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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Mr Peter de Rosa
Headteacher
Durants School
4 Pitfield Way
Enfield
EN3 5BY

Dear Mr de Rosa

Short inspection of Durants School

Following my visit to the school on 15 May 2018 with Mary Geddes, Ofsted Inspector, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in December 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. The school has undergone considerable change in recent years. It now provides for secondary pupils with autism, having previously catered for pupils aged three to 19 with complex needs. This has resulted in a period of considerable change and adjustment for staff and pupils. The curriculum and assessment systems have been redesigned and meet the needs of the pupils well.

You explained the approach you have taken to develop your staff and train new teachers. This has meant changing the role of the heads of department. They now have a clear oversight of the age group they are responsible for and provide effective monitoring and support of the new teachers.

Inspectors spoke to several pupils and parents. All were very proud of the school. Pupils love their school and attend regularly.

The school is presently split over two sites, consisting of the main school and the additional resource base (ARP). The local authority have asked you to expand the school and a new site is being built. At present, leaders maintain quality assurance systems and procedures across the two sites. You and your governors are well aware that these quality assurance arrangements will require further refinement once the proposed expansion is completed.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding practice and procedures are effective and fit for purpose. A strong culture of safeguarding is evident in both the school and the ARP. Leaders, staff and

governors ensure that all safeguarding checks are completed and that staff receive effective safeguarding training to ensure that they remain up to date with the latest guidance. Across the school staff maintain a calm atmosphere which helps pupils to feel safe at school and in the ARP. Parents who we spoke to and who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, said that they are happy with the school and believe that their child is safe.

Leaders are aware that the pupils attending the school are particularly vulnerable. Regular meetings with staff in school and outside professionals make sure that key information is shared. Online safety is taken extremely seriously. Some pupils were able to explain in detail to inspectors what steps they take to keep themselves safe while using the internet.

Inspection findings

- We first agreed to look at the impact that leaders' actions are having on improving staff's management of pupils' behaviour. This is because it is a key focus identified by the school.
- There is a calm consistent approach to managing behaviour throughout the school. Thorough systems and procedures are in place to record behavioural incidents. The school occasionally uses quiet rooms and has taken external advice on this.
- Most of the time behaviour management practice gives pupils the necessary skills to manage their own behaviour and not to rely on adults. Pupils are well supported in developing social skills, for example, waiting, turn-taking and choosing.
- The management of pupils' behaviour is generally effective, including the more challenging students in the sixth form. Behaviour information is analysed regularly, but it takes time to collate all the information.
- The use of reward systems is not consistent across the whole school. Some staff use consequences while others focus mostly on rewards.
- We next looked at how the curriculum is helping pupils to achieve well. This is an area the school identified for development, following the change of pupil intake and age range.
- The curriculum is well organised to meet the different needs of pupils at each key stage. It is designed to prepare pupils for the next stage of their education. As such, life skills are an important component of the curriculum. The pupils are provided with opportunities to gain a wide range of relevant certificates, which provides a basis for their future education
- Evidence from visits to classrooms shows that sometimes pupils are overdependent on adults to support their learning. When this occurs, this reduces pupils' opportunities to become a successful learner and develop their independence skills.
- Finally, we looked at how effectively leaders and staff are able to demonstrate the progress pupils make while at the school. This included looking at pupils'

awareness of what they need to do to progress. This was an area for improvement identified at the last inspection.

- The school recently designed an assessment system which is closely linked to the curriculum. Leaders have put a range of processes in place, involving a number of staff, to effectively keep track of pupils' progress.
- The school have started to set goals for social and emotional development emerging from education, health and care plans, as well as subject-based targets. As a result, assessment overall provides a holistic view of pupil development. Additionally, a new feedback system is used consistently throughout the school which supports pupils' understanding of what they need to do to progress.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- procedures are further developed to support the analysis of behavioural incidents, so that timely action can be implemented
- all staff provide more opportunities to promote and develop pupils' independence

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Enfield. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Penny Barratt
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

The inspectors carried out the following activities during the inspection:

- meetings with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, governors and representatives from the local authority
- joint visits to classrooms with the headteacher and deputy headteacher
- scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils
- informal discussions with parents at the end of the school day
- responses to Ofsted questionnaires
- a scrutiny of documents, including the school's development plan, safeguarding information and records, and data on pupils' achievement and attendance
- a review of the school's website.