

# Larwood School

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## WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT OURSELVES-LARWOOD SCHOOL SELF EVALUATION SERIES 2019-20

### FOCUS: INTERVENTIONS

This report should be read alongside others in the 'What we know about ourselves' section of the website or internal server.

### 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. Key factors to consider as part of this year included:

- During the course of 2019-20, we added to our capacity from 80 to 86 pupils. This was due to the revamping of a previous space called the Playbarn, which enabled more pupils to join our school and reduce lost time away from education. This was in direct response to the placement crisis that Hertfordshire has been experiencing with special needs pupils.
- During the course of the year, around 60% of our pupils either had a formal diagnosis of autism or had the traits of autistic behaviour
- Like other schools across the country our provision was effected by Covid 19. We took the decision to close down at the start of the crisis (March) due to a lack of staff and the high infection rate. During the Easter holidays we opened for Key Worker pupils, then slowly but carefully expanded numbers over a period of weeks. BY June we had all pupils experiencing some physically based provision, except those that needed to shield, and those whereby parents choose to keep children at home for a variety of reasons. Therefore, we had half of the year effected by Covid 19, which impacted upon our attendance, progress and curriculum model.
- We adapted our provision in light of Covid 19 to provide a physical school and virtual school.
- We continued to support a local secondary SEMH School (Brandles) that had gone into Special Measures following inspection in 2018. In Feb 2020, they were formally adopted in Larwood Academy Trust.
- We were inspected by Ofsted in October 2019 and it concluded that:

*Larwood School continues to be a good school.*

*There is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if we were to carry out a section 5 inspection now.*

*Pupils thrive at this school. They learn in a stimulating environment where adults deliver curriculum that is exciting and helps pupils learn well. Pupils' needs are often met through carefully planned activities from specialist teachers. Staff organise learning to get the very best from pupils.*



All of our pupils have all experienced exclusion and at least 1 term away from education. The vast majority of pupils arrive at Larwood having been receiving part time education. One hour a day quite often being the norm.

It is appropriate to state that all of our pupils have experienced the challenges and issues that any officially designated pupil premium pupil may have. Please note there are specific characteristics of this cohort which include family related breakdown including pupils witnessing violent incidents, legal proceedings, medication issues, family upheaval/displacement, and drug and alcohol related issues.

### OVERALL GENERAL PROFILE FOR THE SCHOOL DURING 2019-20

Year	Number of pupils and % change over the year	Boy/girl	% Autistic Spectrum Condition	% 2years plus at Larwood	Profile Low/Mid/High
1	0-	NA		0	
2	6-50%	Boys	67%	0	80/20/0
3	10-50%	Boys	60%	40%	90/10/0
4	17-53%	16 B 1G	67%	41%	78/22/0
5	25-28%	23B 2G	44%	50%	92/8/0
6	26-35%	20B 6G	50%	11-46%	84/16/0

### KEY POINTS ARISING FROM THIS PROFILE WITH IMPACT ON FUTURE PRACTICE:

1. The biggest 'in year' pupil variation took place for across three year groups this year, whilst we have tended to have one year that stands out. Therefore, Years 2, 3 and 4 all had 50%+ variation. Our systems have refined to such an extent that this is our 'norm' and I have challenged many an external visitor (including Ofsted in October 2019) to identify new pupils in the class. None have been successful so far!
2. We remain heavily boy orientated however, we did have our highest number of girls for some time- 7. Curriculum adjustments were made to reflect this, including some topics and groupings being for girls only.
3. The Space Hub evolved and much of its practice refined to assist pupils with autism. This was noted via our 2019 inspection.
4. As with many other schools and the rest of the UK, we only had what can be described as a 'normal' six months of provision. From March onwards, we had to rapidly adapt due to Covid 19. This led to a restructuring of staff roles and a vast range of video/online learning resources being used for our pupils. We maintained a Key Worker/most vulnerable group throughout the pandemic, and then gradually extended numbers when safe to do so. Therefore, by July, we had approx. two thirds of the pupil population accessing at least two days of physically taught curriculum per week.



