

Shenstone Lodge School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104024
Local Authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	308487
Inspection date	14 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Margaret Jones HMI

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	5-11
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number on roll	
School	18
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	R Butcher
Headteacher	Stephen Butt
Date of previous school inspection	22 September 2003
School address	Birmingham Road Shenstone Lichfield WS14 0LB
Telephone number	01543 480369
Fax number	01543 481104

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

Shenstone Lodge is a small residential special school for boys who have severe social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. It offers day and boarding, extended day and part time provision. All pupils have a statement of special educational need. Attainment on entry to the school is well below the national average because of the nature of the pupils' difficulties and/or disabilities. The school admits pupils with considerably more complex needs than was the case at the previous inspection. There are two pupils with autistic spectrum disorder. Two pupils are in public care. More than half of the pupils are eligible for free school meals and a third of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The school, where possible, re-integrates pupils into mainstream primary schools.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Shenstone Lodge is a good school where pupils are successfully helped to overcome their behavioural and emotional difficulties, and go on to make good academic progress. Pupils arrive at the school with a variety of behavioural and emotional problems. However, the good level of care and the outstanding behaviour management systems in place enable pupils to make good progress in their personal development, and thoroughly enjoy their time in school. Academic progress increases in relation to the time spent at the school, because of successful strategies to manage behaviour, motivate pupils and engage them in their own learning. Over the last three years, a very good proportion of pupils have made such good progress in terms of learning and personal skills that they have been successfully re-integrated into mainstream schools.

The quality of teaching and learning is good across the school and this is reflected in the rapid progress pupils make. There are excellent relationships between staff and pupils, demonstrated by explicit praise and constant reinforcement of good behaviour. Parents are pleased with what the school does for their children and the results of the parents' questionnaire were all positive. The curriculum has been thoughtfully designed to ensure that pupils get the breadth of knowledge required by the National Curriculum whilst at the same time providing what they need for their social and emotional development. Activities out of school time complement and support pupils' personal development.

Pupils are keen to say that they feel safe in school and they are very well looked after. There are some instances of bullying, but almost all pupils regard these incidents as being dealt with well by staff. Pupils lead healthy lives and grow in confidence during their time in the school. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education and later life. Young people and their families are able to have significant input into decision making within the school. Young people in residence have recorded children's meetings that show discussions relating to activities and some meal planning. Staff are consulting young people on a constant basis. Families have an input into education reviews and families are also well supported by the school's family liaison person who also completes home visits and is able to state a range of initiatives that have supported individual parents.

The headteacher is dedicated and determined and leads the school well. His drive and vision has established clear priorities and ensured that successful strategies have been put in place to raise achievement. However, monitoring of some aspects of the school is not sufficiently consistent or rigorous and the school does not fulfil statutory requirements in two aspects of equality legislation. There is no disability equality scheme or accessibility plan in place and no assessment has been done of the impact of the school's race equality policy.

Effectiveness of boarding provision

Grade: 2

The quality of the residential provision is consistently good, in terms of recording systems and the care provision to the young people. A developing staff team helps to ensure that young people are guided and supported through their early education and residential experience. Three of the four recommendations raised at the last inspection have been met despite the short time period between the last care inspection and this whole school inspection. The final recommendation is planned to be completed by July 2008. Young people's privacy within the

boarding provision is effectively managed. Young people are aware of their ability to complain to the staff team and responses from questionnaires show that they would talk to care staff if they were unhappy. Appropriate procedures are in place to respond to young people who abscond from the school. There have been no recorded incidents of absconding from the school since the last social care inspection. Systems are in place to ensure that young people live and are educated within a safe environment. Appropriate checks are completed regarding fire safety and electrics. Water temperature checks are completed monthly although a current issue with the schools boiler is having a detrimental effect on the ability to provide constant hot water at all times. This situation is appropriately monitored and risk assessed by the headteacher. Appropriate risk assessments are in place to cover the school site and activities completed. Residential staff are the key personnel that offer proactive and caring support to young people consistently and this was observed throughout the inspection. One young person stated that care staff are 'lovely and helpful'. Young people are seen to approach care staff for affection and guidance and this is professionally and thoughtfully given. Young people are encouraged to maintain regular contact with parents and family members. This is observed within the evening routines. Staff are confident in talking to parents and relaying positive aspects of young people's school day as well as discussing possible negative behaviours.

