

North East Specialist Inclusive Learning Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108133
Local Authority	Leeds
Inspection number	300605
Inspection dates	27–28 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Melvyn Blackband

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	2–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	136
6th form	41
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr T Mallinson
Headteacher	Mr M Robertshaw
Date of previous school inspection	22 May 2000
School address	Westwood Way Boston Spa Wetherby West Yorkshire LS23 6DX
Telephone number	01937 844772
Fax number	01937 845122

Age group	2–19
Inspection dates	27–28 June 2007
Inspection number	300605

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The North-East Specialist Inclusive Learning Centre (SILC) operates on two sites; The West Oaks School site and Oakwood Lane site. It also provides support for local schools. The West Oaks School has specialist status as a Technology College and has been nominated as a high performance special school. The West Oaks site provides for pupils with severe learning difficulties (SLD) and a small number with profound and multiple difficulties (PMLD). A large minority of pupils suffer from autistic spectrum conditions. The pupils at the Oakwood Lane site are of primary age and have behavioural, emotional and social learning difficulties (BESD). Most pupils are White British, although a few pupils are from other mixed race, Black Caribbean, Chinese, Indian or Pakistani backgrounds.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Provision in the North East SILC is outstanding. Both West Oaks School and the Oakwood Lane Centre are extremely effective and continually strive to improve the provision for all the learners. Because of their learning difficulties, the standards reached by West Oaks pupils are exceptionally low but all pupils do well in their studies and make outstanding progress. Pupils at Oakwood Lane enter the centre with very low levels of attainment but many make excellent progress in catching up to nationally expected standards. Many pupils at the centre are therefore able to rejoin mainstream secondary schools. The pupils love coming to school and parents are generally very happy for their children to attend, knowing that they will be safe, that they enjoy their lessons and that the staff have high expectations of their progress. Typically, parents comment that their children love school and that, 'he can't wait to get there'.

The monitoring and tracking of the pupils' achievement is outstanding and plays a vital part in ensuring the pupils' excellent progress. All the pupils also make outstanding progress in their personal development. The quality of teaching is excellent, including for pupils with PMLD and those with autistic spectrum conditions. Teaching in the post 16 department is outstanding and most pupils achieve very well. The pupils enjoy their lessons and respond by trying their best. Lessons on both sites are well planned and the curriculum has a clear focus on meeting the needs of each pupil. It is enriched by the good use of off-site visits to extend the pupils' knowledge and understanding. The range of qualifications available to older pupils, however, is limited and pupils in Years 11 and in post 16 are restricted to the same form of accreditation. This does not allow pupils of all abilities to demonstrate their potential.

The pupils thrive within the supportive ethos. There is a strong emphasis on the pupils' personal, health, and social education (PHSE) on both sites. This promotes the pupils' emotional and behavioural development and they learn to stay healthy, to keep safe and to behave well. The pupils are involved wherever possible in decisions about their progress and well-being. Pupils in the post 16 department make excellent gains in their levels of maturity and self-confidence, helped by outstanding programmes of work related learning.

The SILC provides exemplary support to a wide range of other schools. Both West Oaks School and the Oakwood Centre are very active in supplying a range of their expertise, not least to support a number of inner-city primary schools.

All this is driven by outstanding leadership and management. The acting principal provides excellent overall leadership and he is extremely well supported by the senior staff on both sites. Their contribution is outstanding in ensuring the staff work as close knit teams and share the vision of maintaining high standards in all they do. The governing body is supportive and provides a good level of challenge to the senior staff. The SILC has had an excellent track record since the previous inspection, provides excellent value for money and has an outstanding capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 1

Pupils make outstanding progress in their personal development because of excellent procedures to develop their experiences of adult life. The post 16 department has developed excellent work related activities to which the pupils respond enthusiastically. The staff promote mature behaviour and an adult ethos within which the pupils are encouraged to actively seek

independence and make choices. Because of this and the excellent teaching, most pupils make outstanding progress. The range of qualifications on offer, however, is limited and some pupils are not rewarded with the most appropriate form of accreditation for their efforts. The department is well led and managed.