## POSITIVE OUTCOMES FOR 2019/20

- Early identification of pupils needing interventions and linking up pupil with outside services. This was achieved via the admission process or due to a rapid change in behavior, mood or safeguarding concern, bereavement or anything that may impact on the child in a negative way. The pupil was discussed during the Friday SLT meeting and an intervention will be decided for the child. For example, a pupil that was due to start in Sept 19, was discussed in the Friday meeting after admission process identified that due to family circumstances and safeguarding concerns the child should see a counselor. As a result, he began with a counselor within the first month of starting at Larwood and has had a mentor from the first day. This continued up until Lockdown due to rapidly changing and negative family issues, including going into care and the death of an important family member and caregiver. As this pupil is moving on to Brandles it has been possible for him to continue with the same counselor at the start of September as arranged in LAC review.
- Buddy the dog (PAT assessed) Pets as Therapy started coming to the school 4/5 times a week and has worked with over 10 individual pupils as well as whole classes, and Friday activities This was an increase, as initially Buddy was only coming for 2 mornings a week. Emotional benefits – pupils’ talk to Buddy and tell their worries to him-‘It was one of the only times that I saw him smile’ LASA discussing impact on a pupil. Mental health benefits – take the dog on walks, pet him and feel supported. ‘one morning he [pupil] came in to school heightened and screaming, threw himself down on the floor and covered his face. Buddy backed up onto his lap and the pupil immediately calmed down.’ FSW discussing impact on a pupil with severe mental health diagnosis.
- End of half term Friday meeting to discuss which pupils were going to be receiving interventions – everyone’s knowledge/view on the impact of the intervention could be triangulated with data and reports and future decisions are better informed – this is a new process that started last academic year.
- Nick Beesley, Counsellor and Play Therapist worked with 4 children in the year. 2 he supported with bereavement and 2 with safeguarding and transitioning into care as well as developmental trauma. One teacher commented that this was essential work for the child (moving into care) and that NB’s support ‘meant the world to him’. He enjoyed having a safe space to talk and play using soft toys to play out scenarios and feelings.
- More sessions (6 additional) were provided with counsellors meaning more pupils were able to access this service which leads to a more individualised support package for the pupil, better outcomes for the individual (as specified below), reduction in behavior incidents and also better outcomes for the class because of the support.
- Speech and language continued – 2 pupils were seen based on need. Speech and language issues can have an impact on behavioural issues due to the frustration in not being able to communicate well. These two children who were supported enjoyed going to their sessions and have started to make improvements in this area. This has had a positive impact in class in their communication and reading.



- Psychotherapy takes place with Kerry Sharp (Trainee in final year) once a week with 2 children and she has also done reflective parenting with 2 parents. One teacher reports that the child really enjoys and looks forward to the sessions with Kerry. The child has been open and engaging with working through past issues. One useful outcome has been less focus on traumatic history (as previously reliving this over and over) and more open to a positive self-image and hope for the future.

Art therapy takes place once a week and works with four pupils a week targeting past trauma and DV – saw altogether 4 pupils in the academic year. As an example, one pupil has been able to better engage with school, points have gone up and art therapy has been a huge motivator for coming to school. For one child who was the most prolific in terms of behavior incidents and time out class, Fridays were highly motivating as she enjoyed the sessions so much and was able to regulate her behavior and be calm prior to and during the sessions. This therapy supported a very guarded child to make a disclosure that was imperative in getting him and his family the support they finally needed as we knew there were ongoing issues but never had the proof.

- Counselling with the butterfly rooms took place and also supported 4 pupils and their families with a range of issues including trauma, bereavement, transitioning to care and DV. Some of this work was disrupted due to COVID and will continue in September. 4 children accessed the butterfly room therapies. For one pupil, who has a history of witnessing extreme domestic violence and who exhibited hyper vigilant behavior at school as well as numerous outburst, the change in him after beginning to receive counselling was huge. His teacher reported that he was no longer anxious to come to school (and leave mum and siblings), generally much calmer and was able to self-regulate.
- ARC sexually harmful behavior team also supported one pupil.
- Continued to work with PAWs for animal assisted therapy – 4-6 pupils were due to access this in total, however due to COVID only 2 did. PAWs is goal-directed intervention in which Frank, a newfoundland dog and Sarah Gordon, an ex-special needs teacher and one of the few people in the UK trained to deliver AAT works with a pupil towards targeted outcomes that are drawn from the pupils’ EHCP. After each session Sarah writes a detailed report of the session which includes quotes, refers to non-verbal communication (key in working with our ASC pupils) next steps, what worked well/or not and this is shared with parents and key staff. Animal Assisted Therapy is more intense and goal orientated than working therapeutically with an animal (please see interventions with Buddy for more on this). Each session with Sarah and Frank also has a member of staff from Larwood this ensures safeguarding for the pupil, Sarah and also Frank. Really good /tight example.
- Introduction of protective behaviours – keeping safe, resilience, recognizing emotions

An effective tier down service from counselling or art therapy. It’s an effective tool in being able to make a more robust referral to children’s services, have more information to build better relationships with parents and provide invaluable safeguarding information.

