



# Dysart School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 102623  
**LEA** Kingston Upon Thames LEA  
**Inspection number** 276746  
**Inspection dates** 15 June 2006 to 16 June 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Judith Charlesworth AI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Special	<b>School address</b>	190 Ewell Road
<b>School category</b>	Community special		Surbiton
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 19		KT6 6HL
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8412 2600
<b>Number on roll</b>	65	<b>Fax number</b>	020 8412 2700
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs Caroline Tate Baxter
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	27 March 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Stephanie James

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 19	<b>Inspection dates</b> 15 June 2006 - 16 June 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 276746
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Dysart caters for pupils with a wide range of special needs and disabilities. Half the pupils have autistic spectrum disorder (ASD). The remainder have profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), complex medical, physical and sensory needs, and severe learning difficulties (SLD). The school was re-designated last September and now only admits pupils with SLD and ASD. On entry, typical levels of attainment are decreasing, and increasing numbers of pupils start with challenging behaviour. About three quarters of the pupils are boys. More than half are from White British backgrounds. The rest of the pupils represent 16 cultural heritages.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Dysart is a good school. It gives prime importance to providing for and teaching pupils to stay safe and healthy, to enjoy and achieve in their work, and to be prepared for taking their place in the community as young adults. This sets the context for good academic achievement. Pupils' personal development is outstanding as a result of this very strong provision. Some actively demonstrate this through their enthusiastic involvement and participation in all aspects of school life. They make suitable choices in their lifestyles and learn to manage their own difficulties and behaviour with skilled support. Not all pupils are able to make such choices because of their difficulties, but nevertheless, staff work relentlessly towards improving the quality and autonomy of pupils' lives. The staff are outstanding role models, showing respect and support at all times. This encourages excellent relationships and helps pupils feel safe and included.

Pupils achieve well because the curriculum and teaching are good. Although standards are understandably below average, pupils achieve well in relation to their starting points and the targets set for them. The systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are excellent and the information gained is usually very effectively used to inform planning. Occasionally, though, the information is not used well enough to ensure that each pupil learns and participates in lessons as far as is possible. In other respects, teaching is generally strong and is supported very well by high quality teaching assistants. The curriculum is interesting, relevant and enriched by a suitable range of activities. Pupils have good opportunities for working with mainstream peers, and the school's expertise is regularly used to support other schools in the community. Parents are highly supportive of the school and the quality of care and education their children receive.

Leadership, management and governance are good and have grown in effectiveness over the past three years. School improvement has been good but, although the school has moved location since the last inspection, there are still some difficulties with the design of the current building. A management focus on instigating developments has led to a reduction in the systematic monitoring of the school's current work. This has led to a small amount of less effective practice, such as some planning and teaching for the mixed needs 'curriculum mornings'. This has been identified by excellent, realistic self-evaluation which is used very effectively to identify strengths and weaknesses. The school correctly recognises its effectiveness as good, and knows what it needs to do to improve. It regularly seeks the views of the school community before implementing developments and incorporates the outcomes into its practice. The school is now set on an exciting path to further improve its provision, and is in an excellent position to do so. Resources are effectively deployed to maintain and develop the school's activities, supplemented by grants and extra funding. The school provides good value for money.

## **Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form**

### **Grade: 2**

The post-16 department of the school is very effective in preparing its pupils for adult life. The department is led and managed well. Whilst in many ways integral with the main school, the post-16 department is appropriately autonomous in its provision of education. The curriculum is good and includes many community and college-based opportunities for learning.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- ensure that information compiled on pupils' skill levels and their strategies for learning are used to best effect in all lessons;
- re-establish consistent monitoring and evaluation of planning and teaching.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' achievement is good. They make good progress towards, and generally meet the challenging targets set for them. Due to pupils' severe learning difficulties, standards are below average but they achieve well in relation to their starting points and capabilities as measured by national measures such as P Levels. Pupils achieve particularly well in relation to targets set on their individual education plans (IEPs) which look for very finely tuned steps of progress, such as increasing ability to tolerate an activity. The individual approach taken to each pupil's provision and learning means that all pupils achieve equally well. Parents are very happy with the progress their children make. There is a great deal of information on individual pupils' skill levels and strategies to support their learning, but in a small minority of lessons, this information is not used to the full and some pupils do not achieve enough at these times.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Their enjoyment is shown in the calm atmosphere, and their very good levels of enthusiasm and participation in school life. Pupils achieve well in their school work and spend leisure time happily and productively. Attendance is good despite the frailty of many. Pupils' behaviour is excellent. Many have behavioural difficulties, but staff support helps pupils learn how to manage it for themselves. Relationships are excellent. Pupils feel safe and secure and come to expect and show respect and tolerance within the school and the wider community. There have been no recorded incidents of racial abuse, bullying or exclusions. The school is racially harmonious; faith and cultural diversity, and the "specialness" of each individual are explored and celebrated.

