



*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
Promoting Improvement*



Providing Inspection Services for
**Department of Education
Department for Employment and Learning
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure**



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Focused Inspection

**Lakewood School
Bangor**

Inspected: June 2008

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STATISTICAL INFORMATION (SPECIAL SCHOOLS)

1.1 i. **School: Lakewood School Bangor** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 02.06.08**

ii. **School Reference Number: 431-6614** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Focused**

1.2

School Year	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Total Enrolment	26	24	22	14	16

The enrolment for the current year is the figure on the day of notification of inspection. For previous years it is the figure in the annual return to the Department of Education.

1.3 Number of Pupils in Outreach Programme: 0

1.4 Average Attendance for the Previous School Year: 79.9%

1.5 i. Number of Teachers in School: 7 on Outreach Programme: 0
(including the Principal and p/t teachers)
(f/t equivalent = 25 teaching hours)

ii. PTR (pupil/teacher ratio): 2.3

iii. Average Class Size: 4

iv. Number of Classroom Assistants: 6

v. Ancillary Support:
Number of Hours per week:

Clerical Support: 30

vi. Percentage of children in receipt of free school meals: 0%

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Lakewood School is situated in Bangor and provides education for Lakewood Regional Secure Care Centre. At the time of the inspection, there were 16 pupils attending the school who had received a secure accommodation order in the Family Proceedings Court. The pupils remain in the centre for some three months and with the requirement to attend medical and social services appointments and court appearances, the usual school attendance is reduced to around 30 days.

1.2 Many of the pupils arrive at the school with standards below those expected for their ages and abilities. This is most often because of their chequered educational histories, their severe emotional and social difficulties and, in some cases, because of additional learning difficulties.

1.3 The arrangements for the inspection of pastoral care and child protection included the opportunity for the parents to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. Sixteen parental questionnaires were issued to parents and four were returned. Of these, three parents or guardians took the opportunity to submit a written response. The chairperson of the Board of Governors (governors) met with the inspectors and expressed the governors' satisfaction with the work of the school and their appreciation of the new school and its facilities.

1.4 The focus of the inspection was on the standards achieved by the pupils, the quality of the provision for learning, the leadership and management of the school and the arrangements for child protection and pastoral care.

2. ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS

2.1 Throughout the inspection, the pupils' standards of achievements were judged in relation to their previous educational records, their social, emotional and behavioural histories and the baseline assessment completed during their induction.

2.2 The pupils experience a safe and secure learning environment where their needs are assessed comprehensively and provision is planned to encourage them to engage with learning and to address their social and emotional needs. The pupils engage, to varying degrees, with the curriculum and, more so, when the activities planned for them catch their interest, are practical and relevant to their lives and future. All of the pupils derive varying levels of success from the opportunities to reflect on their behaviour and motivation to learn. All are provided with accreditation pathways and, in most cases, the pupils show some improvement in their basic literacy and numeracy skills, completing or working toward the completion of units of the Assessment and Qualification Alliance (AQA) in English, mathematics and entry level programmes. Pupils also benefit from the well designed personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme. For those pupils who choose to participate in the young men's and women's group sessions, their personal and social skills are enhanced further. Overall, the findings indicate that some of the pupils could achieve more in the short time they remain in the school.

2.3 The school's programme for the promotion of health and well-being has strengths, which include practical cooking lessons using fresh food and the youth group 'Cook It' programme which takes place one evening per week. There is a developing commitment to encouraging the pupils to eat healthily and to be physically active. The areas for improvement include the need to provide more opportunities to engage in a variety of physical activities throughout the day.

2.4 The inspection findings identified the following strengths in the achievements of the pupils:

- the standard of behaviour is satisfactory in the majority of the lessons observed and reflected in the improved willingness of the pupils to attend school, settle to work and learn;
- incidence of poor behaviour and reluctance to work are dealt with appropriately and often result in the pupils re-engaging with lessons;
- the good efforts of the pupils to work with teachers and assistants and complete the tasks set for them;
- the improvement in personal and social engagement of the majority of the pupils; and
- the pupils' improving sense of awareness of their achievements and potential to gain external accreditation for their work.

3. QUALITY OF PROVISION FOR LEARNING

3.1 The quality of teaching in the school is satisfactory and, in a majority of instances, it is of a better quality. Where the teaching is well planned, practical and purposeful, the pupils engage well and achieve.