What the school should do to improve further

- Broaden the range of accreditation in Year 11 and Year 14 to allow pupils of all abilities to fully demonstrate their achievements.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

Although standards are very low at West Oaks when compared nationally, those with autistic conditions and with PMLD achieve very well, as do pupils in post 16 provision. The recording and tracking of pupils' progress is exemplary and this has a significant impact on their achievements. Pupils at Oakwood Lane make exceptional progress, from a very low base when they enter the centre. In many cases, they make enough progress to reintegrate successfully in mainstream secondary schools. All the pupils achieve outstanding success in meeting individual education plan (IEP) targets which are rigorously monitored to ensure a high level of challenge and which exemplify the high expectations of pupils throughout the SILC provision.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

The pupils' excellent progress in personal development at both sites reflects the strong management of behaviour and the emphasis on moral and social values. The pupils' spiritual development is very good and cultural development is outstanding, for example, during the recent 'Africa Week' at West Oaks. The pupils are generally calm because they feel safe and confident and know what is expected from them. The excellent PHSE programmes help pupils to gain understanding of exercise and healthy eating. There are many opportunities to take part in physical activity. The pupils learn how to keep themselves safe and those who were spoken to were emphatic that there are no issues about bullying. Pupils at the Oakwood Lane Centre felt strongly that the centre was the best school they had ever attended. Attendance by almost all pupils is good. Pupils develop their understanding of community involvement through many activities in and out of the schools and older pupils in the post 16 department learn valuable work related skills through work experience.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

Teachers know their pupils very well and this helps them to plan interesting well paced lessons. There are excellent relationships between classroom teams and the competent classroom assistants are very skilled in helping pupils to meet their individual learning targets and in recording their progress. Teaching throughout the sites is consistently good and the impact

this has on pupils' achievement is significantly enhanced by the exemplary standards of assessment and recording of every small step in the pupils' learning. The management of pupils' behaviour is a strength on both sites. The pupils enjoy their lessons. They like and respect their teachers and they try hard to succeed. The teaching of PMLD pupils and those with autism is excellent and this enables these pupils to make outstanding progress. Teaching in the post 16 provision is well planned to create many opportunities for the pupils to develop independence and self-confidence.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

Pupils enjoy a carefully constructed curriculum which is very well adapted to their needs. Programmes are rigorously monitored for their effectiveness. There is a range of good programmes for post 16 pupils and particularly in work related learning. Although the curriculum promotes outstanding progress, for some pupils, the range of accreditation is too narrow and they therefore cannot gain the qualifications most suited to their ability and which would better demonstrate the quality of their achievements. Programmes in PHSE underpin much of the curriculum at both sites and these have a strong impact on the pupils' achievements in personal skills. There are many activities to take pupils out of the classroom, to enrich provision. The SILC provides an exemplary range of opportunities for pupils to experience mainstream provision

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

There are high standards of care and support for pupils. Child protection arrangements are effective and there are excellent risk assessment procedures. The necessary checks on staff are in place. On both sites, pupils have open and trusting relationships with staff and consequently gain a high degree of support for their learning and personal development. Pupils have a good understanding of their progress and how they can improve their work. There is an outstanding level of assessment and target-setting to which pupils contribute and which provides high quality information for parents in annual review meetings. Pupils receive very good advice and support as they are about to leave school. Links with other schools and colleges are outstanding.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

The SILC has continued to provide an outstanding service for its own pupils and to a wider group of schools. The acting principal has shown very good leadership through his calm determination to maintain the highest standards of provision. He is supported by a very committed senior team. A strength of the SILC lies in the effective way the managers monitor, evaluate and improve on every aspect of performance and in the way staff constantly seek innovative ways to extend the effectiveness of their work. The SILC's development planning is robustly focused on improving pupils' achievement.

Communication is excellent. Staff are fully consulted and feel involved and valued. There is outstanding professional training for staff and this has a significant effect on pupils' achievement. Governors provide effective support and they are developing a secure grasp of the SILC strengths and areas for development. The school has maintained a high level of consistent improvement since the previous inspection and has an excellent capacity to improve further.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

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
--	-----------------------	--------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The behaviour of learners	1	
The attendance of learners	2	
How well learners enjoy their education	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	1

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Not long ago Ms Hicks and I came to the school to see how you are getting on and whether we could suggest anything to make West Oaks School and Oakwood Lane Centre better. You made us very welcome and we enjoyed meeting some of you in the classroom and while we were eating our lunch. Thank you and well done!

I was with you for two days and Ms Hicks for one day. That was long enough for us to realise that West Oaks School and Oakwood Lane Centre are outstandingly good schools. One of the reasons is that you all enjoy school so much. There were lots of other things that we liked. Here are a few:

- you work hard and make excellent progress
- the many different people at the school do their very best to look after you
- you are helped to be as independent as possible and to make as many choices for yourselves as you can
- you get many opportunities to mix with other pupils from different schools
- those of you in the post 16 department are able to go out on interesting work experience placements.

There is one thing which we think would make the school better.

- Teachers should make it possible for the older pupils to gain a wider range of qualifications so all the pupils can show how well they have made progress.

Please thank your parents for the helpful comments they made on the questionnaires.

Best wishes and good luck.