

Lakeside School

Naylors Rd, Liverpool, L27 2YA

Inspection dates

22–24 January 2014

Overall effectiveness

	Overall effectiveness	Outstanding	1
Pupils' achievement	Outstanding	Outstanding	1
Pupils' behaviour and personal development	Outstanding	Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching	Outstanding	Outstanding	1
Quality of curriculum	Outstanding	Outstanding	1
Pupils' welfare, health and safety	Outstanding	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management	Outstanding	Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings

This school is outstanding because

- The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding, enabling pupils to make rapid progress from their starting points and achieve exceptionally well over time.
- The outstanding curriculum is very well matched to the needs and interests of all pupils.
- The school's outstanding provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development ensures that pupils develop the highest standards of personal conduct and behaviour.
- The outstanding arrangements for welfare, health and safety help all pupils to feel very safe and treasured as individuals.
- Leaders and managers are highly ambitious in driving and maintaining high levels of achievement for all pupils. The impact of their work can be seen in the extremely good quality of provision and outcomes.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent schools standards') and associated requirements.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was conducted with one day's notice.
- Eleven lessons were observed, taught by four teachers. Meetings were held with members of staff, the headteacher and a representative of the proprietors.
- Documentation was checked including policies, curriculum documents, the school's self-evaluation and development plan, teachers' planning, samples of pupils' work, progress data and in relation to welfare, health and safety.
- There were no Parent View responses but a few parents and carers telephoned the inspector. Questionnaire responses from 27 staff were analysed.

Inspection team

Shellie Barcroft, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Lakeside School is an independent day special school. It caters for boys and girls aged five to 13 years with complex learning and communication difficulties and associated challenging behaviours.
- The school was registered in January 2001. It is located in a semi-rural environment on the outskirts of Huyton near Liverpool.
- The school is registered for up to 26 pupils. There are currently 24 pupils on roll, all of whom have a statement of special educational needs.
- Each pupil is referred and funded by placing authorities and the school currently provides for pupils from nine different local authorities. There are a small number of looked after pupils.
- Lakeside school is part of the Witherslack group of schools, which operates nationwide. It provides education and care for children and young people with complex needs.
- The school aims to provide a family orientated, therapeutic and nurturing environment, where children grow in confidence and self esteem, in order to make academic progress.
- The school was last inspected in November 2010.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that every lesson is of the highest standard by spreading the best practice of teachers whose teaching is consistently outstanding.

Inspection judgements

Pupils' achievement

Outstanding

Pupils' achievement is outstanding. Pupils make outstanding progress over time and achieve extremely well, including boys, girls and those with different special educational needs. Although pupils enter the school with low or very low starting points, the school is successful in closing gaps with similar pupils, especially regarding development of their communication, language, reading, writing and mathematical skills. Most pupils are exceeding the national expectations for progress from their starting points and some are making exceptional progress in all areas of learning. Teachers' high expectations and extremely good management of pupils' behaviour ensure that there is always a highly positive atmosphere in school and pupils enter classrooms eager to learn and full of enthusiasm. The rigorous planning for individual needs, varied range of activities in lessons and detailed assessments all play a significant part in ensuring that pupils make excellent progress. Pupils achieve very well in various areas of the curriculum for example, earning Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) Awards and British Gymnastics Proficiency Awards. When pupils leave to move on to secondary school, the standards attained ensure they are very well equipped for their next stage in education.

Pupils' behaviour and personal development

Outstanding

The high expectations and consistency in managing pupils' behaviour results in exemplary attitudes and behaviour, in and around school. Parents and carers are delighted with their children's personal development. The school's excellent arrangements for induction and outstanding provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development ensure that pupils rapidly develop the highest standards of personal conduct. The school is very focused on including pupils in all activities. Incidents of misbehaviour reduce markedly over time. Incidents of bullying are extremely rare. Excellent day-to-day care, guidance and support ensure that pupils are motivated and readily participate in learning. Attendance and punctuality are very good, reflecting pupils' enjoyment of school life. Relationships between staff and pupils are exceptionally positive and, as a result of excellent teamwork, lessons proceed without disruption. Pupils say that everyone is very friendly. The school is a very orderly and harmonious community. Pupils are very well mannered, kind and respectful towards others. These factors make a significant contribution to pupils' achievements and the school's ethos.

