

Larwood School

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WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT OURSELVES - LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT REPORT 2016 - 17

This report should be read alongside other reports such as:

- Other school self-evaluation reports, in the same series titled-‘What we know about ourselves’.
- The School Development Plan (SDP)
- Ofsted Reports-day and residential (2014-Day, 2015,2016,2017-Residential)
- Hertfordshire Improvement Partner reports (HIP reports)

CONTEXT

Larwood School is a primary school for pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH) and all pupils have an Educational Health Care Plan. Pupils are referred to us as part of a panel system organised by Hertfordshire. We have capacity for 64 day pupils. As part of our provision, we are also a residential school and this operates from Monday through until Friday, with pupils returning home at the weekends. We are the only residential (primary) special school for SEMH pupils in the county. Our pupils display the following characteristics:

- *They have all experienced exclusion and at least 1 term away from education.*
- *2 pupils last year attended 5 schools. 1 pupil has been at 4 schools. 19 pupils had been at 3 schools and the rest of the cohort had been at 2 schools. Therefore, 36% of the cohort had been at, at least two schools before Larwood.*
- *Although all pupils have SEMH as their designated need, ASD ranged between 50% and 80% in different year groups, and those pupils with 2 or more identified needs within their statement ranged from 50%-83%. We continued to employ a Family and Community Engagement Worker (specialist work undertaken in the community), School Counsellor, and our own school based Family Support Worker.*
- *In year referrals meant that the size and dynamics of every year group changed during the year. This varied from the lowest amount of change for Year 6 with 22%, Year 5-29%, Year 4-45%, Year 3-43% and Years 1 and 2-100% of pupils were new during the year.*

Overall general profile for the school during 2016-17



Year	Number of pupils and % change over the year	Boy/girl	% Autistic Spectrum Condition	% 2years plus at Larwood	Profile Low/Mid/High
1	3-100%	All boys	66%	0	66/34/0
2	2-100%	All boys	100%	0	100/0/0
3	7-43%	All boys	71%	0	85/15/0
4	13-45%	12B 1G	54%	1-8%	76/12/12
5	15-29%	14B 1G	66%	5-33%	80/13/7
6	23-22%	19B 3G	74%	12-52%	80/15/5

Commentary and judgements will be made in this report which reflect Ofsted's approach to inspection alongside our own vision and values that we believe make Larwood School unique.

Therefore, I will make reference to the following areas:

- Vision, ambition and expectations
- Process and rigour related to self-evaluation and how this is then used
- The impact of leadership and management on teaching and learning, behaviour, the curriculum, including personal development and British Values.
- Groups of pupils, including those with autism, Pupil Premium, Children looked after and Sports Premium and those that fall within a Safeguarding category
- The creation of, implementation and review of continued professional development
- The role and impact of the governing body, both in term of statutory duties but also with regard to the wider impact that they have in challenging and supporting the school to provide the outstanding education that all its pupils deserve
- The impact of academisation and the leadership and management of the school's finances and resources.
- Our role in the local and wider community

VISION, AMBITION AND EXPECTATIONS

Larwood School and its staff remain committed to providing the very best education for its pupils. Our school strapline of 'achieve, believe, expect and enjoy' permeates the school's work and this is evidenced in many ways:

- When you walk through the front entrance door you are met with pictures of pupils that demonstrated how they have 'achieved, believed, expected and enjoyed'.
- Assemblies make reference to the school strap line at regular intervals and in a variety of ways

- Dialogue between pupils and staff is used to reinforce and challenge pupils to meet this expectation in way that is personalised to them.
- Reports use the language of improvement and challenge

We consider our school to be the leaders of our type of provision within our county and beyond. For the past three years we have set the challenging target of achieving around 80% progress for our school cohort in the areas of reading, writing and mathematics. Research conducted by the Headteacher two years ago indicated that although our school had been rated by Ofsted as 'good', our academic progression rates with our pupils were on a par with other similar schools rated 'outstanding'.

IMPACT:

- The vast majority of our pupils arrive at our school with a 'broken' education. We fix this, usually fairly quickly but look beyond the sticking plaster method to try and ensure that our pupils go onto better and consistent improvements.
- Sustained improvements in reading, writing and mathematics with regards to progress during the time that a pupil is at Larwood School
- Sustained improvements in behaviour and well being
- A much improved approach to team working and dialogue between staff, pupils, parents and governors

EVIDENCE:

- Parent views, pupil views, data
- What we know about ourselves reports for behaviour, attendance, teaching and learning, progress and achievement
- Exclusion data
- Behaviour Watch reports
- Internal data related to progress in academic subjects
- Ofsted reports-day and residential
- Governing body reports
- Hertfordshire Improvement partner reports
- Headteacher research on progress of four SEMH schools across the country
- Pupils work books

Process and rigour related to self-evaluation and how this is then used?



