

Lord Wilson School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115849
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	338668
Inspection dates	12–13 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Kay (Kathleen) Charlton

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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	50
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr M Davies
Headteacher	Mrs L Strodder
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by an additional inspector. Eight lessons were observed covering all eight teachers. Meetings were held with students, staff and governors. The inspector observed the school's work and looked at documentation including the school improvement plan, planning and assessment information, tracking data, letters from parents and carers, and six questionnaires from parents and carers.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work. She looked in detail at the following:

- the impact on students' achievement of leaders and managers within the revised leadership structure
- the effectiveness of the provision in ensuring students' needs are met, particularly in speaking, listening and literacy□
- the success of the school in improving students' behaviour and attendance
- the effectiveness of the systems to set and track challenging targets for students to ensure that all make the progress of which they are capable.

Information about the school

Lord Wilson is a special school designated for students with behavioural, social and emotional difficulties. All students have a statement of special educational needs and are from White British backgrounds. No students speak English as an additional language. Many have had disrupted schooling, often with extended periods out of full-time education, before starting at Lord Wilson. The school has a number of awards including Enhanced Healthy Schools Status and a Sportsmark, and it is an Investors in People organisation.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Lord Wilson is a good school with the promotion of equal opportunities at its heart and where staff say 'We never give up on any student.' There are outstanding features, notably in the care, guidance and support students receive and in aspects of their personal development.

Students make good progress and achieve well so that virtually all gain a range of accreditation by Year 11, including vocational, GCSE and Entry Level qualifications. Their progress is particularly good in art, media studies, physical education and information and communication technology (ICT). The quality of teaching is good and lessons are interesting and well paced. Consequently, students enjoy their work and try hard. Teachers know their students' abilities well. They assess work accurately and involve students fully in reviewing their own progress. Staff ensure that students' skills in numeracy are developed effectively. ICT permeates the whole curriculum and staff are creative in the ways that they extend students' skills in this area. However, they do not always make use of a sufficiently wide range of approaches to develop students' skills in speaking, listening and literacy. The school recognises that students can do better in this area and has rightly highlighted it as a priority for improvement.

Students' greatly improved attitudes and good behaviour underpin their good achievement. As one said, 'I now get my head down and work.' They thrive within the caring and supportive ethos and benefit from the excellent relationships they have with staff. They are very supportive of each other and make an outstanding contribution to the school and local community. Students say that there is always a trusted adult to turn to for support or advice. Excellent procedures for safeguarding help them feel safe and secure and they grow in confidence. They value the healthy school meals and the range of physical activities on offer. Very good experiences of working life and challenging vocational courses, based on the school's excellent links with others, play an important part in ensuring students are well prepared for the next stage of their lives.

The headteacher, ably supported by her senior team, leads with drive and determination. With the commitment of staff, she has overseen good improvement since the last inspection, particularly in the ways targets are set for students and in the development of a very robust tracking system. The governing body acts effectively as the school's 'critical friend', and governors and school leaders all have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school has rightly identified that community cohesion is very effective at a local level but is not sufficiently developed at national and international levels for students to learn more about the lives of others in a wider context. The school has good capacity to improve further.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure all students fulfil their potential in speaking, listening and literacy by making certain that staff use a wide range of approaches to develop students' skills.
- Help students to learn more about other communities in the United Kingdom and beyond by developing community cohesion at national and international levels.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

From a wide range of starting points, students of different backgrounds and abilities make good progress. They enjoy their lessons and persevere well in their learning. In an outstanding physical education lesson, for example, they contributed exceptionally well when assessing the quality of each other's work on a trampoline. As part of this assessment, the teacher insisted the students read and used sophisticated vocabulary, and also used ICT to evaluate performance. In this way, students' basic skills, particularly in speaking and listening, were developed very effectively alongside their physical skills. High quality discussion of this kind is not yet, however, evident in all subjects.

Students learn to be reflective and respect each other's feelings, as seen during many of their informal conversations with staff. They readily turn to adults when in need of support and have the confidence to speak up for themselves. Lunchtime is a very harmonious occasion when students demonstrate their improving social skills. Their understanding of the need to adopt a healthy lifestyle is excellent, as reflected in the school's Enhanced Healthy Schools Status and its Sportsmark award. In addition to the weekly, timetabled physical education lessons, students take part enthusiastically in activities such as football, health-related fitness programmes and outdoor pursuits. They make excellent contributions to the school community through the school council, by acting as mentors and, in a wider context, by improving a local forestry area. Most students attend regularly and attendance is improving. Students' good personal and academic skills, particularly the way they have learnt to accept responsibility and socialise with others, prepare them well for life after school. As a result, the vast majority move successfully to employment or further education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers know their students well and this enables them to plan lessons that match their interests and levels of understanding. They bring enthusiasm and high expectations to their lessons. Students receive a good level of individual attention from their teachers and the well-trained teaching assistants. Staff work well as a team and manage students' behaviour very effectively; as a result, lessons run smoothly. Teachers have improved the use they make of assessment since the last inspection. They are now much more successful in ensuring that students understand what they need to do to improve their work. The school's own monitoring is very discerning and recognises how further improvements can be made, notably in the development of students' skills in speaking, listening and literacy.

