

# Inspection of an outstanding school: Dysart School

190 Ewell Road, Surbiton, Surrey KT6 6HL

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Inspection dates:

12 and 13 March 2024

## **Outcome**

Dysart School continues to be an outstanding school.

The principal of this school is Leigh Edser. This school is part of Orchard Hill College Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, John Prior, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Jay Mercer.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

This is a caring and nurturing school. In the morning, pupils are greeted by enthusiastic school staff who are genuinely happy to see them. Pupils are happy here.

The school understands the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders are ambitious for pupils' achievement. The school draws upon the strong knowledge and expertise of staff to provide effective support for pupils with SEND. Frequently, pupils achieve and surpass the outcomes set out in their education, health and care plans (EHC plans).

The school cares deeply about pupils' personal, social and emotional development. They provide many avenues for pupils to share their views and explore their interests. This includes pupils who are nonverbal. Recently, pupils met with representatives from the local council to share feedback on how to improve the train station. This included improving accessibility for wheelchair users and considerations for a wide range of sensory needs. When some older pupils expressed an interest in cookery, the school arranged for pupils to organise and run a weekly community cafe at a local church.

The school teaches pupils to listen to each other and treat others with kindness. Pupils are taught important messages about safety. This includes when online. Pupils feel safe. Leaders take effective action to safeguard pupils' welfare.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

The school places high importance on pupils' early reading and communication. Leaders

assess pupils' knowledge of phonics, language and communication when they join the school. All teaching staff are trained to teach phonics. They check systematically the letters, sounds and words pupils know. Teaching and reading books are matched according to the phonics pupils know. Pupils who are nonverbal are taught to communicate in other ways. This includes using symbols and a range of resources and devices. Pupils have opportunities to read and enjoy stories at school. Story time is an engaging, exciting time of the day, and all pupils are supported to take part.

The school is highly ambitious for all pupils. The school organises different curriculum pathways tailored to pupils' needs which leads to appropriate and ambitious end points. This includes in the sixth form where students achieve accredited functional skills qualifications. The school's curriculum pathways include a broad range of subjects in line with the national curriculum and early years foundation stage. The school thinks carefully about the most important knowledge and skills that they want pupils to learn. Content is broken down into small steps so that pupils build knowledge cumulatively over time.

Leaders take great care to find out about pupils' starting points when they join the school. The school considers the requirements set out in pupils' EHC plans and takes pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs into account. The school consults parents, carers, pupils and a range of experts. This includes therapists, psychologists and medical professionals. All the information gathered is used to personalise adaptations to teaching and resources to support pupils to learn the curriculum. School staff receive regular training to enhance their knowledge and expertise and provide strong support for pupils. Leaders and the trust work closely with staff and do what they can to help staff manage their workload. Leaders of the trust provide effective and appropriate support and challenge to the school.

The school informs parents about the importance of regular school attendance. Pupils' absences are closely monitored. Where absence causes concern, leaders take swift action to address it. This includes working collaboratively with families and partners at the local authority to find ways to ensure that pupils attend school regularly.

In recent times, the school has revamped the approach it takes to managing behaviour. School staff and pupils know what is expected. Pupils are taught to recognise and communicate their emotions. Teaching staff know pupils well. They are alert to possible situations that may lead to disruption and know what motivates pupils. As a result, lessons are calm and orderly. Learning is not disrupted by unsettled behaviour.

Pupils' wider development is an important part of the curriculum. The personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum is sequenced effectively. For example, pupils are taught the names of different body parts and about privacy. Pupils are then taught about the importance of showing respect for the privacy of others and the significance of consent. The school wants pupils to be independent and confident. There are a wide range of educational visits offered. These are well thought through to provide increasingly greater challenge. For example, pupils visit the local supermarket regularly and are taught to manage money. When appropriate, pupils visit shops that require travel on public transport. Students in the sixth form receive effective careers information and guidance. The school arranges work experience opportunities with local businesses and

within the academy trust.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Dysart School, to be outstanding in September 2015.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	142698
<b>Local authority</b>	Kingston upon Thames
<b>Inspection number</b>	10296741
<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Academy special converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	163
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	11
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Jay Mercer
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	John Prior
<b>Principal</b>	Leigh Edser
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.dysartschool.org">www.dysartschool.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	13 November 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- This is a special school for pupils with autism and severe learning difficulty. All pupils have EHC plans.
- Dysart School converted to become an academy school in April 2016. When its predecessor school, Dysart School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- Since the previous inspection, the school opened two education provisions at premises separate from the school. Dysart School, Apollo 2, is located in Latchmere Road, Kingston-upon-Thames, KT2 5TU. Dysart School, Apollo 3, is located in School Lane, Surbiton, KT6 7QH.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the principal and other senior leaders. Inspectors also met with representatives of the multi-academy trust and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and PSHE. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The inspection took place at all three school sites.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- An inspector spoke with some parents before school.
- Inspectors reviewed staff, parent and pupil responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

## Inspection team

Andrea Bedeau, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jayne Jardine

Ofsted Inspector

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