The residential provision is appropriately decorated and young people have sufficient space within bedrooms. The current building situation on the school site means that there has been a reduction in bedroom space, although this does not have a significant impact on the care provided within the accommodation. Young people share rooms in some cases and this is well managed by a staff team who are aware of which individuals 'get on' together and where there are concerns regarding specific behaviours. Young people's bedrooms have some personalisation. Sufficient facilities are available to ensure that young people can be involved with individual activities if wished. The residential provision is well staffed and there is additional support from teaching and learning support staff. The staff team has a low turnover ensuring that young people receive a very consistent standard of care. Activities in the evenings are suitably varied and planned in advance. Sufficient staffing is available in the evenings to ensure that young people are well supervised and supported.

A designated senior staff member ensures that the shift is well led. At least two staff members sleep in each night to support the young people. Cover arrangements are in place for those staff who are not working. Arrangements for the support of care staff through supervision are developing and the majority of the staff team receive this support each half term. All staff also have annual appraisals to examine their individual development. The whole school management team have a good awareness of issues within the residential provision and are proactive in its development. The care staff team are all well qualified and this ensures young people are cared for by competent professionals.

What the school should do to improve further

- Meet statutory requirements concerning race and disability in a way that enables the school to raise awareness and improve provision in these two areas.
- Develop success criteria, based on outcomes for pupils, to ensure all members of the school community are involved in rigorous self-evaluation.
- Address points for improvement in the care provision which include; ensuring records of additional measures of control are fully completed and additionally entered in young people's individual files (NMS 10.14 and 10.17) and ensuring all staff receive at least one and a half hours one to one supervision from a senior member of staff each half term (NMS 30.2).

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good across the core curriculum of English, mathematics, science and information communication technology (ICT), where pupils make good progress from very low starting points. Good teaching enables pupils to make similar rates of progress across other subjects although this is not tracked as well. Careful baseline assessment when pupils enter the school means that realistic but ambitious targets are set for pupils' progress which match those in mainstream education. The few pupils who have additional learning needs have increased their progress following effective individual intervention to help their literacy and numeracy. Current pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve as well as other pupils. The school does not analyse the results of different groups of pupils over time. Pupils are making particularly good progress in developing basic skills in ICT because of a whole school approach. Not all staff have implemented consistent strategies for the teaching of writing and calculation across the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good with some outstanding elements. For example, the singing lesson seen was an uplifting experience that the pupils thoroughly enjoyed. Behaviour is good, and pupils really appreciate the reward system and strive to do their best. Healthy lifestyles are encouraged by the provision of tasty and nutritious meals and support from the school nurse. Pupils know they need to eat fruit and vegetables to keep healthy and they understand the need to exercise. The vast majority apply this knowledge by taking part in the good range of out-of-school activities provided, such as football, swimming and cubs. Pupils have a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe, and generally use tools and resources sensibly in lessons, even when their concentration slips in other ways. Attendance is good and pupils really enjoy their lessons. They sometimes do not want to go out to play and ask if they can take work home with them. Homework is set regularly. Through the weekly children's meetings pupils play a part in the school community and they participate in a range of activities with local primary schools and the wider community.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Behaviour management structures pervade lessons and teachers give pupils very clear expectations for both behaviour and learning. Lessons are well planned for individual pupils and based on detailed assessment of their needs. Teachers make effective use of ICT to engage pupils actively in their own learning. In the best lessons, teachers make pupils feel confident enough to take risks, make mistakes and learn from them. For example, in a design and technology lesson where pupils were making model cars, the teacher used a mistake in using the wrong piece of wood to demonstrate the need for patience and perseverance. However, learning support practitioners do not always have sufficient knowledge or training to replicate this approach. Occasionally, in lessons, activities are too long for pupils to concentrate all of the time, and there is a lack of opportunity for independent learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The quality of the curriculum is good and meets the needs of the pupils. The subject knowledge brought in recently with new staff from mainstream education has enhanced the quality of the curriculum, particularly in ICT and English. Links with mainstream primary schools also enrich what is on offer. Social and emotional aspects of learning materials have been used judiciously to support personal, social and health education. These are effectively supplemented by input from specialist external agencies so that pupils get good coverage of sex and relationships education and drug education. Social occasions, such as lunchtime, are used well for pupils to watch role models and practise their manners and good behaviour skills. There is a good range of out-of-school activities, which develop social skills and help to keep pupils fit and healthy. Since the previous inspection, great progress has been made in establishing ICT across the curriculum. However, literacy and numeracy across the curriculum are still being developed. There are good supportive links between the residential provision and school, with teaching staff working within the residential unit in the evenings and the care staff offering additional support to school staff during the day. Information regarding differing areas of the school is shared on a consistent basis across the residential and education provisions. Homework is encouraged within the residential area and supported by teaching staff.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Young people are well supported by the staff team in ensuring their health care is appropriate. Each child has assessed health and hygiene needs recorded within a care and support plan. Young people have access to additional input from external health support such as psychological and psychiatric services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service and speech and language support through staff making referrals.

