

Larwood School

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What we know about ourselves-Teaching, Curriculum and Learning report 2016

Please note that this should be read in conjunction with the leadership and management report, skills curriculum report, and progress and attainment report.

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 60 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. 20 pupils had been at 3 schools and the rest of the cohort had been at 2 schools. Therefore, 31% 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 87% 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 psychiatric nurse, school counsellor, and music intervention specialist to work with some pupils /parents.*
- *In year referrals meant that year groups changed in size by between 5% and 60% increases.*

Additional complex nature of assessing progress/attainment in 2015 – 16

In 2014, a new set of guidelines were produced which meant that for the first time this year, pupils would experience a different curriculum, new assessment methods and completely revised Standard Assessments Tests at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6). It was with great challenge that new initiatives such as assessment and curriculum were both changed at the same time. This caused the following concerns:

- The cohort leaving in 2016 would only experience 2 years of a new curriculum.
- Staff would only have a relatively short time to implement new curriculum and assessment methods before SATS were taken
- As with any new initiative, resources and experience grow over time. Therefore, for this cohort of pupils, teachers were faced with few resources and tools to use for the benefits of the pupils. This included examples of quality assessment materials.



- Papers and information related to the SATs were leaked and shared online in the approach to the tests in the summer of 2016
- Both the new curriculum and new assessment procedures were known to be more difficult.
- Old results and patterns of performance using a different assessment method, curriculum and tests cannot be directly compared to this new approach.

Overall general profile for the school during 2015-16

Year	Number of pupils and % change over the year	Boy/girl	% Autistic Spectrum Condition	% 2years plus at Larwood	Profile Low/Mid/High	
2	3-100%-all new	3B 0G	66%	0	66/33/0	
3	6-33% change	6B 0G	50%	33%	83/17/0	
4	10-40% change	10B 0G	80%	33%	80/10/10	
5	21-40% change	18B 2G	57%	25%	80/15/5	
6	20-5% change	17B 3G	75%	80%	70/20/10	

Key points arising from this profile:

1. We experienced massive in year entry to the school with years 4/5 having the most change and Year 6 having the least. We must continue to review and adopt our practice for transition for both pupils and parents. The role of our Family Support Worker is pivotal in this process.
2. We remain heavily boy orientated with the biggest proportion of girls in Year 6-3/20. We must review our provision for girls and their needs as individuals and as a group as the year progresses.
3. Every cohort has a high proportion of pupils with autism. This varies from 50% in year 3 to -80% in year 4. Pursuing best practice with regards to autistic children is in the best interests of all. Therefore, our determination to achieve Autism Accreditation, review and adjust our own practice and promote staff gaining Masters Qualifications is entirely appropriate.
4. We had the greatest stability over time with our Year 6 cohort and this helps development and progress from every angle.

We are dominated by a low ability profile across the school based on very sketchy previous assessments. However, our own internal assessments also prove that there are huge gaps in learning and development for all pupils upon entry to Larwood

Our Ofsted inspection in Jan 2014 had confirmed that we were judging lessons appropriately. Our end of year review for 2013-14 notes that the majority of lessons (58%) were good and a



small proportion (15%) were outstanding. However, with supportive CPD and targeted coaching there were clear improvements in 2014-15. The start of 2015 generated some key changes in staffing whereby even greater focus on transition, planning for pupils needs and active learning were apparent. Two classes were affected by staff turnover, however, both staff that were recruited already had experience of working with pupils in our sector

Summary:

Year	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
2013-14	15%	58%	27%	0
2014-15	30%	62%	8%	0
2015-16	44%	52%	4%	0

The satisfactory lesson observed took place during the first term of a newly appointed member of staff, and this lesson was judged to be on the cusp of RI/Good. Further development and support then took place for the member of staff concerned, alongside other support for staff. The latter including specific focus on pupil feedback and assessment for learning.

How the conclusions above were reached?

At Larwood there is a clear and shared observation schedule. Every half term staff are observed by line managers. They are usually given 48 hours' notice, however, sometimes a 'drop in' may lead to a full observation and write up. Staff are given feedback as soon as possible and during the summer term, we ask staff to observe each other, as part of a development program to assist in lesson observations and leadership and management.

Please note that there are a variety of ways in which we gather teaching evidence. This includes:

Lesson observation-at least half a lesson observed with notes and feedback

Drop in-part of a lesson (usually 10-15 minutes) observed as part of a theme of looking at a particular aspect of teaching and learning

Pop in-a quick visit to a classroom as part of a learning walk

Learning walk-visits to a number of areas or classrooms to highlight one aspect and gain an overall picture for that aspect.

Work scrutiny-books or aspects of work reviewed and checked for particular reasons



There were a large number of strengths recognised as part of our review program and these included:

1. Pupil teacher relationships-teachers and LASA's
2. Differentiation so that appropriate challenge was present for those that needed it, as well as reducing work based anxiety where it may have been a trigger
3. Classroom management and behavior. The impact of Steps became apparent as the year progressed for the vast majority of **pupils leading to a 55% reduction in the need for use of restrictive physical intervention**
4. Links to emotions where appropriate
5. Rewards and sanctions
6. Use of learning intentions throughout the lesson
7. Chunking and pace
8. Use of specific vocabulary to enhance and build upon learning
9. Pace and focus
10. **Review of feedback system and suggested improvements**

There were also some areas for improvement and this included:

- Use of technology to enhance learning-this has led to the 'adopt an app' program
- **Staff self analysis of learning, apart from SLT observations. IRIS (self-assessment video analysis system used by 3 staff during the course of the year. This also generated one lesson that was used as part of the appraisal system)**
- Continuing to improve and review writing. **This led to the creation of The Big Idea to be implemented in 2016-17**

How staffing supported teaching and learning?

