



Longley School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 107797
LEA Kirklees
Inspection number 277845
Inspection dates 2 November 2005 to 3 November 2005
Reporting inspector Mr Henry Moreton CfBT Lead Inspector

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Special	School address	Dog Kennel Bank
School category	Community special		Huddersfield
Age range of pupils	5 to 16		West Yorkshire HD5 8JE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01484 223 937
Number on roll	118	Fax number	01484 511 520
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Hilary Pollard
Date of previous inspection	26 June 2000	Headteacher	Mr Phillip Gibbins

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Longley School is a special school where all but 2 of the 118 pupils have a statement of special educational need. The school's main provision is for pupils with moderate learning difficulties but some pupils are on the autistic spectrum, while others have complex language and communication difficulties.

Most pupils enter the school with low levels of attainment. Just under one half of all pupils are entitled to free school meals; 1 in 4 has English as an additional language. There are far fewer girls in school than boys.

The school has the Silver Arts Mark award and the Active Mark award.

Longley School is part of the local authority's plan to reorganise provision for pupils with additional learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Longley School is a good school. Pupils achieve well. Many gain pass grades in a range of nationally accredited awards, including general certificate of secondary education (GCSE), although the number of subjects examined is limited. School leaders seek improvement. Their systems of self-review are robust. Consequently, inspectors judged the school's self-evaluation to be accurate in all respects. During a long period of uncertainty the school has moved forward rapidly under the direction of the headteacher, well supported by his deputy and the governing body.

Good quality teaching and learning enables pupils to achieve well. A key factor in helping pupils is that they are very well known to their teachers and teaching assistants. Most pupils enjoy school, and attend regularly. They respond positively and work hard. The behaviour of a significant number of pupils is very good in classrooms and around the large school site.

Parents are very positive about the school. As one parent said, 'the environment fostered at Longley is a positive, caring and supportive one, giving children the opportunity to learn and succeed'. Inspectors agree with this view.

The school has improved well since the last inspection, although the attendance of a small minority of mostly older pupils is proving difficult to improve. The school has a wealth of information about what pupils know or find difficult in their work, but the use of this information to improve classroom practice needs further development. Resources are effectively and efficiently managed to secure good value for money. The school has good capacity for further improvement but now needs to consolidate the many developments that it has instigated over the last 18 months (these include gaining Investors in People status and the Healthy Schools award, introducing a school council and continuing to improve the accommodation for information and communication technology (ICT) and science).

What the school should do to improve further

- Take stock before introducing any more major changes.
- Improve the number of subjects available for accreditation.
- Ensure that all teachers use information effectively in measuring pupils' progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards vary from one year to the next but from below average levels of attainment on entry, pupils achieve well. They do this because they are taught well, enjoy school and are eager to learn. The targets set for pupils in their individual education plans are well focused on their particular needs. This means that regardless of pupils' individual learning difficulties and/or disabilities, or for those for whom English is not their first language, they develop as well as each other. Several pupils, including those on the autistic spectrum successfully integrate into mainstream schools or colleges

for at least some part of their education, whilst a small number make a successful transition. As pupils move through the school they improve their literacy, and especially their numeracy skills, well. The school enters pupils for standardised assessment tests and tasks whenever possible. Most pupils benefit from a range of courses that are externally accredited. These are well matched to the ability of individuals and most pupils are successful. For instance, the most able pupils succeed in the GCSE mathematics examination. For the first time this year a small number of the older pupils achieved the Junior Sports Leader award. Whilst the school sets out to have its work recognised nationally, such as the Arts Mark and Active Mark awards, there is the potential to develop further the number and range of courses for all abilities.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The vast majority of pupils behave very well and show very positive attitudes. The school meets the needs of those pupils with very challenging behaviour. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong. Most respond positively in social situations. At a performance by a visiting theatre group during the inspection several pupils, without prompting, approached the performers afterwards and thanked them. Development of pupils' cultural and spiritual awareness is good. For instance, during lunch, pupils listened respectfully to Grace. Older pupils reflected on the importance of religious celebrations such as Eid, which some of their classmates celebrate. The opportunities provided for pupils to reflect on the world around them are good. They visit many places of interest; though for the first time in recent years there has been no residential experience this year. Pupils' achievements are celebrated. Relationships are excellent and pupils feel safe but they do not have enough of a voice in suggesting how they would like to see the school improved further. The school benefits from good leadership on healthy living and lifestyles. Attendance is satisfactory. Punctuality is good. Pupils make good progress in developing the personal attributes that will enable them to contribute to society with some enjoying contact with their peers in other schools.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good and successfully meet the needs of its diverse range of learners. All the lessons observed were at least good, including those involving pupils on the autistic spectrum and with specific speech and language needs. Teachers plan activities which meet pupils' learning needs accurately. They are challenged appropriately. All groups of pupils make good progress and achieve well because teachers and the teaching assistants work very effectively together. Pupils know what is expected of them in terms of behaviour and work ethic. There is a positive climate in lessons. Most pupils are carefully guided so that they know what they need to do to improve. The national strategies are well implemented, with daily attention given

