

# Inspection of a good school: Lighthouse School Leeds

Arthington House, Hospital Lane, Cookridge, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS16 6QB

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Inspection dates:

25 and 26 April 2023

## Outcome

Lighthouse School Leeds continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders have developed an ambitious, destination-led curriculum. Staff focus on inspiring all pupils to have a bright future. Providing pupils with skills and experiences is a cornerstone of the 'Lighthouse way'. Leaders want to empower pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) towards their next steps in education or employment.

All pupils that attend the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. The school is well resourced. It has specialist staff who are trained to support pupils' complex needs. Developing pupils' communication skills is an important part of the school's curriculum. It is embedded in lessons across the school. Speech and language therapists support teachers to ensure pupils get the support they need.

Relationships between staff and pupils are highly secure. They show mutual respect. This ensures that pupils engage with lessons well. Pupils are encouraged to try hard. Staff use motivational language to get the best from pupils. This makes lessons positive. Staff challenge and support pupils to do well.

Personal development is a strength of the school. Leaders ensure that pupils receive effective guidance that supports them towards work or college. Pupils feel safe in school. They say bullying is not an issue. If it were, staff would deal with it effectively.

## What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The curriculum is highly ambitious. Leaders have precisely mapped out what pupils will learn across subjects and year groups. They have carefully considered what pupils should know and remember. This includes the curriculum for students in the sixth form. Ongoing evaluation is an important part of leaders' work. This ensures the curriculum meets pupils' needs well. Most subjects are highly developed. However, curriculum thinking in some subjects does not currently match the quality of the strongest curriculum areas.

Leaders prioritise developing pupils' communication skills. Reading is an important part of the curriculum. Those pupils that need support to develop their reading skills receive targeted support to develop their phonic knowledge. Those pupils that need help to develop their speech and language skills receive specialist support. Pupils read a variety of texts, including poetry. Some pupils read classics that include Shakespeare. Teachers revisit learning often. They use targeted questioning effectively to test understanding. This ensures pupils can recall prior learning well.

Pupils behave exceptionally well. There is a calm but purposeful atmosphere around school. Pupils ask questions politely. They show respect towards each other. Pupils are willing to contribute to lessons. They are prepared to show visitors their work. Most pupils feel happy in school. When pupils behave well, staff reward them with praise and contact home. This is well received by pupils.

Personal development is a notable strength. Leaders ensure that pupils learn about the world around them. Pupils have a say in developing local thinking that affects them. They meet with local politicians to have their views heard. Pupils are encouraged to contribute and have a voice. They participate in debate in school. This includes on the school council and in debate club. Pupils have won debating competitions with other schools. They are very well supported for next steps to work and college. The school has an in-house careers advisor. Pupils participate in work experience in the community and with school partners. There is strong support for pupils next steps. All pupils from Year 9 to Year 14 receive individual careers meetings. All pupils leave the school with a plan for the future.

Pupils speak highly of the after-school 'Shine club'. It is well attended. Pupils participate in a variety of activities, such as bowling and cinema. These dovetail in-house activities that include sports and traditional arcade games. Pupils appreciate activities to keep healthy. Leaders ensure pupils learn about self-care that includes personal hygiene. Several staff are trained to support pupils to develop better sleep routines. Pupils have an appropriate understanding of people that are different to them. They can describe different religions and faiths. They speak confidently about celebrating difference. They understand consent and personal boundaries.

Staff are well trained. They are developed to be effective in their roles. They say that their workload is manageable. Assessment is used effectively. Staff feel leaders listen to them. They say they have a voice about their work. Early career teachers are well supported. They have a mentor with regular coaching meetings. They receive appropriate time to do their job.

Trustees have ambition for pupils. They want to grow the school further. Trustees actively ensure that the quality of education is not impacted as the school expands. They are well informed. Leaders present clear reports for challenge and scrutiny. Trustees visit the school regularly. This allows them to test what is happening in school is effective.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders' checks on adults prior to their employment are thorough. Staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities well. Leaders ensure that all staff are well trained with regular inputs on statutory information. Staff take quizzes with rewards to test their understanding. They recognise pupils' additional vulnerabilities due to their complex SEND.

Leaders' mantra is 'see something, say something'. Staff are proactive. They intervene quickly to support pupils. Safeguarding logs are comprehensive. Leaders are tenacious when pursuing support for pupils. Staff are aware of pupils' vulnerabilities while online. Lessons and interventions help pupils make the right choices while using technology.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Leaders have developed an ambitious curriculum. Most subjects are highly developed and well embedded. Some subjects do not currently match the quality of the strongest subject areas. This means the development of pupils' knowledge is stronger in some subject areas than others. Leaders should further develop the curriculum, so that it is equally strong in all subject areas.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2014.

## **How can I feed back my views?**

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138380
<b>Local authority</b>	Leeds
<b>Inspection number</b>	10255901
<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Free schools special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	82
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	26
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Katie Parlett
<b>Principal</b>	Emma Sullivan
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.lighthouseschool.co.uk">www.lighthouseschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	21 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Lighthouse School Leeds is a special school for pupils aged between 11 and 19 years.
- The school makes provision for pupils with autism spectrum disorder. All pupils have an EHC plan.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school measures itself against the Gatsby benchmarks to ensure pupils receive high-quality careers advice.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the principal, members of the senior leadership team, subject leaders, teachers, early career teachers and support staff.
- The lead inspector met with members of the board of trustees. They also spoke by telephone with the local authority school improvement partner.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics and personal, social and health education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also closely scrutinised the provision for reading and communication.
- The lead inspector met with the school's designated safeguarding lead. The inspector reviewed the school's safeguarding records, relevant policies and other safeguarding documentation. The inspector reviewed the processes leaders use to identify and help pupils who need support. In addition, the inspector scrutinised the school's records of checks carried out on adults who work at the school.
- The lead inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys for pupils, staff and parents. This included any free-text responses.

## Inspection team

David Mills, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Tudor Griffiths

Ofsted Inspector

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