



Lord Wilson School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 115849
Local Authority Hampshire
Inspection number 290344
Inspection date 1 March 2007
Reporting inspector William Geoffrey Robson

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

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Coldeast Way
School category	Foundation special		Sarisbury Green
Age range of pupils	11–16		Southampton SO31 7AT
Gender of pupils	Boys	Telephone number	01489 582684
Number on roll (school)	50	Fax number	01489 582115
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Derek Woodward
		Headteacher	Mrs Lynda Strodger
Date of previous school inspection	22 October 2001		

Age group	Inspection date	Inspection number
11–16	1 March 2007	290344

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Lord Wilson School provides for boys who have statements of special educational need related to severe behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Many have previously experienced difficulties in mainstream schools which resulted in an extended period out of full time education. More than half have transferred from a primary special school or pupil referral unit. Many students have unsettled home circumstances and nine are currently in local authority care. All students are from White British backgrounds. The school has temporarily increased its number on roll to accommodate an extra class, pending the completion of a building project at another school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Lord Wilson is a good school with some outstanding features. Parents and carers are most appreciative of the very good care, guidance and support that the school provides. One parent wrote, 'Without Lord Wilson School my son would be permanently excluded and totally misunderstood.' Another said, 'The school has brought out the best in him. The staff are professional, caring and have a fantastic relationship with the children.'

The school benefits from good leadership and management. The headteacher has established and maintained a clear vision for the role of the school since it opened ten years ago. She enables staff to work as a dedicated team to help students overcome the severe behavioural, emotional and social difficulties they have experienced in their lives and in mainstream schools. As a result, students' personal development is good overall and some make outstanding progress in this respect. Students' behaviour improves considerably during their time in the school and they establish good, supportive relationships with each other. Some more mature students are very successful in mentoring their peers and helping them to improve their behaviour. Students feel safe because, as one said, 'Teachers know your problems and we can talk to them. They investigate any bullying quickly and deal with it.' The school provides a good curriculum that motivates students and meets their needs well. Through excellent links with local colleges, businesses and external agencies, it prepares students very well for further education and employment. Students also enjoy opportunities to develop a healthy lifestyle through regular physical education, use of a fitness room and the chance to play football and basketball against other schools.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. It is based on the excellent relationships identified by parents and students alike. Because students improve their behaviour and attitudes to learning they begin to make good progress. Standards remain low compared with those in mainstream schools but students achieve well. However, teachers do not focus enough on assessing students' work. They emphasise the importance of targets for personal development but do not set precise targets for students to improve the standard of their work. As a result, students are not sure how well they are doing in different subjects.

The school provides good value for money. Good improvement since the last inspection and the involvement of all teachers in self-evaluation means that the school has good capacity to improve further. However, available data about students' progress is not used systematically to evaluate provision or set specific targets for improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Set clear targets for students' academic achievement so that they know exactly how well they are doing and how to improve their work.
- Use the available data about students' achievement and personal development to evaluate the school's work more rigorously.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Most students enter the school with very low standards because of the difficulties that they have experienced including, for some, frequent exclusions from previous schools. They make satisfactory progress during Years 7, 8 and 9 but in 2006 only two students reached the standards expected nationally in any of the Year 9 National Curriculum tests. However, the longer students attend the school, the better they achieve. Last year, all in Year 11 gained at least one GCSE or entry level qualification. Several Year 10 students gained similar qualifications because of the school's policy of enabling them to experience success as soon as possible. Children in local authority care make similarly good progress. Therefore, although standards remain very low by comparison with national figures, students achieve well overall.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Students' personal development and well-being are good, especially in view of the severe difficulties that they have previously experienced. They feel very safe in the school and clearly trust teachers and support staff. Some students still display very challenging behaviour but many begin to control their emotions successfully. They feel that '...teachers help you to know your limits'. This is one sign of students' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Many grow sufficiently in confidence to help other, more vulnerable students. They respond very well to opportunities to contribute to their own school community. They elect representatives to the students' council, which has helped bring about improvements to the toilets, the availability of healthier food in the tuck shop and the replacement of a computer projector in one classroom. They respond well to opportunities for in-school work experience by washing cars, helping with cleaning and acting as support assistants. Students' more positive attitudes and increasing enjoyment of school are shown by their improving attendance. Although some are still held back by poor attendance, the majority clearly enjoy the opportunities for learning that the school provides and attend regularly.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The good quality of teaching and learning is firmly based on teachers' understanding of students' needs and the excellent relationships that they establish with them. This enables teachers to manage any challenging behaviour extremely well. Students themselves say, 'Teachers know how to control you.' Occasionally, however, lessons lack pace and teachers make insufficient demands on students towards the end of lessons. Teachers and support staff work together effectively because of good joint planning. In the best lessons they plan a variety of motivating activities that interest

