

The Lighthouse Group Bradford.

Independent school inspection report

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| DCSF registration number | 380/6118 |
| Unique Reference Number (URN) | 134427 |
| Inspection number | 348741 |
| Inspection dates | 27 April 2010 |
| Reporting inspector | Christine Graham HMI |

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under section 162A of the Education Act 2002¹, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005², the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

This was a light touch inspection which focused principally on the quality of education provided by the school; its provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and the improvements the school has made since its last inspection.

Information about the school

The school is one of a number of independent schools run by The Lighthouse Group (TLG). The school provides part-time education for students between the ages of 12 to 16. The school can accommodate up to 36 students each day. There are currently 55 students registered at the school. Most placements last for 12 weeks and some last for up to 36 weeks, students attend for between one and three days each week. During the inspection there were nine students in school. Some students come from local secondary schools, or directly from Education Bradford, as part of its alternative education provision, or from other local authorities in West Yorkshire. Students have a range of social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and some of the students placed at the school have been permanently excluded from other schools. A significant proportion access courses at the school because they have attendance issues. Many students have special educational needs and/or disabilities and one student has a statement of special educational needs. The school was first registered in September 2003. It was last inspected in October 2007. The school moved into a new building in March 2008.

The school aims to:

'address the individual social, emotional and learning needs of young people and develop their self-esteem. To engage young people on pathways to learning with accredited outcomes and help them to gain recognised qualifications. To challenge and help modify inappropriate behaviour and help young people to make appropriate choices and to facilitate reintegration into schools or further education or employment.'

¹ www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162

² www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8

Evaluation of the school

The school has successfully tackled all the recommendations from the last inspection. It meets its aims successfully. The overall quality of education is good. The curriculum, teaching and assessment and welfare, health and safety are good. The provision made for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The school safeguards the welfare of all its students and has produced all the relevant policies and guidelines. The school meets nearly all of the regulations necessary for its continued registration as an independent school.

Quality of education

The curriculum is good. The curriculum offered by the school complements the education provided in students' mainstream schools or that delivered by other providers. The curriculum covers all areas of learning and places a particular emphasis on students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Students follow national courses leading to accredited qualifications. The curriculum is personalised to meet the needs of individual students. It is based on their interests and it is appropriately balanced so that students develop a range of key skills. Students of all abilities make good progress during their time at the school. All students that attend regularly attain at least one nationally recognised qualification and some attain two or three accreditations at the highest level. The school's provision for music and for sports and physical activities is outstanding. Each classroom has enough new computers to allow students to work on tasks independently and there is enough space to allow students to work with a partner or as part of a small group. There is a very good range of extra-curricular opportunities, facilitated by the excellent resources available in school, and these together with a number of day and residential visits that are well tailored to students' interests, enrich the curriculum and do much to motivate students. Students are well prepared for life after school.

Teaching and assessment are good. The school usually receives information about students' prior attainment and students are assessed on entry to the school. These baseline assessments together with other information about students' likes and dislikes are used to plan the curriculum offered to each student. Teaching groups are small and there are usually at least three staff in each lesson; this means that students receive a great deal of individual support. Teachers' expectations of what students will achieve are high and they set challenging targets. Students make good progress because teachers plan their learning very carefully using the school's lesson planning format. They focus on what students will learn and they provide a range of activities that meet students' needs. These tasks help students to make academic progress and to develop personal skills and positive behaviours. This has a positive impact on their future economic well-being. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used to particularly good effect. This helps to make lessons interesting and ensures that students enjoy learning. One student said, 'Lessons here

are fun so I want to work, at other schools they were boring so I did no work'. Another student added that she did not attend her mainstream school, often for weeks at a time but does not mind attending at The Lighthouse Group because lessons are interesting. Most students, particularly those that have been at the centre for some time, work very effectively. They present work well and usually complete their tasks. Support staff provide very effective support. They encourage and motivate students and ensure that work is completed independently.