The ethos of the school and a wealth of planned opportunities help pupils to live healthy and safe lives, and to understand how to choose to do so as far as possible. Consultation with pupils led to a better range of provision for playground equipment

and salads at lunchtime, for example. Pupils learn to reflect and understand life issues such as birth and death. They contribute to their class and school community and take part in wider community events. Pupils have been involved in drawing up rules for safe playtimes and, where able to, give their views and opinions which have an impact on their school community. They are involved in charity work, such as Jeans for Genes and celebrate each other's achievements wholeheartedly.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching is good, and learning is good as a result. Teaching is particularly strong when teachers are with their own class groups. This teaching is underpinned by excellent assessment of individuals' needs and skills. The information is usually used very well to adapt planning and strategies so that each pupil's individual needs are met, and they learn effectively. Teaching strategies include valuable advice and guidance from therapists to ensure that a holistic approach is taken to the education and care of each pupil. Occasionally, in mixed class groups, teachers do not use available information to best effect, and so do not help each pupil learn or participate as much as possible. For example, the teacher's explanations were not sufficiently supported by visual prompts in one lesson for pupils with ASD. Teaching assistants contribute very effectively to both teaching and learning. They support individuals and class activities efficiently, often calming potential behavioural difficulties to help the class run smoothly. Interesting teaching methodologies, such as team teaching, a vibrant adult approach, humour, and good use of information and communication technology motivate and engage pupils particularly well.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good. It meets the needs and interests of the different age groups well and fulfils statutory requirements. The curriculum for post-16 pupils includes a good range of community and college based activities, and there is appropriate accreditation for pupils aged 14-19 years.

The curriculum is very well adapted to meet pupils' needs. There is a strong emphasis on the core skills of communication and personal, social, health and citizenship education. High quality, detailed planning allows the development of pupils' skills, understanding and knowledge over time. Class groupings are given careful consideration to help pupils learn more effectively. Pupils are very well prepared for their future lives and well-being. This includes the use of their leisure time. The curriculum is enriched well by a number of arts-based activities such as theatrical and drumming workshops, visits and residential journeys. Enrichment will shortly be increased by an extension of the school day to allow after-school care and clubs. There are good links

with other schools, both for individual inclusion and for groups to come to Dysart to work and play with Dysart pupils.

A new curriculum model is currently being successfully piloted to better meet the needs of the changing school population. This is working very effectively.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

This area of provision is outstanding. A very strong emphasis is placed on pupils' health and safety. Pupils' individual diets are rigorously adhered to, and the school has recently gained the Healthy Schools award and promotes pupils' health in all that it does. Relationships with, and input from therapists are very strong. Safeguarding arrangements are robust and ensure pupils are well protected and taught. Risk assessments are rigorous and lead to appropriate action to minimise risks where necessary. The school works very effectively with pupils' difficulties to help them conform. For example, a few pupils cannot tolerate group work at the moment, but with individual support, participate in lessons from outside the group and are learning to phase back in. Excellent academic guidance is given through the detailed assessment and IEP systems. In addition, the school works closely with parents and external agencies in planning for pupils' well being and for their lives after they leave school. Questionnaire returns show parents' very high satisfaction with the school. 'Dysart has always offered our son a wonderful range of learning opportunities. The staff are very caring and very much value our son's achievements. Communication with his class teacher and others is very good.'

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The school has undergone positive change over the past three years, instigated by strong, new leadership and a growing capability of the governing body to make a real contribution to setting and driving the strategic direction. Governance is good. All managers have a strong commitment to providing the best education and care for each pupil, and to continuing school improvement; self-evaluation is excellent. The school has a realistic view of the quality of its work and agrees that some aspects of monitoring, for example the quality of teaching and learning in lessons, have been less effective due to a focus on new developments. This has affected, for example, the effectiveness of a small amount of mixed-needs group work.

Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Managers are now in an excellent position to make further improvements through their exciting plans to focus further on the Every Child Matters outcomes, and to re-model the curriculum. The school runs smoothly on a day to day basis and resources are effectively deployed in the best interests of the pupils and parents, for example to develop extended provision. The accommodation is spacious for most, but cramped for post-16, and the building is not designed for the needs of the new intake of pupils. There is inadequate space for the

quick and safe delivery and collection of pupils at the front of the school. Dysart is highly consultative, seeking and acting upon the views and opinions of stakeholders, pupils and parents at regular intervals, formally and informally. It is also generous with its resources and expertise and is used by the local authority as a resource to support mainstream schools and to help set up special provision outside Dysart.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	Yes
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	2
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, through quality assurance and self-review	2	
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 are deployed to achieve value for money	1	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	Yes

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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**

Pupils

Thank you for letting me come into your lessons when I visited your school recently to see how well it was working and how well you were all doing. I was very pleased with what I found at Dysart, and agree with the school staff that it is a good school. I think, actually, that some of its work is excellent!

I found that the staff work very hard to keep you healthy and safe, enjoy your work and prepare you for your adult lives. You make good progress in your school work, and your personal development is excellent. It's lovely to see how much you enjoy lessons and how well you join in with all the activities. Your relationships with staff and with each other are great. I really enjoyed coming out with you at playtime and seeing all the interesting things you choose to do. I know some of you get anxious about certain situations, but I thought you managed to overcome these really well, with the help of the staff. The headteacher, senior staff and governors run your school well. They are always looking for ways to make it better and better, and keep bringing in exciting new developments, like the new after school club that is about to start. But just occasionally, the senior staff do not check that everything is going to plan as often as they should, which means that on some occasions, things don't go as well as they usually do. The school has some very good systems to help you learn, and these usually work very well although occasionally, teachers could use the information about how each of you learns best more effectively. Mostly, though, you learn well in your lessons and enjoy it when teachers use the computer white boards and have some fun with you. I was impressed by the help given to you by the teaching assistants. I think that the school gives you an interesting range of things to study, and extra activities too, like your visit to Thorpe Park and work with pupils from other schools.

In all, I think that you are fortunate to attend Dysart School, and I know that your parents think so too. I wish you all the best for your futures.

Yours sincerely

Judith Charlesworth

Lead Inspector