As a school, we have developed a comprehensive and critical approach towards our own self-evaluation. The process operates as follows:

Daily review of pupil performance and well-being via the reflection process. Questions used are:

What has gone well and should be repeated?

What didn't go so well and should be avoided?

Celebration of 'magic moments'

This feeds into a weekly SLT meeting, based on data drawn from Behaviour Watch, and leads to us critically asking how we can make the next day/hour/week better for our pupils? (Friday-8:00am)

A weekly SLT meeting (3.50 until finished) reviews any matters of a strategic nature, again using data where possible.

We review our own pupil performance data on a half termly basis which generates some professional development training sessions and pupil interventions.

Information is sought from parents, pupils, staff and governors are various times during the year to assess our performance in a variety of ways. For example, there is an annual Governing Body Training Day whereby all governors visit classes to see how we work and generate critical questions based on their visits, we generate staff and parent surveys, staff are involved in strengths, weaknesses and next type activities.

Half termly moderation of assessments and moderation of assessments with Local Authority/School Colleagues during the year.

We work with an external advisor, who is also an Ofsted Inspector to review our work, assess our own internal judgements such as lesson observations and data analysis, as well as helping to develop staff.

Annual 'What we know about ourselves' self-evaluation reports, written by the Headteacher covering Behaviour, Attendance and Exclusion, Teaching and Learning, Pupil Progress and Achievement, Pupil Premium, Sports Premium, Children Looked After, Residential Provision and Leadership and Management.

Annual Ofsted Inspection of Residential Unit-Outstanding for the last two years

Individual plans related to various areas of school improvement and created using school based and external data. For example, to focus on the improvement of extended writing in terms of quality and quantity over time. Annual review of progress as noted above.

Creation of School Development Plan, which last for three years.

Ofsted Inspection aligned with time scale for Schools judged as 'good' during their last inspection

THE IMPACT OF LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT ON TEACHING AND LEARNING, BEHAVIOUR, THE CURRICULUM, INCLUDING PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND BRITISH VALUES

PLEASE SEE:

What we know about ourselves - Progress and Attainment report

What we know about ourselves - Behaviour, Attendance and Exclusions report

Generic patterns related to impact can be observed from both reports and they continue with recent trends. This includes:

- Consistent trends in meeting or getting very close to the school's targets for reading and mathematics. Therefore, a greater number of pupils (approx. 80%) are meeting our progress expectation for the time spent at Larwood School.
- Writing has improved during the last year in terms of progress made during time spent at Larwood (80% meeting targets compared to 56% in 2016), and we believe that much of the success of this was due to the implementation of The Big Idea. The impact of being able to get more pupils (mainly boys) engaged in the writing process cannot be underestimated. Although this has not necessarily filtered through to SAT's results, our review of books shows that our pupils are better equipped for the next stage of their education when they leave us, compared to previous years. We are very aware that this need to continue to improve and our refining of the scheme, alongside the use of Pobble, should enable continued engagement and progress whilst at Larwood.
- Reduction in the need for use of restrictive physical intervention over the last three years, including a 27% drop last year and an average of 2 incidents per week, across the year. As every child who enters Larwood has, as part of their Education Health Care Plan, a history of violence to peers and adults in both school and home surroundings, this demonstrates great impact. It is now increasingly difficult to make valid year on year comparisons due to the nature of the cohorts (size/range of needs/cognitive ability etc). However, with every new pupil we are quickly able to assess their needs and plan for their improvements. We are very aware of the need for constant training in this area and the drive for consistency of practice remains essential.

- The curriculum remains under constant review and evolution to meet the needs of our pupils and the demands that society will place upon them in the future. Already noted is the role of The Big Idea, and Pobble. Additionally, the creation and establishment of our own Arts programs (MAPS and MAD) have enabled a greater proportion of our pupils to engage in such areas and produce shows, as well as attend a theatre in London to see the Lion King. This engagement has also contributed to the reduction on the need for RPI and a lower proportion of incidents during the year. Our skills curriculum has achieved greater choice, more off-site activities and a more creative approach to some of the traditional subject areas such as Science. Pupil voice, their behaviour and engagement all indicate this is a strong feature of our curriculum entitlement.

