



Durants School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 102066
LEA Enfield LEA
Inspection number 276648
Inspection dates 4 October 2005 to 5 October 2005
Reporting inspector Kay Charlton AI

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

Type of school	Special	School address	4 Pitfield Way
School category	Community		Enfield
Age range of pupils	5 to 16		EN3 5BY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02088041980
Number on roll	84	Fax number	02088040976
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Graham Went
Date of previous inspection	5 June 2000	Headteacher	Mr Keith Bovair

Age group 5 to 16	Inspection dates 4 October 2005 - 5 October 2005	Inspection number 276648
-----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one inspector who was in school for two days.

Description of the school

Durants is a special school catering for pupils aged 5-16. The school is currently undergoing re-organisation. It is changing from a school catering for pupils with moderate learning difficulties to one that caters for pupils with complex learning difficulties. The new build of the primary department is virtually complete and the re-housing of the secondary department is well under way. A new unit for autistic learners has just been opened. Currently there are eighty four pupils on roll. They come from a wide range of social, economic and cultural backgrounds. All have statements of special educational need. Twenty seven pupils speak English as an additional language. There are two looked after children. The school has gained the School Achievement Award, Healthy Schools Award, Artsmark Silver Award, School Plus Award and the Investors in People Award in recent years.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school judges itself to be good. The inspection confirms this view and also identified some outstanding features. Teaching is good overall and pupils make good progress. Virtually all attain or exceed their individual targets. Most aged 16 attain very well in nationally accredited examinations given their starting point on entry. In the foundation stage children make a good start to their education. In the primary department pupils achieve particularly well because of consistently good and often outstanding teaching. In the secondary department pupils achieve well but there is more variation. This relates to variation in the quality of teaching in this part of the school which ranges from satisfactory to excellent. Even though it is good overall the school has rightly identified the need for a more consistent use of a wide range of teaching strategies to provide a more active approach to learning as its key area for development. Pupils' personal development is outstanding. They make very good progress in developing their confidence and independence. They are extremely well cared for and relationships are excellent. Pupils enjoy school and their behaviour is very good. Links with other organisations are used very well to support both pupils' learning and personal development. Parents hold the school in very high regard. Leaders inspire others to work towards successes. At a time of significant change staff are working together very well to meet the growing diversity of pupils' special educational needs. The governing body is very supportive and acts as the school's critical friend. The school has demonstrated a strong capacity to improve in future. The school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

In line with the school improvement plan the school should:* Ensure more consistent use of a wide range of teaching strategies to provide a more active approach to learning in the secondary department.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Overall, pupils achieve well and reach or exceed their individual targets. They achieve especially well in the primary department and in Years 10 and 11 of the secondary department. In recent years pupils have attained very well in nationally accredited examinations. However, in Years 7, 8 and 9, there are occasions where pupils, particularly those with complex learning needs, can achieve more. This is because staff do not always make sufficient use of a wide range of teaching strategies to meet the changing needs of the school population. Throughout the school a good emphasis is placed on the development of pupils' understanding of literacy and numeracy, and as a result they usually attain or exceed their individual targets in these areas. There is now a much more systematic approach to the teaching of reading than at the last inspection and this is having a positive impact on pupils' achievements. In the recently established unit for autistic learners pupils are making a good start. The school pays

careful attention to ensuring the needs of looked after children and those who speak English as an additional language are met. As a result they make progress similar to that of others in their age group.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The school is extremely effective in promoting pupils' personal development and well being. Pupils are treated with respect and their views are taken into account. Their self-esteem grows markedly and they develop very good levels of confidence and independence as well as very good levels of personal responsibility. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils develop an excellent sense of social awareness and clearly learn the difference between right and wrong. They learn to reflect upon important issues, such as the need to respect each others' faiths and cultures. They respond exceptionally well to the moments of silence in assembly where they show a high degree of reverence for the situation. Pupils of all ages are keen to come to school and indicate that they are proud of their school. They enjoy lessons and also the very wide range of enrichment activities that take place. Pupils' behaviour is very good and their attendance has improved in recent years and is now good. Pupils very effectively learn about the need to adopt safe practices, for example when undertaking challenging activities, such as climbing up the rigging when sailing. They increasingly understand the need for a healthy lifestyle and talk knowledgeably about the importance of eating five fruit or vegetables each day. Inclusion in a range of activities with mainstream schools plays an important part in developing pupils' understanding of working as a member of a wider community. Pupils' preparation for their future is enhanced very well by the school's links with the local college and the well organised work placement programme.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Overall, teaching and learning are good. Staff show commitment to every pupil and, with a great sense of enthusiasm, encourage them in their learning. Pupils indicate that 'their teachers help them a lot'. There is good and often outstanding teaching in Reception and in the primary department. In this part of the school staff make particularly good use of pictures, symbols, objects and gesture to encourage pupils' understanding in every possible way. They also make good use of a wide range of resources and techniques to ensure the pupils are very actively involved in learning. In the secondary department teaching is good overall. There is some outstanding teaching as was seen in a Year 10 art lesson. However, notably in Years 7, 8 and 9, there are occasions where teaching is only satisfactory. The school has rightly identified the need for strategies similar to those seen in the primary department to be used more consistently in these situations to ensure the diverse and complex needs of a growing number of pupils are fully met. Good practice has recently been established