Assemblies, discussions in different lessons and personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSCHE) lessons ensure that pupils mature into very well rounded individuals. Moral development is excellent. Pupils' understanding of right and wrong is supported by the celebration of their efforts in assemblies and scores on the 'kindometer'. Pupils and staff interact very well, playing games together at break times and sitting eating dinner together at lunchtime. The school is proud to be a Fairtrade and Eco school, which supports pupils' concern for the local and global communities. Pupils participate in a wide range of fundraising events for charities for Fairtrade, Vengadu (a children's orphanage in India) and Eco-friendly activities, for example litter picking in the community and wastebusters recycling projects. Pupils are given responsibility by becoming monitors and being elected as school council and eco-reps. This encourages contributions from all pupils to keep the school a safe and clean environment. Just as importantly, it raises confidence and self-esteem very effectively. Each week pupils take part in 'Children's choice'; this is an afternoon of activities for pupils to find something they can excel at, for example, wow science, cooking, gardening and photography. This changes each half term to meet the interests of all pupils. PSHCE includes topics such as the Government, democracy and elections. The proprietor has ensured that partisan political views are not promoted in the teaching of any subject in school. Furthermore, the curriculum enables pupils to develop a broad knowledge of public institutions and services in England.

Social development is excellent. Pupils have many opportunities to develop cooperative skills in

lessons, through team sports and by interacting with many different people through visitors and school trips. Pupils are highly committed to diversity and equality. They show very high levels of respect, care and appreciation towards people who are different from themselves. The curriculum enables them to develop much awareness and understanding of their own culture and also the traditions, values and beliefs of others.

Quality of teaching**Outstanding**

The quality of teaching is outstanding. This ensures that pupils' achieve extremely well and make very good progress over time. During the inspection, lessons observed were judged to be good or outstanding. High teacher expectations, good pace of lessons, skilled questioning to challenge pupils further, and stimulating activities result in learning in almost half of lessons being outstanding. Literacy and numeracy are given a high profile and taught very well. The school has a very effective phonics programme used to accelerate pupils' progress in reading, writing and spelling. Data shows that over the last three years pupils have excelled in their literacy skills. Teachers and pastoral staff review and agree progress against personal and academic targets to ensure development in both these areas. The speech and language therapists and the special educational needs coordinator complete very rigorous assessments on admission to the school. These are used to devise individual intervention programmes to support pupils' learning in the key skills of language and communication. Teachers and support staff work together very effectively to support learning and ensure that pupils achieve their targets. Assessment is completed regularly and attainment and progress are tracked accurately over time. Senior managers and others are highly trained in providing high quality support for pupils and also in using resources to best effect. The school is currently in the process of being awarded the Dyslexia Friendly Quality Mark. Excellent stimulating activities and resources, including computer technology, ensure all pupils participate fully in lessons and make outstanding progress.

Quality of curriculum**Outstanding**

The curriculum is outstanding and enables pupils to make excellent progress. The school follows the National Curriculum, supported by detailed schemes of work and policies for every subject. Teachers' planning promotes positive attitudes to learning and meets the needs of all pupils very well. The curriculum gives pupils sparkling opportunities to excel in literacy, numeracy, science, information and communication technology (ICT), food technology, art, music, physical education, religious education and PSHCE. The successful emphasis on helping pupils to close gaps in their previous learning is evident in pupils' achievement. Pupils receive very high levels of support, including individual teaching sessions at times. Speech and language sessions are timetabled to assist in pupils making outstanding progress. All teachers are aware of the importance of reading and encourage pupils to have their own book to read in school and at home. The school's very strong emphasis on developing reading has resulted in pupils developing much confidence, enjoyment and a love of reading to their peers. Similarly, the use of ICT is embedded in all subjects and pupils are encouraged to gain ICT skills and utilise them whenever it is appropriate to do so, for example in mathematics entering data to produce bar charts. An excellent programme of extra-curricular activities, off-site visits and visiting speakers to the school enriches the curriculum.

