

Larwood School

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

FOCUS: THE ENVIRONMENT

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 our 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

- General improvement to the day to day appearance of the school continues to be a high priority, examples of these this year are the continuing of painting across the school, some new LED lighting and new carpets in two classes and two offices.
- During the summer of 2019, we filled in the gap between the hall and the dining room. This has created another teaching area in the dining room; also, we can move the new tables to one side to make a large area for performing arts such as dance, music and other interactive functions using the new Prowise screen.
- We have had two new paths laid: one around the astro playground and the other from the front of school to the top staff car park, which included much improved new lighting to the car park. This has made not only visual improvement but also a long lasting robust and safer environment.
- We continue to carry out weekly, monthly, half-termly, termly and annual health & safety checks. Two example of issues that were pick up from these are,
 - (i) The trees over the play equipment needed a significant amount of chipping to prevent injury to children and staff from falling branches
 - (ii) When the 5-year hard wiring test was completed, the children's cooker in the small kitchen was in need of repair so wiring and fuses had not been installed correctly and was dangerous was replaced as this is a very popular intervention that promotes well-being and develops social skills
- We made the decision to hire the upstairs of the school out to a therapy company as the school rarely used this area, which allow the school to increase its income and we would be given a number of therapy session for either our children, parents of staff. To make the butterfly room welcome and to show we are good landlords the whole of upstairs needed to be painted and cleared of our furniture. Also, significant amount of work was done to the outside to make their entrance more welcoming.

WHAT DIDN'T GO ACCORDING TO PLAN OR AS WELL AS WE HAD HOPED IN 2019/20

- We were getting new school signs made for the front of school to update to academy status, but due to the disruption of Covid-19 this has not been completed.
- We were getting the doors replaced and updated to solid wooden doors to the electrical intake cupboard in reception, but due to the disputation of Covid-19 this has not been completed.
- When the hall / dining room wall was built, we found that there was a need for soundproofing as the chat/ talking between to children was reflecting of the new wall causing quite some noise. We are going to build 10 raised picture frames with insulation hidden inside and a painting canvas on the front for each class to complete a group painting that can be up on display all year. These are ready but we postponed this due to the disruption of Covid-19.



WHAT SHOULD LARWOOD SCHOOL DO TO ENHANCE BETTER PUPIL PROGRESSION, AS A RESULT OF THIS SELF-EVALUATION, NEXT YEAR?

Description	Desired impact	Indicators for success	Any cost?
To update the front of school signs with academy status	To have the correct information up about the school and to improve the signage.	When the signs are able to be put in place.	Approximately £1000
To replace and update the wooden doors to the electrical intake cupboard in reception	Smart new door and improved safety standard	When they have been fitted	£485
Sound proofing the dining room with self-built picture frames	That the ambient noise is reduced and have each class art work displayed all year around	They will be in place in Sept / Oct. Hearing the children talk about their paintings.	None