The introduction of newer elements such as 'Living Of The Land' and 'Hammertime' have also added to the range and skillset, for some of our pupils. We know that pupils who took part in these activities not only achieved higher points in comparison to other subject areas, but also did much better generally as the weeks passed.

We have set ourselves the challenge of making sure that other areas of the curriculum are reviewed during the following year and that we refine our approach to Maths, as well as consider adopting a skills based curriculum for a greater proportion of time.

- Personal development was noted as a strength of the school (Ofsted residential reports 2016, 2017) however, we believed that we did not track this as well as we could. Having made the adjustment to this process so that it sits alongside our academic assessment procedures, it can now be monitored and tracked much more easily. The impact is measured in a variety of ways and includes measures such as:
 - Pupils being able to gain and retain a friend for the first time in their lives
 - Recognising and using appropriate manners are important in all situations (Please/thank you, opening a door etc)
 - Being able to be independent as well as a team member
 - Being safe in a variety of places and situations
 - Being kind to others and using caring gestures at the right time and in the right place
 - Having the ability to fail but not give up, get angry or hurt themselves or others
 - Being able to cope with change
- British Values. This is difficult to assess the impact of this area. It is not an area that can be easily measured and/or quantified. However, the following are embedded into our school culture

RESPECT

This forms an integral part of our culture and ethos, and is highlighted via practice and policy. The Behaviour Management Policy, our Code of Conduct for staff and pupils, assembly program and curriculum discussions linking values and respect to other cultures and faiths are all embedded.



TOLERANCE

(Particularly in relation to difference, and for those with/without faith). This is noted above within the area of Respect, but is given direct time via PSHE, RE and assemblies than operate throughout the year.

RESPECT FOR THE LAW

Again, this is taught as part of our PSHE curriculum, but we also bring this alive by inviting Police officers into school at regular intervals. They may be involved in meeting pupils for discussion about generic themes or meeting an individual and their parent's due to a particular issue.

DEMOCRATIC PROCESS

Time is devoted to this area via class based votes for positions of responsibility, as well as broader and bigger events. For example, all pupils, staff and governors voted on which piece of new playground equipment should be installed, alongside the tendering process. The role of government within the UK and abroad are also discussed and explored where possible (The Trump election generating great debate!).

RESPONSIBILITY

Again this is built into the pupils induction and then grows with them via their class and school experience. It may be related to taking responsibility for their actions, or increasing their responsibility as a member of our school community as they are doing so well. Pupils rise to this challenge really well.

Groups of pupils, including those with autism, Pupil Premium, Children looked after and Sports Premium and those that fall within a Safeguarding category

Separate reports for all of these areas have been consistently produced for the past 5 years. Please see the reports for details.

The creation of, implementation and review of continued professional development

Our approach to CPD is that we avoid the 'drive by' approach to staff training which for many schools, teachers and parents replicates these comments:

- A one-day training course which is educationally sound, based on practice and research, and providing lots of good interaction and thought. However, after the day has passed the initial enthusiasm starts to wane, and without constant supervision, the practice and knowledge created on the day soon disappears.
- Parents 'baffled by Inset days', teachers are told-BBC News 2014, supported by the then Shadow Education Secretary-Tristram Hunt
- Inset days are "universally reviled" by teachers and largely used for keeping school staff up-to-date with policy changes rather than for professional development, school leaders and education experts have warned.-The TES 2014

The Scotland Teacher Review stated: Continuing professional development (CPD) is accepted as an integral part of teacher education because only a continuing learning and training assures a high level of expertise and enables the teachers to keep their professional skills and knowledge up-to-date. CPD therefore should not be regarded only as an obligatory activity just to meet the required 35 hours.