in the unit for autistic pupils. Work undertaken in physical literacy is making an important contribution to the pupils' learning. Assessment is good overall. Throughout the school assessments are made to help set targets for each pupil. Some of the 'small step' assessments in the primary department are used very effectively to challenge pupils in the next stages of their learning. There is less consistency of practice in the secondary department and the school is appropriately undertaking training to ensure well moderated assessments across both departments. Extremely thorough assessments have been undertaken to help pupils gain external accreditation in Years 10 and 11.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. All requirements are met. It is at present under review to reflect the change in pupils' needs. As a result, a curriculum much more along the lines of that set up in the primary department has recently been adopted in Years 7, 8 and 9. All national curriculum subjects are taught but in a much more integrated way than has happened in the past. This is working well. The school is also amending courses for the 14 to 16 age range in order to best suit the changing needs of the school. For all age groups there is excellent provision to support pupils' personal development and well-being. A particularly strong contribution is made by the outstanding range of enrichment activities undertaken. Pupils are very keen to take part. They regularly go out and about in the local area visiting places such as the local supermarket and they also go as far afield as Africa to visit their partner school, Spain and also France.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support of pupils are outstanding. Pupils and parents speak very highly of the school's work in this area. The excellent relationships established between pupils and staff and the respect shown to pupils, for example in school council meetings, forms the basis of the school's success. The nature of the pupils' needs means that the school has to pay attention to a very wide range of statutory requirements including the use of restraint and the administration of medicines. All these requirements are fully met and all adults receive regular update training as required. The school fully meets the requirements of the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice and is successful in engaging parents in helping map out the future for their child. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are robust and reviewed on a regular basis. The way in which both teaching and support staff work together, for example in the high level of supervision of play-times and lunchtimes, is an important part of the school's effectiveness. The motto is that 'the children always comes first'.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good overall. There is a strong senior team who present a very clear vision about the future of the school. They are managing the

school very well at a time of significant change. They have established a very good team spirit and through a very comprehensive training programme are ensuring that staff are prepared for changes that are occurring as the school population changes. Their own commitment to learning through being part of national initiatives spells out their belief in the importance of continuous professional development for all. The self-evaluation procedures are good and take account of the views of parents, pupils, governors and a range of other external agencies. Much of the monitoring within school has tended to operate within the primary and secondary departments. There is a very clear plan to make this a whole school procedure so that both benefits from the expertise within each department. Governors are very supportive. They are involved in setting priorities for development and have a systematic programme of monitoring the overall effectiveness of the school. They ensure that all statutory requirements are met. The school very actively promotes equality of opportunity. The re-build programme provides a wider range of opportunities to ensure that pupils get the 'very best'. Currently a number of classes are coping with working in either temporary accommodation or in rooms that have just been set up. Resources are good and used well. Recent recruitment to the school has been handled well and staff appointments are very actively supporting ways forward. Overall, the school provides good value for money.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
--	-----------------------	--------------

Overall effectiveness

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

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

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

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

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

Thank you for all the help you gave me when I visited your school. My discussions with you helped to give me a clear view of how much you appreciated all the things your school is doing to help you.

You told me that Durants School is a good school and that it cares for you and supports you very well indeed. I agree with you and I could see how well it was doing in helping you reach your targets. You are developing very good levels of confidence and you are learning to do more and more things for yourselves. You told me how much you enjoy your work and that you particularly like doing art, games, dance and science. You enjoy the excellent range of visits out of school, such as those to the Houses of Parliament. Those of you who go to college and are involved in work placements appreciate the way your school has set this up for you.

All of you were quick to tell me how good your teachers are, that 'they help you a lot,' and that they are fair and I agree. You really appreciate the efforts the head teacher is making to improve the building. In order to improve the school needs to make sure that your teachers make lessons even more interesting in Years 7, 8 and 9. This will make it easier for those who find listening difficult.