The welfare of young people is supported by the staff team who are all trained in the safeguarding of children, with additional training for staff taking a lead in this area. Appropriate policies are in place regarding safeguarding and referral protocols have been agreed with out of county placing authorities. Recordings of safeguarding concerns are in place and auditing of these has highlighted where updating has not been sufficiently completed by staff. This updating has now been rectified. The recruitment practices completed for staff working full time within the school are all appropriate.

Systems are in place to support those young people who are bullied within the school. Young people have an awareness of bullying being wrong and how to respond to this behaviour. The school has a policy regarding bullying behaviour and how staff are to respond to this. All staff are trained in the use of restraint including support staff who are able to observe. Sanctions and restraints are recorded within appropriate systems. The majority of restraint records are well recorded although some lack information and additional measures of control are not always recorded on individual young people's files.

Academic tracking has improved since the previous inspection and pupils are now aware of their targets. However, the monitoring of behaviour and social skills is not sufficiently robust. Transition arrangements for re-integration into mainstream schools are excellent. They are centred on the needs of pupils and allow them an effective voice in what happens.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good overall. Aspects of leadership are outstanding. The school's partnerships with others are good. Highly effective links with parents and excellent links with partner primary schools particularly benefit pupils' learning. The school uses funding effectively to provide outreach work in local schools. The headteacher has successfully created an ethos of high expectations and consistently excellent relationships where pupils can achieve both personally and academically. The recent review of the needs of the school has been used effectively to change management structures to improve pupils' progress and the overall care provision, and this shows that the school has good capacity to improve further. The school's own self-evaluation is accurate in many respects. However, the recently developed subject action plans do not have success criteria based on clear outcomes for pupils' achievement. Lesson observation does take place by senior managers but subject leaders who have the expertise to bring about specific subject improvements do not regularly carry out this form of self-evaluation. Governors are supportive of the school's work but have not ensured that statutory requirements are met.

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Annex A

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of boarding provision	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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.

Annex A

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
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	3
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

15 May 2008

Dear Pupils

- Inspection of Shenstone Lodge School, Lichfield, WS14 0LB Thank you for all the help you gave us when we visited your school on 14 May. We enjoyed talking with you. Shenstone Lodge is a good school. We thought you would like to know what was good about your school and how we thought it could get even better.
- The school is well led by the headteacher and there is a good team spirit among the staff and governors, who want you all to do your very best.
- You are very happy in school and really enjoy your lessons. You behave well, and try to do your best.
- You are making good progress in your school work and in your behaviour.
- You like and respect your teachers.
- You know how to keep healthy by eating the right food and taking exercise.
- You enjoy the good range of activities provided for you in and out of school hours.
- You told us that you feel safe in school and are well looked after. There is good care and support for all of you.
- These are the things we thought could be improved.
- Subject leaders should check more carefully how well you are making progress in lessons.
- The school should have a policy for helping people with disabilities and checking that different races get on well together.

We wish all of you success in your studies and thank you once again for your help with this inspection.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Jones HMI



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- You are making good progress in your school work and in your behaviour.
- You like and respect your teachers.
- You know how to keep healthy by eating the right food and taking exercise.
- You enjoy the good range of activities provided for you in and out of school hours.
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These are the things we thought could be improved.

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