



Silverdale Special School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 133432
LEA North Tyneside
Inspection number 282951
Inspection dates 5 December 2005 to 5 December 2005
Reporting inspector Ms A Berger

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Special	School address	Langdale Gardens
School category	Maintained		Howdon
Age range of pupils	7 to 16		Wallsend, Tyne and Wear
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0191 2005982
Number on roll	23	Fax number	0191 2006710
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr G Mitchell
Date of previous inspection	1 March 2003	Headteacher	Mr B Hedley

Age group 7 to 16	Inspection dates 5 December 2005 - 5 December 2005	Inspection number 282951
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one HMI for one day.

Description of the school

Silverdale School makes provision for pupils in Key Stages 2, 3 and 4 with emotional social and behavioural difficulties (EBSO). More recent admissions have included a number of pupils diagnosed with significant mental health problems. Attainment on entry is very low because of the pupils' history of poor behaviour and attendance.

The school currently has 23 pupils on roll though it has the capacity to admit up to 40. Admissions had been halted due to safety concerns in the school but placements have now resumed on a phased basis of 3 pupils each half term. In the longer term the local authority intends to place pupils with the most severe EBSO in the school. A number of pupils, currently attending residential provision outside the area, are due to return to their community and attend Silverdale School. Plans are therefore being considered to extend residential provision in the borough for up to eight pupils.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

The outstanding leadership of the headteacher, supported well by the senior team, has resulted in consistently good teaching and learning in lessons. The pupils' achievements are particularly good in literacy, numeracy, physical education (PE), music and information and communication technology (ICT). However, despite everyone's good work the legacy of low standards has not yet been overcome as there are many gaps in the pupils' learning. The pupils' achievement overall is nevertheless satisfactory.

The pupils' motivation and enjoyment has improved considerably because the curriculum is relevant, varied and flexible. Behaviour is managed well, though this is in the context of very small classes and high staffing ratios. There is a strong emphasis on developing positive relationships and the pupils are beginning to resolve their differences through discussion rather than action.

The senior team have evaluated the strengths and weaknesses of the school very well and they are in full agreement with the recommendations for further improvements. The strong leadership and recent history of significant success demonstrates a good capacity to continue to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop further the behaviour management and therapeutic approaches needed to work with an increasingly large number of very challenging pupils.
- Continue to ensure that the consistently good teaching is focused on helping pupils make up for lost ground and achieve well.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The pupils in Key Stage 2 continue to make good progress overall. The teaching in this area remains consistently good and as a result the pupils are developing well. Lessons are well structured and relationships promote a positive learning ethos.

In Key Stages 3 and 4, standards are rising due to the much improved teaching, particularly this term. Teachers now have a clear understanding of what pupils need to learn next. They share this with their classes and as a result the pupils are highly motivated to achieve the next goal. During the visit, this was particularly evident in PE, where the pupils were discussing with each other what skill they needed to master to reach the next level in badminton.

Despite this recent good progress in lessons there is still a long way to go to ensure the pupils in Key Stage 3 and 4 reach their potential. Standards are low and the pupils' achievement over time is not yet as good as it could be. The older pupils have only

just started to work towards nationally recognised qualifications and national test results and end-of-year assessments largely reflect the legacy of underperformance.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development has improved substantially and the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Most pupils are now prepared to talk to visitors and discuss their work with enthusiasm. Behaviour overall is satisfactory though a few new students with the most serious difficulties disrupt others' learning. Their behaviour, however, is being managed well and they are showing signs of committing themselves to the school community. Attendance is satisfactory.

The pupils understand that their risk assessments are about keeping themselves safe as well as ensuring the well-being of others. They know what the consequences of their actions are and they make the right choice more consistently.

Much has been done to promote healthy lifestyles. Fitness is promoted very well through the outstanding PE programme. Pupils are also encouraged to cycle to school and a new course has been established to assist with maintaining the pupils' own bicycles.

The school listens carefully to the pupils' views and acts on them wherever possible. The pupils have very good opportunities to influence the developments in the school.

The pupils are beginning to recognise their part in the local community. Good emphasis is paid to developing local partnerships and the pupils have become more aware of their region through many and varied visits. They have also been successful in raising money for charities such as the Tsunami appeal. Two boys have taken the initiative and arranged to visit a local care home each week to help the elderly in their community. They were able to explain that it was their way of helping others and they had a good understanding of the importance of giving as well as taking.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are planned well to ensure that the pupils are more active and engaged in their work. Great care is taken to make the activities relevant. Teachers use practical demonstrations to illustrate new ideas rather than just explaining them and so pupils find it easier to understand. Progress is monitored and tracked very well. The good practice in the lower school has now extended into all classrooms. The pupils know what they have achieved and what they need to do to next.

Teaching assistants and link workers support learning well. The educational psychologist also provides very effective support to staff to continuously reflect on their practice and improve their effectiveness.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is carefully planned to ensure that there are a good variety of subjects each day. The students have responded well to the shorter lessons and the new accredited courses in Key Stage 4 are suitable for the age and attainment of the students.

Very good work is done by the senior link worker to ensure that the pupils have suitable skills in preparation for work and their place in society, and there is a very wide range of community-based curricula opportunities. Particularly impressive was the participation of the two boys in Year 11 who attended a 10 day camp with many students from other countries. This took great courage given their lack of previous residential experiences and was very successful in improving their confidence and self-esteem.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

There are very good arrangements for ensuring the pupils are safe. The regular risk assessments have been developed with the very good support of the school educational psychologist. Relationships with other agencies have been developed very well and a regular structure for meetings between the school support teams and others involved with individual pupils have begun. Advice and guidance for pupils in deciding on their future careers is good. The current Year 10 and 11 pupils have a clear idea about what they want to do next and have spoken very highly of the help and guidance provided for them.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. He has vigorously pursued weaknesses in teaching in the upper school. As staff have left he has taken care to appoint good new teachers and provide management opportunities internally for those who have shown promise, building particularly on the strengths in the lower school. He has developed the multi-disciplinary team very well and the link workers, psychology services, and other partners work together very well to promote the pupils' achievements. There is a strong sense of team work and staff are now growing into their new roles.

The governing body has provided very good direction for the school. The chair has used his extensive experience to provide the right balance of challenge and support. The local authority has provided some very good support for the school. In particular, the recent support from their human resources team has made a significant impact on improving the quality of teaching. The local authority has now clarified its vision for the school in the long term and this has helped the headteacher and governors plan and develop appropriately.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

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Silverdale Special School
Langdale Gardens
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Wallsend
Tyne & Wear

5 December 2005

Dear Pupils

Thank you very much for the way you made us welcome when we came to visit you. You're a credit to your school and we know that you have helped towards improving things.

All that hard work has really paid off and the school no longer needs special measures. Well done! The teaching has always been good in the lower school and we saw how much better things are now in the upper school. Now we need to see that all these improvements lead to good exam results. You know how important this is.

Some of you still find it very difficult to control behaviour but you are responding well to the help staff give you with this. You're enjoying most of your lessons and trying hard to discuss any problems as they come up. If you behave well and continue to concentrate in class you will achieve well.

We think that two main things need to happen to make the school better still.

The school needs to prepare for becoming much larger. The staff will have to share their time between more pupils whilst still helping you all to behave well.

You need to catch up with some of things you have missed over the years so that you can do well in your examinations and tests.

Of course you also need to continue to work hard and attend regularly.

Finally, we're sure you'll be saying thank you to Mr Hedley for the great job he has done in leading your school. We did!

Ann Berger
HM Inspector