We retain the view that as a school serving pupils with social, emotional and mental health issues, one of our most important features for pupil success is the quality of our staff. Therefore, we continue to have small classes with one teacher and one support assistant present. We also have the following staff that play important roles to aid teaching and learning:

- One extra member of the teaching team who is not allocated to a class. This person can provide interventions, class cover for PPA and absence when required
- One extra member of the learning and support assistant team who is not class based. This person can provide additional support to classes when needed and absence cover.



- The Fox Team. Within this team there are two members of staff who work proactively with pupils to manage behaviour for learning and may support a child 'one to one' if needed. This allows the rest of the class to continue with the lesson where dedicated support is needed. There is also a dedicated Family Support Worker and Transition Worker. Finally, there is one member of the Team who will withdraw pupils for improved behaviour, well being and curriculum access sessions. **This team experienced high turnover during the year with both Transition worker and Family Support worker initially leaving for other posts. However, the Transition worker returned within a month of leaving to become the Family Support worker. Additionally, the Deputy Head who had led this team left in December and was replaced by an existing member of staff in an Assistant Headteacher role with the title of improving behavior for learning. All data supports the view that the change of staffing had no detrimental effect on the continued drive for improved Well-being, progress and sustainability.**
- Music Intervention specialist. This person provides generic support for music as well as small group and individual lessons.
- Physical Education Specialist.
- Speech and Language intervention. We have a weekly visit from a member of Hertfordshire's speech and language team who works with those pupils highlighted via EHC plans or classroom teams.
- School Nurse.
- Residential Team. We have the ability to provide 24-hour curriculum for up to 12 pupils, Monday to Thursday. The team support pupils with homework and well being on a day to day basis.

How the curriculum and day supports teaching and learning?

During 2015-16, we embedded the previous year's changes and new curriculum/assessment methods. Therefore, the following should be noted:

1. A continuation of our assembly program. Assemblies now take place Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays only. We retain an act of collective worship, at the start of every lunchtime, for all days of the week. Our data analysis indicated that some pupils found morning play very difficult and this affected the rest of the day for them. Our pupils also seem to be most receptive during mornings; therefore, literacy and numeracy are based during the mornings.
2. All pupils are given fruit during the morning break and access to a free school meal every day. A range of choices are available.
3. PSHE is supported via classroom activities and assemblies with the SEAL program, as well as dedicated transition work and Year 6 specific topics.



4. Creativity remains an important part of the curriculum however, we conducted a review of the Arts Award program as the year developed. Staff at all levels believed it was time to change this as pupil motivation and staff delivery were causing concern. Staff have set about creating their own curriculum ready for 2016-17 and a temporary TLR has been appointed to one member of staff for alternative curriculum ideas and topics.
5. Wide coverage of British Values via established assembly program, PSHE topics and day to day business.
6. Further exploration as to how we might continue to improve the quality and quantity of writing for pupils based on previous progress and our own analysis. [This has led to the creation of the Big Idea for 2016-17.](#)
7. The addition of times available to be utilized for reading or other PSHE type topics. As we reduced the number of morning assemblies (five to three) and changed the length of lessons, we now have other opportunities to work creatively with our pupils at other times of the day.
8. Frequent training sessions and carefully monitored use of Hertfordshire Steps to support and enhance learning

Parental support for teaching and learning

This remains an important part of our drive to improve our pupil's capacity to catch up and achieve as well as others. Therefore, we:

- Hold a 'meet the teacher' event every September
- Organise a more traditional parents evening event in November
- Review pupil progress with all staff and parents during EHC reviews during the Spring term
- Produce an end of year report for parents in the summer term
- We organized and ran three behavior management course for parents
- Issue all pupils with a home school diary
- Have daily contact via email with some parents where it is deemed helpful
- Hold individual sessions such as 'homework' and attendance during the year.
- Work with some parents during the longer summer break to discuss routines and wellbeing for those pupils that normally board with us.
- Visit parents at home where it is thought to be helpful
- [Transition meetings with parents now give a very clear view and demonstration of what Hertfordshire Steps means](#)



Governor Support for teaching and learning

This is generated via formal procedures that comply with the governance of any school, alongside our own initiatives that help all parties. This ensures we have the right blend of challenge and support to ensure accountability as well as maintaining a well being agenda for all members of the Larwood School community. We have a Pupil Attainment and Support Committee (PASC) which meets to review data and question the leadership team in relation to progress and attainment. Examples of this group's impact have included:

1. Requesting specific information from subject areas, or suggesting reviews that would aid further discussion and progression
2. Providing challenge and further analysis based on pupil performance. For example, why have girls done so well compared to boys in reading this year?
3. Insisting on clear advice with regards to specific steps taken to support pupils that may be falling behind or starting from a low baseline
4. Tracking data relating to time out of class, exclusions, attendance, use of physical intervention and incidents

Other systems are also used which clearly demonstrate the devotion and dedication of the governing body. This includes each person being associated with a class and arranging visits, attending school based governor training events and strategic planning days.

