

Dysart School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	102623
Local authority	Kingston upon Thames
Inspection number	376745
Inspection dates	25–26 January 2012
Lead inspector	David Scott

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	70
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	9
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ashley Boyle
Headteacher	John Prior
Date of previous school inspection	13–14 July 2009
School address	190 Ewell Road Surbiton Surrey KT6 6HL
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Age group	4–19
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Introduction

Inspection team

David Scott

Additional inspector

Ann Short

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed teaching and learning in 17 lessons, amounting to five and a half hours in total, seeing all nine teachers. For all the lessons observed, inspectors were accompanied by senior leaders. Meetings were held with the headteacher, members of the governing body, a representative from the local authority, staff and pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at self-evaluation documentation, monitoring and assessment information, lesson plans and policies. They also analysed questionnaires from 45 parents and carers and 21 staff. The school's safeguarding procedures were also evaluated.

Information about the school

Dysart is an average sized school when compared with other special schools. The school provides for pupils with severe learning disabilities, as well as those with profound and multiple learning disabilities; a high proportion of pupils have a diagnosis of autism. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs or are being assessed.

Almost half of all pupils are of White British heritage, with the next largest group being those from Asian backgrounds. A very small number of pupils are looked after by their local authorities and the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion of pupils who are from ethnic heritages other than White British is above average, as is that of the pupils who speak English as an additional language. The school's Early Years Foundation Stage children are taught in the Reception class.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	1
Achievement of pupils	1
Quality of teaching	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	1

Key findings

- Dysart is an outstanding school that provides an exemplary education. The quality of education in the sixth form is also outstanding. As one parent commented, 'This is a terrific "family" school, and we wouldn't want our child to go anywhere else.'
- As a result of outstanding provision, children make significant gains in their learning, particularly in their early reading and communication skills, when they join the Early Years Foundation Stage. As they move through the school they continue to make rapid and sustained progress up to the time they leave the sixth form.
- Overall, teaching is typically outstanding and never less than good. Its impact together with an exciting curriculum leads to the pupils achieving exceptionally well, whatever their needs, as they move through the school. Nevertheless, not all lessons are outstanding and teachers do not always show pupils how they can improve their work, or provide sufficient opportunities for them to learn by themselves.
- Pupils are so well supported and praised that they learn how to behave outstandingly well, both in lessons and around the school. They very quickly overcome any daily difficulties that occur, feel extremely safe and secure, attend exceptionally well and are keen to learn and have fun. They show immense respect and are kind and helpful to each other. As one pupil explained, 'We keep each other happy.' Almost everyone makes a significant improvement in their ability to concentrate.
- Pupils' awareness of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues is very carefully interwoven into the daily life of the school in exceptional ways.
- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. He has an extremely clear vision of how the school should develop and is very ably assisted by the senior leadership team.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching still further by:
 - ensuring that pupils have meaningful opportunities to review their learning

- to help them improve
- providing even more opportunities for pupils to develop independence in their learning.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Although attainment is low, including in reading at the end of Key Stage 1, evidence from lessons and information about progress for all pupils shows that achievement is outstanding over time. The responses from parents and carers to the inspection questionnaire show that they too feel that their children are achieving outstandingly well. Pupils make excellent progress irrespective of their special educational needs or disabilities. A strong focus on the development of pupils' skills in communication and numeracy has a significant and positive impact on their achievement across all areas of their learning. Seamless use of signing, symbols and communication aids across the school ensures that all pupils are fully engaged in their lessons regardless of their difficulties. Extremely effective speech and language, music, occupational and physiotherapy and the use of the sensory room are key factors in enabling pupils to make rapid progress in their physical and cognitive development.

All groups make similarly outstanding progress. Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 make rapid progress. They build very securely on this between Key Stages 3 and 4. Pupils in Key Stage 4, for example, really flourish in developing their confidence to express themselves. They become increasingly independent. Almost all pupils stay on into the sixth form. No one leaves without employment or some form of accredited vocational qualification, or placement at college. Excellent links, with such places as local colleges and the borough's Work Start initiative, support training and employment very well.

Pupils with communication difficulties, including those on the autistic spectrum and those with profound and multiple learning difficulties, make powerful steps in their communication skills and often make a leap forward in vocalising sounds, then using single words. Those who are able, gain the confidence to speak in longer sentences. Those who have immense physical disability are helped to develop both communication and greater physical skills very well, as was observed when pupils experienced the sights, sounds and smells of a shopping expedition, where teaching and consequently learning were of the highest order.

Lessons and progress information show that by Year 2 pupils make outstanding progress in their reading. Pupils all enjoy books and stories. For example, children in Reception thoroughly enjoyed hearing the story about the animals in the zoo, and sang a special song to help them remember the story. Similarly, junior-aged pupils worked hard to match sounds to letters using the words 'the' and 'it', while reading 'The Fizz Buzz'. As a result, they continue to make rapid gains in literacy as they move through the school. Those pupils who are new to learning English also make rapid progress as a result of staff providing practical activities, using pictures and books to help to give clues for word recognition in role-play activities.

Quality of teaching

Classrooms are delightful, both indoors and outdoors, with imaginative activities and attractive displays to capture and respond to pupils' interests and enthusiasm. For example, the sensory garden incorporating a weather corner provides a secure and attractive outdoor environment for quiet reflection and the study of various eco systems. The themed curriculum linking subjects ensures a range of activities that encourage pupils' interest. As a result of these and rigorous monitoring and support, teaching overall is typically outstanding and always consistently good.