3.2 In the best practice observed, the pupils engaged and enjoyed the work and for the duration of the lessons behaved well, interacted appropriately and learned useful and transferable skills. In these instances, the lesson objectives were made clear to the pupils and they understood what skills or knowledge they would develop. However, this is not yet consistent across the classes and is reflected in the wide variation in the quality of the teacher's planning across the classes.

3.3 The evidence indicates the need for the staff as a team to develop an agreed planning framework for what is realistic for the pupils to achieve in their short stay, what is a priority for their lives beyond the school and what recognition they can achieve for their efforts. The teachers should therefore write individualised education plans (IEPs) to reflect the initial assessment information and to inform their teaching approaches and ensure the pupils make progress in the key skills of literacy and numeracy.

3.4 Consideration is also needed to ensure that those pupils of school leaving age have increased opportunities to enhance their skills for independent living.

3.5 The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care and child protection has important strengths. The school has procedures in place which implement the guidance outlined in the relevant Department of Education Circulars and has identified appropriately a few areas for improvement which it is currently implementing. Among the strengths are:

- the very caring and supportive ethos which permeates the life and work of the school;
- the committed leadership of key personnel for pastoral care;
- the contribution made by the support staff to the pupil's well-being and their learning experiences; and
- the effective pupil reward system for positive behaviour.

3.6 The inspection findings identified the following strengths in the quality of teaching and learning:

- the staff are skilled in addressing the challenges posed by the pupils; on occasions, when a pupil refused to comply with the work, appropriate strategies and back-up support prevented the situation from becoming too difficult; and
- the strong emphasis on PSHE; the impact of the work of the youth worker was an added strength to the programme which could be considered as a useful support to inform work across the curriculum.

4. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

4.1 The strong leadership and effective management of the Principal, ably supported by the senior teacher, have enabled the staff to adapt to the new school building and resources and to take on new initiatives and changes. Much has been achieved over the past two years as a consequence. Improvements have been made, for example, to the behaviour management and reward system, the initial assessment approach and the routine educational and care staff briefings and multi-disciplinary case discussions to inform practice. The work of the educational psychologist is an additional support in this work and is highly valued by staff. These improvements are having a positive impact on the pupils' progress and personal development. The school is now at a point where it can focus more closely on embedding systems and ensuring better consistency in the quality of work across all the classes. Procedures for self-evaluation and monitoring of the pupils' progress and the appropriateness of the curriculum could now be developed and used to inform more effectively the transition of the pupils on leaving.

4.2 The school's process for development and planning has strengths and there is a developing commitment to monitoring and evaluating the pupils' attainments and experiences. There are some effective policies in place, for example, pastoral care which supports a positive learning environment. The school is working hard to complete the school development plan in order to meet fully the requirements of the School Development Plans Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005.

4.3 The main strengths of the leadership and management of the school are:

- the leadership of the Principal;
- the effective daily routines and carefully organised procedures to ensure the smooth and safe running of the school;
- the effective policy and staff training for the behaviour management of the pupils; and
- the initial assessment and multi-disciplinary discussions of each pupil's needs and agreed strategies.

5. **OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS**

5.1 The school provides an effective educational support for pupils' in the Regional Secure Care Centre. The overall effectiveness of the school shows strengths in many aspects of the areas inspected. The inspection has identified the following strengths:

- the majority of the pupils' demonstrate good behaviour and engagement with learning;
- the pupils' improvements in PSHE and their improving sense of awareness of their achievements and potential to gain external accreditation for their work;
- the many good features of some of the teaching;
- the strong emphasis on life skills and improving the pupils' emotional well-being;
- the good leadership and management of the Principal and senior teacher; and
- the arrangements in place to enable the effective assessment and discussion of the pupils' needs.

6. **AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT**

6.1 The inspection findings indicate that the following areas for improvement need to be addressed:

- the school need to agree a common planning format and develop an IEP matched to each pupil's needs; and
- the Principal needs to establish a system to monitor and evaluate the quality of the planning and the classroom practice.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 In the areas inspected the school has strengths in many aspects of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified a few areas for improvement in important areas which need to be addressed to meet effectively the needs of all the learners.

7.2 The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing these areas for improvement.

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