to the teaching of both literacy and numeracy. Assessment arrangements are good. The school's strategy for using the information gathered on how well pupils are progressing is developing. Data about all aspects of pupils' work and social development are recorded diligently. However, further work is needed to ensure consistency of its use in planning lessons and checking on pupils' progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and covers all of the expected areas. The school has adjusted well in order to meet the challenges of varying numbers, and needs, in the different year-groups. The school's principle focus, appropriately so, is to meet pupils' individual needs in terms of language and speech, to address their social skills, and to increase their confidence as they progress through the different subjects of the National Curriculum. The specific needs of pupils with complex speech and language difficulties, as well as those on the autistic spectrum, are provided for effectively through specialist provision. Pupils enjoy good links with their peers in secondary schools, though this aspect of provision is not as well developed for those of primary school age. Teachers work very hard to overcome the problems associated with the inadequate accommodation, especially in science and ICT. The vocational provision is developing well with the recent introduction of the Youth Award for some. There are good links with the world of work, including work experience placements.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care for pupils is good. This is a harmonious community, which celebrates a range of different cultural heritages. Learning is well matched to the needs of individual pupils and this has a positive impact on their progress. The school has much data on every pupil and is looking for better ways to use it to improve provision for them. Vulnerable pupils are well supported. A small number of pupils are excluded from time to time but this is necessary to safeguard the safety of others. Arrangements for the protection of pupils are well established. A high proportion of pupils are aware of the choices they need to make to stay healthy and safe. Effective use is made of a wide range of visiting professionals offering specialist support. Pupils of all abilities are fully included in the life and work of the school. Extra efforts are made to ensure the small number of girls is well supported. Pupils are aware of their future options. Work with schools in the secondary sector is successful in preparing pupils for their future.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Managers are well supported by the governors who show a strong commitment to the school; ably led by their chair. Their counsel is wise. The improvement planning process is detailed and builds on extensive self-review

over the last 18 months. The self-evaluation is accurate in identifying strengths and weaknesses and involves the key stakeholders well. The many initiatives taken over recent months reflect the headteacher's dynamic leadership. There is a good awareness of what needs to be done to improve and there are currently several developments in the pipeline. The management team has increased capacity for further development but it is now time to pause and consolidate.

Improvements in pupils' achievement and personal development, including the principles of 'Every Child Matters' are suitably reflected in the priorities for development. Staff feel very well supported. The contribution of the large number of support staff is highly valued, and rightly so because their work is significant. Staff are encouraged to develop their professional competencies. There is a good delegation of responsibilities but middle managers and teachers have not been involved enough in the analysis of the data held on pupils.

School managers, with the assistance of governors, are supporting staff very well through uncertain times. The school has good capacity to improve on its high standards while a decision on its long-term future is awaited.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for being so polite and friendly. We thoroughly enjoyed talking to you about your work and finding out about the things you like doing.

What we liked most about your school:

- the way that you work so well together
- the way that you welcome visitors to your school (like you, we really enjoyed the performance of 'Sleeping Beauty')
- the way that you behave in lessons and around the school
- the way that you respect people who come from different backgrounds and religions
- the work that your teachers and their assistants do to help you.

What we have asked your school to do now:

- use all the information that it has about you to help you even more
- improve the number of subjects for you to learn as you get older
- make sure that all the many new things that are taking place in school work for you.

We hope that you carry on enjoying lessons and continue to help your teachers to make Longley School a good place to learn. We wish you well for the future.