Teaching is characterised by thorough planning, secure subject knowledge, high expectations, rigorous tracking, effective questioning and good use of assessment to support learning. For example, in Reception, support staff are perceptive and note down significant moments of each child's progress, in order to inform 'next steps'. They employ the widest range of approaches to successfully challenge and elicit responses from learners; as was observed in a numeracy lesson where older pupils were making leek and potato soup, carefully mixing the ingredients after they had been accurately measured. Learning was moved forward at a fast pace because of high levels of staffing, together with very effective one-to-one support received from teaching assistants.

Teachers' excellent role modelling promotes respectful relationships and develops high levels of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. The majority of responses from parents and carers to the inspection questionnaire reflect this. Teachers' explanations are accurate and clear and pupils who find learning difficult or who have particular learning barriers are supported very well because staff focus sharply on their needs. This was observed in a physical education lesson where older pupils completed a 'circuit' of obstacles. The physical activities were highly effective as staff were able to raise pupils' self-esteem and confidence and develop their counting skills at the same time. Nevertheless, not all lessons are outstanding and teachers do not always give learners sufficient guidance on how they can improve their work, or provide sufficiently imaginative opportunities for them to learn by themselves.

Parents and carers expressed views in the Ofsted questionnaire that teaching was outstanding. Inspection findings confirm this to be the case.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school, as one parent described, 'My child always arrives and leaves school happy'. They feel extremely safe and secure because of the outstanding provision for their care. Parents and carers are appreciative of the school's warm and caring ethos. Case studies and inspection evidence confirm that pupils' behaviour is typically outstanding and fosters positive attitudes to learning, showing respect towards adults and each other. The highly consistent and successful approach taken by all staff to behaviour management ensures that learners' attitudes to school are excellent. Careful attention to pupils' personal needs, including eating, hygiene and medical, ensures that they have full access to the curriculum. As a result, their attendance has improved markedly since the previous inspection and is

well above average.

Pupils develop a good understanding of how to lead safe and healthy lives. For instance, they have a keen awareness of the importance of being able to live safely in the community. Pupils have a good appreciation of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle by participating in physical activities, and by preparing and serving nutritious meals in Café 16. Pupils and staff report that there is no bullying of any type in the school. Parents and carers also reported that they, too, are confident that the school's systems are sufficiently robust to deal with any incidences of bullying, should they ever occur; they also endorsed the inspection's findings that behaviour and safety overall are outstanding.

Leadership and management

At all levels of leadership there is an excellent distribution of roles and responsibilities, so that the vision and determination to do the very best for all groups of learners are achieved. Professional development opportunities linked strongly to pupils' needs and regular checking of lessons ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is continuously improving. The promotion of equal opportunities is extremely well embedded in all aspects of the school's work. Discrimination of any sort is not tolerated. Pupils are never left out. Monitoring and evaluation are sophisticated and ensure that all pupils have excellent opportunities to develop the skills they need to succeed in their lives after school.

The curriculum meets the needs and interests of all pupils extremely well. Since the previous inspection, the school has extended the range of vocational and work-related opportunities in the sixth form. The curriculum is enriched by inspiring assemblies, themed weeks, trips and residential visits which provide further opportunities for pupils to broaden their social skills. Excellent partnerships with local schools and outside agencies make a strong contribution to the pupils' outstanding achievement.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well by high expectations of all staff who present very positive role models for the pupils. This enables pupils whose circumstances could make them vulnerable to overcome their difficulties and make significant changes in their attitudes and in their lives at home. As one parent commented, 'My son has progressed so well and staff are very accommodating and always work with me on any issue my son finds difficult.'

Members of the governing body fulfil all their statutory requirements and make an excellent contribution to the school and work closely with the leadership team to determine its strategic direction. For example, by using the school's high quality information to check on its performance, they have been very effective in challenging the leadership with regard to pupils' achievement.

The school has good procedures for safeguarding and risk assessment. These meet government guidelines and include high quality checks on adults and a carefully planned approach to managing the safety of pupils and child protection. Provision for pupils to prepare for life in the United Kingdom and a global society is very good because leaders have an effective understanding of their own community and the

different faiths, ethnicities and cultures within it. The school's international links are expanding and promote positive awareness of global issues, for example through fund raising for 'Red Nose Day', and forming a partnership with a school in Malawi.

Since the previous inspection, the school has improved the accuracy and analysis of information on pupils' performance, raised attendance markedly, enhanced the sixth form curriculum and sharpened the leadership of the governing body. These successful actions demonstrate that leaders have excellent capacity to sustain further improvements.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



27 January 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Dysart School, Surbiton KT6 6HL

Thank you so much for helping us to find out about your school when we visited. We really enjoyed meeting you and seeing you at work and play. You go to a fantastic school; it is outstanding. There are so many things that have impressed us. Many different adults are working together extremely well to make the school just right for you. This means that you learn new things very well and enjoy exciting activities. Everyone works together to make sure that you are very well cared for and safe and you agree. We were especially impressed at how well your attendance has improved since the previous inspection.

You behave extremely well and when you sometimes find this hard, you are quickly helped to find very good ways to calm down. We are impressed by the way that you let others know about your feelings and ideas. You help others and try hard to show kindness to them.

Your headteacher and teachers make it a very special and welcoming place. You and your parents and carers told us that you like school and that it is a very caring and happy place. Your headteacher and teachers are determined to help you succeed, as are your parents and carers. Staff and governors know what they want to improve. So I have asked them to make all your lessons outstanding by:

- checking that you know how to improve your work
- providing you with more imaginative activities for you to learn by yourself.

You can all play your part in improving the school even further by continuing to attend well. It was very good to meet you all. You go to an excellent school and may I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

David Scott
Lead inspector

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