students and encourage high levels of concentration. For example, a media studies lesson intrigued Year 9 students as they produced animated films of creatures they had created from modelling clay. Teachers use a variety of resources, including computer projection and electronic whiteboards, effectively. Students are regularly reminded of clear targets for personal development and behaviour. However, students' academic targets are much less precise. Teachers do not refer to them enough and do not share lesson objectives sufficiently with students. As a result, students usually know how well they are improving their behaviour but are rarely able to explain exactly what they have learned or how they could improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good, broad curriculum that meets students' needs very well. Links with local colleges and businesses are excellent and ensure that students have excellent opportunities for work experience and to study related vocational courses. All National Curriculum subjects are taught and a suitable range of accreditation is provided so that all students are able to gain nationally recognised qualifications. The curriculum enables students to make good progress with literacy and numeracy. They develop satisfactory skills in information and communications technology (ICT) but the ICT course lacks continuity at present. Apart from in English, schemes of work do not identify learning objectives clearly enough. Students appreciate the recent introduction of health related fitness as part of their physical education course. They also appreciate the opportunity to participate in different sports, although they are concerned about continuing uncertainty over the availability of the only playing field to which they have access. Food technology and a course in personal, social and health education also help students to adopt a safe, healthy lifestyle.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This aspect of the school's work is good and there are some outstanding features. Child protection procedures are thorough. Excellent links with a range of agencies enable the school to provide good support for students with more severe social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The school works hard and successfully to keep parents and carers fully aware of their children's progress. Students' individual education plans are reviewed regularly and lead to precise targets for personal development that are constantly reviewed with students, leading to rewards that they are keen to gain. However, students need more guidance to help them understand how to improve their work as teachers do not place enough emphasis on academic targets. Students are unsure about how well they are achieving. Support and guidance for future careers are excellent and nearly all students move on to further education, employment or training when they leave the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides very good leadership by maintaining a clear vision for the role of the school which is shared by all members of staff. The emphasis is placed firmly on students' personal development and well-being, which then enables them to achieve well. Recent workforce reforms have been implemented smoothly and have led to the more efficient use of support staff. All staff show their commitment to supporting students and work as a real team during daily meetings to discuss individual students' progress. Teaching and learning are monitored regularly by the headteacher and the recent introduction of team teaching enables teachers to improve their skills by observing each other. The school has responded well to issues raised at the last inspection and has good capacity for further improvement. Procedures for self-evaluation are satisfactory but the school's self-evaluation form and development plan do not focus enough on outcomes for students or identify clear criteria for success. Data about students' progress is available but is not used systematically to evaluate the school's overall provision and set precise targets.

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

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

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I really enjoyed visiting your school and would like to thank you for your welcome and for being so friendly and helpful. I agree with you that Lord Wilson is a good place to learn. You told me that you get on very well with the teachers and support staff and I could see that during lessons. This letter is to let you know what your school does well and how, with your help, it can be an even better place to learn. My main finding is that the school provides you with a good quality of education and it has some excellent features.

The best things about the school are that:

- those of you who are going through a difficult time in your life begin to overcome your difficulties because of the very good care and support that staff provide
- the school has excellent links with local colleges, employers and support agencies to prepare you well for life after school
- many of you improve your behaviour a lot and develop very well, personally and socially
- the school provides a range of interesting courses for you that meet your needs very well.

To make your school even better I have asked for two main improvements:

- you need to know how well you are doing in all subjects and how to improve your work
- the school needs to work out more precisely how well it is doing

Thank you again for your help. I hope you continue to work hard, do well and make the most of the good opportunities that the school provides for you.

William Robson

(Lead inspector)