Our analysis finds that **teachers in England are working, on average, longer hours than in most other jurisdictions**. Full time teachers in England reported working, on average, 48.2 hours in the sampled week, including evenings and weekends....these relatively long working hours are hindering teachers' access to continuing professional development (CPD). **Of the 36 jurisdictions in the dataset, England ranked 30th in terms of the average number of days spent in a year on certain types of professional development.**² Teachers in England spent only an average of 4 days on these CPD opportunities (including courses, observational visits, seminars and in-service training), compared with an average of 10.5 days. (Teacher workload and professional development in England's secondary schools: insights from Talis-Peter Sellen Oct 2016)

As a Special School that has to derive different approaches for improved outcomes, this has also been applied to our approach to CPD. Therefore, with staff and governor consultation and approval our approach to CPD is as follows:

- We retain one traditional INSET day. This is the first day of the academic year and meets a statutory obligation as well as allowing for whole staff communications relating to a variety of topics as the year begins.
- All other training sessions are delivered on Tuesday evenings between 3.30 and 5.00 pm to all teaching staff and Learning and Support Assistants at the same time, apart from residential staff who are working at this time.
- Residential staff received the same training program (if it is relevant) on a Monday morning during their designated training session.
- We go beyond the required number of hours for an INSET day approach to training
- A published calendar is used with all staff and themes are used that are based on self-evaluation reports from the previous year, ongoing projects and developments and items that support our School Development Plan (Progress, well-being and sustainability)
- Any member of staff can deliver a session. External speakers are used where appropriate.

The impact of this approach has been to develop a highly personalised school approach, which allows continuous review and improvement related to key drivers. It is a sustainable model that does not solely rely on expensive external courses, which are of variable quality. Feedback has always been positive with this approach for 2017/18, all such sessions are to be formally evaluated. As we have linked this into our school year, it also means that parents only have one traditional INSET day to worry about. Examples of how this course has helped our school progress include:

- An increasing number of sessions devoted to safeguarding and its various elements, responding to the increasing demand on teaching staff for this, as well as the increasing number of events associated with it



- Staff pursuing Masters level training which is then shared with all staff
- An ongoing ability to provide data led training, in response to behaviour report analysis.
- The ability to provide staff with personalised learning, on a termly basis.

The role and impact of the governing body, both in term of statutory duties but also with regard to the wider impact that they have in challenging and supporting the school to provide the outstanding education that all its pupils deserve

The role of our governing body has been reviewed as each year progresses and is also checked against an annual residential Ofsted inspection. The group remains committed to providing the very best outcomes for pupils with social, emotional and mental health related issues. This takes place in the following ways:

- By implementing and attending frequent meetings and more than needed to meet statutory regulations. For example, there are five full governing body meetings during the year.
- By creating and attending an annual training day. Exploration of new themes, planning and reviews take place during this day, alongside classroom visits and staff discussions.
- Bi weekly meetings between the Chair of the Governing Body and Headteacher as a check on progress and challenge conversation.
- Additional meetings for clarity of purpose and challenge before governor's meetings such as Finance, Premises and Personnel meeting.
- Attendance at various school events such as school plays, gym and dance festival and school council meetings.

THE IMPACT OF ACADEMISATION AND THE LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE SCHOOL'S FINANCES AND RESOURCES

At the time of writing we have not yet competed a full year as an academy. Therefore, whilst we are on track to achieve many of the aspirations we had by becoming an academy, it is too early to fully assess this area.

In relation to finance and resources, The School Business Manager continues to provide first class direction and support on this matter. All deadlines have been met, and the school is in a healthy position, derived from direct grant income but as from an increasing amount of school generated income.

OUR ROLE IN THE LOCAL AND WIDER COMMUNITY

This is another area that is strongly linked to our conversation to academy status. The TLR post holder for this area has a clear plan, enabling an extension of events, which have taken place and have been reviewed. This included:

- A program that will eventually see all classes attached to and working with another school
- Other schools such as Greenside special school attend events with us, such as Christmas lunch and play performances.



- A proactive role in the local area such litter picking around the immediate site and nearby roads.
- Active participation in the local DSPL group and application to do more
- Previously hosting Stevenage based CPD events for all schools and subject clusters
- Business Manager takes a proactive role in the local and County BM Cluster group
- The Headteacher is part of a number of committees and is the Chair of the Hertfordshire Special School Forum group.
- The Headteacher is commissioned by Hertfordshire for some small pieces of consultancy work on an annual basis and attends training for this.
- We have a series of after school clubs that use of facilities during the week and during holidays. This includes Slimming World, a dance school, birthday parties. There is a proposed plan to start to create holiday club opportunities for our pupils, alongside other local pupils during 2017-18.
- We host a range of charity based school events on an annual basis.
- We actively take part in the Stevenage's Futures Sporting partners competition program and usually do well in one or two areas (Dragon Boating!).

The impact of this wide range of existing (and some new ideas) events equates to Larwood School having an important role in the local and wider and community and one that will grow during the next few years. This allows us to provide specialist provision, meet the needs of the community and continue to break down some of the barriers associated with special needs children.