Pupils' welfare, health and safety**Outstanding**

The school's provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils is outstanding. All the regulations are met. All aspects of safeguarding arrangements are robust and secure. All the required checks on the suitability of staff are completed rigorously and the details entered in the required single, central register. The designated officers for child protection and all staff are well trained. There are detailed policies and procedures and a high level of training in the management of behaviour, first aid and other safety-related matters, including fire safety. This ensures that all staff have a very clear understanding of their role, resulting in pupils being exceptionally well cared for. Risk

assessments are in place to ensure safety on the premises and when out on trips. The school has a very high staff ratio, providing high levels of supervision in and around the school.

Within the PSHCE curriculum and daily assemblies, topics are covered to teach pupils to be healthy and how to keep safe, including from risks related to use of computers and mobile phones. Pupils described the school as being a very safe place and were able to discuss ways of keeping themselves safe in detail. Pupils are encouraged to have a voice. They complete an anti-bullying survey and comments forms are available to express their opinions. Displays around the school encourage pupils to talk and each pupil has an assigned assistant to talk to if problems arise. There is an emphasis on physical education and outdoor play. Pupils are offered healthy options for breakfast and lunch, promoting a healthy lifestyle. As a result of a very effective rewards and sanctions system, pupils are exceptionally well behaved, kind and thoughtful towards each other. They make very strong friendships and are very happy in school. The school's anti-bullying policy is very effective. Daily communication between staff, therapists, parents and carers ensures behaviour and personal needs are reviewed regularly to meet the needs of pupils very well.

Leadership and management

Outstanding

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding. Safeguarding meets statutory requirements, providing high quality of care and support for pupils. The school's evaluation of how well it is doing is very good. The headteacher and senior team are highly ambitious and demonstrate a clear drive for maintaining high standards, including in teaching and pupils' achievement. They have made improvements following the recommendations from the last inspection. Professional development for staff is very good. Leaders assess the quality of teaching and learning in lessons frequently and accurately. Although the quality of teaching is outstanding and ensures that pupils achieve extremely well over time, leaders acknowledge that a few lessons are good rather than outstanding. This limits progress in a small number of lessons to good rather than outstanding. Leaders have already started to develop systems to share the best practice in school to ensure that every lesson is outstanding.

Morale is high and staff express pleasure in being part of the school team. Robust procedures are in place for managing the performance of all staff in school and these have been successful in ensuring the quality of lessons is high. The highly successful curriculum is organised very well and provides memorable experiences and enrichment opportunities for learning. Pupils' progress is systematically reviewed and interventions put in place to support the needs of all pupils. These contribute exceptionally well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school is well supported by the Witherslack group's school improvement team, providing regular monitoring, support and guidance. The school's premises and accommodation are very well maintained. All of the requirements regarding complaints procedures and the provision of information for parents, carers and others are met. The school has developed strong relationships with parents and carers. The high quality information provided, for example, through the school website, newsletters and display screen in school, ensures relationships are maintained throughout the year. The proprietor and school leaders have ensured that all of the independent school standards are met and the school provides an outstanding education for all their pupils.

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	A school which provides an exceptional quality of education and significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 2	Good	A school which provides a high quality of education that exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 3	Adequate	A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of education it provides.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school where minimum requirements are not met and the quality of education has serious weaknesses.

School details

Unique reference number	133262
Inspection number	422748
DfE registration number	341/6082

This inspection was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Day special school
School status	Independent School
Age range of pupils	5-13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	24
Number of part time pupils	0
Proprietor	Witherslack Group
Headteacher	Mrs Victoria Size
Date of previous school inspection	17–18 November 2010
Annual fees (day pupils)	£53,995
Telephone number	0151 4877211
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