils to attend has made some more interested in learning.
- Pupils say that they feel safe overall, but that different staff deal with inappropriate behaviour in different ways and they do not always feel comfortable with what some staff say and do. However, pupils make good relationships with their key staff allocated to them and this has a good impact on their well-being, particularly in the residential provision.
- Behaviour has improved where the school has focused its attention. The number of incidents of poor behaviour has fallen dramatically in some parts of the school, most notably in the intensive support unit.
- Pupils who stay overnight in the residential provision benefit from the consistent approaches and procedures of the staff, and their high levels of input ensure that pupils are well motivated. As a result, pupils behave consistently well during out-of-school hours. They participate enthusiastically in the merits system and staff meticulously chart their successes. The new individual placement plans, while simple to read and understand, are not yet fully integrated with the school's new behaviour management system.
- Residential staff promote pupils' safety and welfare well. Pupils say they feel safe and happy in residence. This is underpinned by effective risk assessments that are used well to promote safety. The pupils' welfare is always given priority and staff supervise their whereabouts at all

times. The dedicated anti-bullying team responds quickly and effectively to incidents of bullying. Consequently they are rare.

- Attitudes to learning are very positive where teaching is exciting and inspires pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. For example, in a science lesson pupils made 'gloop' and the teacher trusted the pupils to have followed the instructions as she turned the bowl upside down over her head to test that it had solidified!
- A very few parents who responded to the school's survey did not feel the school dealt effectively with bullying. Inspectors found that the school gives a high priority to the prevention of bullying through the rapid response anti-bullying team, and ensures that any incidents were taken seriously and reported appropriately.

### **The leadership and management** requires improvement

- The resilience and hard work of the headteacher have made a significant difference to the school. Despite a slow start with the major reorganisation of the leadership team, the school now has clear plans with precise actions to bring about improvement. However, not all staff are convinced about what the school is trying to achieve, or the part they can play in bringing this about.
- A small minority of staff who responded to the questionnaire thought that policies and procedures were not always followed consistently and that this had a detrimental effect on school improvement. Inspectors agree that the school does not effectively identify and share the good practice that exists in both teaching and management.
- The leadership team has been restructured with clear responsibilities. The headteacher is ably supported by senior leaders who are strongly leading school improvement. Senior leaders, along with subject leaders are focusing well on raising pupils' achievement. Subject leaders are beginning to make a useful contribution to school improvement, although this work is too recent to be having a full impact on improving achievement.
- Already, improvement is evident in a number of areas. For example, the progress of those known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is accelerating because the quality of teaching is improving, and the number of incidents of poor behaviour has fallen.
- The procedures to link teachers' pay to the quality of their teaching have been strengthened. Governors are now appropriately involved, and the system is now having a positive impact on raising the quality of teaching.
- Leaders carefully track the progress of groups of pupils to ensure all have an equal opportunity to succeed, and to gain a clearer picture of where improvement is needed most.
- The residential provision is led and managed well, and is organised appropriately to meet pupils' needs. Senior staff monitor practice carefully and are developing systems to drive forward continuing improvement. Care staff have good levels of experience and professional training.
- Leaders are making important improvements to the curriculum. The focus on widening the range of alternative providers and providing courses that lead to higher-level qualifications, especially in mathematics, is having a positive impact. The partnership with the police contributes to pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development and their understanding of how to manage risk in their own lives. The residential provision provides a number of wide-ranging activities which

are well planned and meaningful to pupils. Pupils enjoy local community activities and learn about life in their own community.

- The local authority has provided extensive, high-quality support. This has made a significant contribution to improving the leadership of the school, and to school improvement overall.

#### ■ The governance of the school:

- The restructuring of the governing body has improved its effectiveness in holding the school to account since the last inspection. As a result, finances are used effectively and standards are beginning to rise. Frequent visits to the school give governors an understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and the level of pupils' achievement. The governors support and challenge the school effectively. A good structure of committees, supported well by the local authority, ensures that governors' work is carried out efficiently.
- Governors have a clear picture of teaching quality, and understand how targets are set for teachers and how the school deals with any underperformance. They ensure that staff pay rises are also linked to responsibilities held and pupils' performance.
- They have made good decisions over the spending of the pupil premium money and this is having a very positive impact on eligible pupils' progress. Governors check this carefully to ensure best use of the funding.
- The governing body makes sure that all statutory requirements, including those for safeguarding, are met.

**Outcomes for residential pupils** are good

**Quality of residential provision and care** is good

**Residential pupils' safety** is good

**Leadership and management of the residential provision** is good

- The good residential provision is small enough to cater well for pupils' individual needs. The care offered by residential staff gives pupils structure, consistency and routines. These afford pupils reassurance and stability. Relationships are good, and pupils are encouraged to think and learn about different strategies to manage their behaviour that reflect their individual needs. As a result they behave well, feel safe and develop good personal and social skills.
- Gaining the views of pupils is central to all aspects of how the residential provision operates and develops its practice. A good example of this is how the staff seek the views of pupils to make improvements with upgrading the residential provision by choosing new paint colours, furniture, fittings and carpets. As a result, pupils are proud of their living environment.
- Pupils are encouraged to become independent and are often given choices to assist their decision-making. For example, they choose between going on an event to watch an outdoor cinema film and swimming at the local leisure centre. These opportunities have a positive impact on developing pupils' self-esteem and confidence.

## What inspection judgements mean

<b>School</b>		
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Judgement</b>	<b>Description</b>
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

<b>Boarding/Residential provision</b>		
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Judgement</b>	<b>Description</b>
Grade 1	Outstanding	A school which provides an exceptional quality of care and significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 2	Good	A school which provides a high quality of care that exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 3	Adequate	A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of care it provides.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school where minimum requirements are not met and the quality of care has serious weaknesses.



## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	103632
<b>Social care unique reference number</b>	SC017171
<b>Local authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	400636

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection of residential provision was carried out under the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000, having regard to the national minimum standards for residential special schools.

<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	158
<b>Number of boarders on roll</b>	11
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Christine Best
<b>Headteacher</b>	David McMahon
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 September 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 693 5363
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