Used with children to keep themselves safe in the school/community etc. when they are unknowingly making themselves a target of negative attention. Sian worked with 4 pupils once a week each. The impact of this was that children learned how to keep themselves



safe. One example was a female pupil who had a 15-minute session each day – scheduled at the same time when she had been experiencing incidents. She was able to ask ‘socially inappropriate’ questions in a safe space and learn more about herself.

- Continued good internal practice of interventions including academic, brain gym, gymnastics, physical interventions, Lego therapy. One child (history of neglect and moved to care this year) benefitted greatly from the brain gym sessions that he received each day. He used to struggle for the last few minutes of lunch time but as soon as he was able to access the brain gym intervention he calmed, was able to use the push and pull exercises to regulate himself and often was able to have a successful afternoon in class. Another child, who accessed a phonics intervention made one level of improvement in reading over a term. Prior to coming to Larwood, the pupil had been unwilling to engage in reading aloud but now had the confidence to try.
- A Sand Tray intervention is the therapeutic use of a collection of miniatures in a sand tray. The sand tray is a free space for the child, with no modification and no judgement from the practitioner. It is an intervention that can help a child to express their feelings, emotions and internal world in a non-verbal way by being in the metaphor.

The children who have used sand tray therapy have benefitted greatly. One child at the start of his six-week intervention showed signs of being very guarded within his tray, but by the end of the intervention there was no sign of this guardedness and he expressed his emotions and feelings quite freely in the tray. He was able to use the miniatures in his sand tray to express an incident that had occurred or on occasion, draw or write messages in the sand. As this child was a victim of and witness to multiple DV in the home, the opportunity for him to feel safe and open up to another was vital for him in the process of him becoming markedly more relaxed. This pupil also demonstrated an ability to self-regulate his behaviour where incidents would usually cause a trigger in negative behaviour.

- Introduction of live intervention tracking system on behaviour watch – this proved really helpful for all adults involved being able to access the ongoing reports that reflected what had happened in each session.

### **WHAT DIDN'T GO TO PLAN OR AS WELL AS WE'D HOPED IN 2019/20?**

As with every year in the autumn term staff attendance had an impact on the consistent delivery of interventions. In particular, Jade Lewis left in November for maternity leave. She was replaced with Jessica Kolthammer who then admitted she struggled to confidently deliver some of the academic sessions and in particular math. She was given training by Joe Scales and Melanie Trott. However, she struggled at times to engage the children to come and participate in the sessions with her (this could have been partly due to the children missing the specific relationship with Mrs. Lewis). JK indicated that she felt she would be better suited to being a classroom LASA and indicated she had aspirations to become a teacher, alongside the fact that she had drama training which is beneficial to the year 6 MAPS program she moved roles to support in Melanie Trott's class when the LASA from that class resigned. Molly Heritage then took on the role of interventionist but this role was cut short by COVID. On the whole the children responded well to MH and she had a number of academic training sessions to support her in this role as well as having past experience with sporting futures.



Description	Desired impact	Indicators for success	Any cost?
Summer Reading Challenge	To encourage reading for enjoyment for as many children who are willing to participate and to help minimize the impact of Covid 19 and a potential double disadvantage for our pupils.	<p>Early autumn benchmark assessment for those pupils will indicate that there has not been a summer time loss of learning – perhaps even progress has been made.</p> <p>Pupils charts for participation will have been used</p> <p>Behaviour watch intervention report will indicate good levels of participation from pupils.</p>	Approximately £600 in total to cover the tutors hourly fee. 9 pupils have signed up at the time of writing this report.
Graded support	So that pupils don't go from having a high level of support to none – a tiered/step down. Some may be school based some will be with external agencies	Rag rating of intervention list – internal data	Ongoing cost of external agencies and internal training of Larwood staff
Consistent delivery of interventions – we have a robust plan in place to support pupils receiving interventions consistently including reopening pod to act as a reading/phonics and SPRITE delivery program as well as 2 interventionists to deliver academic, brain gym and other interventions dually. POD will also be the base for Sand Tray therapy and cooking for therapy will also be taking place	Pupils can expect their interventions to be delivered when they should be. Staffing absence not to draw from the intervention team	Data will indicate the amount of progress a pupil has been able to make with consistent delivery of the interventions – will also have a positive impact on behavior	Nil