The school has implemented very robust admittance procedures. The headteacher meets with parents and with placing authorities and schools. She ensures that there is close partnership working between all concerned with the students and that the placing schools, in particular, are kept well informed about the progress made by individual students. This ensures that the students are not forgotten and that improvements in their behaviour or attitude can be maintained on their return to school. Schools appreciate this and some teachers from the home schools are frequent visitors to the school. Although the school provides placing organisations with details of students' progress it does not currently provide local authorities with an annual account of the income received and the expenditure incurred for each student. The school encourages students to be self evaluative. Students complete a written ICT based self-evaluation twice each day. Using a system called 'My Day' they follow a number of prompts that provide feedback about their feelings, attitudes and achievements. Staff fill in a similar log, known as 'Their Day'. The outcomes of these evaluations are available, electronically, to students, staff and to the home school. Students can access their log at school or at home. The logs provide a very useful method of communication and help students to reflect on their learning, attitudes and behaviour. They also provide students with a confidential method of alerting staff to personal problems or to difficulties in their lives.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The school insists on a robust partnership with parents and with placing organisations and schools. These strong partnerships ensure that students' behaviour and their expectations of themselves are changed at home as well as at school. Students' families are given very effective support. There are a range of well-chosen social events that encourage parents to come into school, this helps to establish positive relationships between home and school. Parents are strongly encouraged to attend meetings and they receive regular reports about their child's progress. There is a very supportive group of suitably vetted volunteers that work with students and their families. They provide one-to-one support during formal meetings, carry out home visits and help to organise and attend residential weekends and other activities. These events help to promote positive parenting skills and help parents to deal with any anxieties or problems. Evidence from the school suggests that this support is very well received. Most students settle into the school well. The attendance of many students improves dramatically, often from exceptionally low levels. The school has robust strategies to improve attendance and staff log any absence on the

school's system. Staff contact parents to report any non attendance and, alongside local authority officers, carry out home visits. Students participate willingly in lessons and in after-school and other activities. They are courteous to others and proud of the school. During the inspection students' behaviour was good. They responded positively to the staff and to their peers. In one lesson a student willingly supported another student during her first morning at the school. The school's Christian ethos underpins all that it does and students acquire an appreciation and respect for their own and other cultures. The school is open in the evenings and at weekends and this helps to provide much needed stability for some students.

Safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety

The provision for students' welfare, health and safety is good. The school works very closely with Education Bradford, there are shared policies, especially those relating to safeguarding students and school staff have access to regular training sessions. The school's arrangements to safeguard students are robust and there are effective procedures to ensure they are kept safe during the school day and when out of school on visits. The school has carried out the necessary safeguarding checks for all staff. It maintains a single central register of such checks as required. The school works very closely with placing organisations and there is a regular transfer of information. Students are given support and advice that helps them to understand potential health risks and deal with any addictions. Many students smoke. The school provides them with support that helps them to give up but they are allowed to smoke, in a specially designated area, during break times. Although they are closely supervised during this time and are not allowed to share cigarettes, this does not help to promote their physical health or well-being. However, the school estimates that about around 40% of students give up smoking during their time at school. Students are encouraged to eat a healthy diet and take regular exercise. They are given support that helps them deal with emotional issues and improves their confidence and self-esteem. Students are very well supported. One particularly strong aspect of the school's provision is the way that staff support is tailored to students' individual needs. Staff teams reflect family groupings and key workers are chosen both for their skills and for their affinity with individual students. The school fulfils its responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act 2002.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets nearly all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005, with the exception of those listed below.

The school does not meet all requirements in relation to the information provided to parents and placing authorities (standard 6) and must:

- supply an annual account of income received and expenditure incurred by the school in respect of pupils to the local authority and on request to the Secretary of State (paragraph 6(8))

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by the regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

Attempt to eliminate smoking on the school premises.

Inspection judgement recording form

| | | | |
|-------------|------|--------------|------------|
| outstanding | good | satisfactory | inadequate |
|-------------|------|--------------|------------|

The quality of education

| | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| Overall quality of education | | √ | | |
| How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils | | √ | | |
| How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs | | √ | | |
| How well pupils make progress in their learning | | √ | | |

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

| | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|--|
| Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | √ | | | |
| The behaviour of pupils | | √ | | |

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

| | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils | | √ | | |
|--|--|---|--|--|

School details

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| Name of school | The Lighthouse Group Bradford | | |
| DCSF number | 380/6118 | | |
| Unique Reference Number (URN) | 134427 | | |
| Type of school | Co-educational | | |
| Status | Independent | | |
| Date school opened | September 2003 | | |
| Age range of students | 12-16 | | |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | | |
| Number on roll (part-time students) | Boys: 36 | Girls: 19 | Total: 55 |
| Number of students with a statement of special educational need | Boys: 1 | Girls: 0 | Total: 1 |
| Annual fees (day students) | £2,844 | | |
| Address of school | Centre of Excellence Hope Park Trevor Foster Way Bradford BD5 8HH | | |
| Telephone number | 0845 508 3242 | | |
| Fax number | 0845 508 3241 | | |
| Email address | bradford@tlg.org.uk | | |
| Headteacher | Mrs Helen Laws | | |
| Proprietor | The Lighthouse Group | | |
| Reporting inspector | Christine Graham HMI | | |
| Dates of inspection | 27 April 2010 | | |