A strong programme of personal, social and health education is a cornerstone of the school's work. There are clubs and many varied visits, including a number of residential trips, which play a vital part in supporting this work. A good balance of subjects is offered and theme days contribute well to the programme and to students' enjoyment of school. A small minority of students, who have significant difficulty in adjusting to school life, follow very effective individual inclusion support programmes that often include home tuition, work-related learning and use of the school's virtual learning environment. These programmes are very carefully planned to meet their needs and successfully motivate them to re-engage in learning. Following the success all students have had in a recently introduced ICT course that focuses on developing skills across all subjects, the school is rightly looking to introduce similar courses to enhance the current programmes for English and mathematics.

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The school provides a very high standard of care, guidance and support for its students. The school staff work very hard to develop productive links with parents and carers and make regular contact, often through home visits. Staff work tirelessly to develop students' self-esteem and help them stay safe and healthy. Their links with others agencies, including health professionals and career advisers, are used exceptionally well to enhance the provision. Vulnerable students are very carefully monitored and significant support is put in place if required. Students are given a great deal of help when joining or when leaving the school so that there is a smooth transition. They are given excellent guidance for the next steps in their education.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and senior team have a clear vision for the school and they are successful in driving improvements to achieve the best for their students. They use the school's rigorous tracking system extremely well to highlight areas that are in need of improvement including ways that classroom practice might be improved. Professional training is of high quality, as the school's recognition as an Investors in People organisation would suggest, and linked clearly to identified developments for both individuals and the school. The role of key stage leaders in the revised leadership structure has been well thought through with relevant professional development in place to support their increased responsibilities.

Safeguarding policies and procedures are extremely thorough and robust. All staff adopt a very vigilant approach. Governors are very knowledgeable in this area and check carefully to ensure all requirements are met. The school is extremely successful in promoting equal opportunities and tackling discrimination. If any difficulty gets in the way of any student doing their best, every effort is made to resolve the issue so that they quickly get back on track. Leaders help students to develop a clear understanding of, and commitment to, the cohesiveness of their immediate communities. At the same time, they are aware that they need to do more to promote students' wider understanding and engagement. Governors receive high quality information about the school's work as a result of the improved systems of data analysis and self-evaluation. They have a good range of skills with which to challenge the school and are in the process of formalising their own programme of monitoring. They provide a good standard of strategic management and ensure that the school provides good value for

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money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

The school's own information about the views of parents and carers supplemented the few questionnaires received by inspectors. Comments show that parents and carers overwhelmingly hold the school in high regard. They are very happy with the teaching in the school and the ways in which the school helps them to support their children's learning. A parent of one boy wrote, 'The transformation from the boy he was all those years ago is amazing.' The inspection findings confirm these very positive views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Lord Wilson School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 6 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 50 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	4	67	1	17	0	0	1	17
The school keeps my child safe	4	67	1	17	1	17	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	3	50	3	50	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	3	50	2	33	1	17	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	4	67	2	33	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	4	67	2	33	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	3	50	3	50	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	4	67	1	17	1	17	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	4	67	1	17	0	0	1	17
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	4	67	1	17	1	17	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	4	67	1	17	1	17	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	4	67	1	17	1	17	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	4	67	1	17	0	0	1	17

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



14 July 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Lord Wilson School, Southampton, SO31 7NL

Thank you for making me so welcome when I inspected your school.

Lord Wilson School gives you a good education where you do well because of the good teaching. Staff care for you extremely well and help you improve your behaviour. By the time you leave, you get a range of qualifications that help you either get a place at college or a job. I could see that those of you who work on the inclusion support programmes are gaining confidence and improving in many ways. The staff have high expectations of you and I could see that you try hard. All staff work hard to make sure you are safe and healthy. You are given a very interesting range of things to do, such as going to Wales on the recent residential visit. This sounded great!

The school is well led and managed. The staff are very keen to do their best for you and to develop the school even further. I have asked them to make sure that, in all subjects, they help you improve your skills in speaking, listening and literacy. I have also asked the school to develop wider links to help you gain a greater understanding of the lives of other people in the United Kingdom and even further afield.

Yours sincerely

Kay Charlton

Lead Inspector

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