



Sutton Hospital and Tuition Service

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 135010
Local Authority Sutton
Inspection number 294249
Inspection date 19 September 2006
Reporting inspector James Bowden

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

Type of school	Special	School address	Drapers Building
School category	Pupil referral unit		Orchard Hill, Fountain Drive
Age range of pupils	5-16		Carshalton SM5 4NR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8770 8146
Number on roll (school)	60	Fax number	020 8770 8146
Appropriate authority	The local authority	Headteacher	Mrs Karen Martin
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected		

Age group	Inspection date	Inspection number
5-16	19 September 2006	294249

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional inspectors.

Description of the school

The Service operates over three sites spread across the borough and caters for learners with a range of medical needs. The tuition unit supports local learners who are unable to access school, the majority of whom are suffering from mental health disorders. The schoolroom at the Royal Marsden Hospital is based in the children's Oncology Unit and at Queen Mary's Hospital the Service supports, through bedside teaching, short and longer-stay learners with conditions including cystic fibrosis, asthma and road traffic injuries. The number on roll at the hospitals varies considerably throughout the year.

Learners come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds; inpatients on the hospital wards often coming from other boroughs nationwide or from other countries. Many learners referred to the tuition unit are involved with other specialist and support agencies in the borough. They arrive with a history of poor attendance and a negative attitude to education. Some individual tuition takes place either in learners' homes or in local libraries prior to them joining the tuition unit. Here, in Years 10 and 11, the focus is on learners achieving external accreditation whereas, the focus for younger learners is on reintegration into either mainstream or specialist school.

The great majority of learners are of White British origin. There are no significant differences in the number of boys and girls. Apart from physical disabilities, about a third of learners receive support under the special educational needs (SEN) Code of Practice. Most of these have social, emotional or behavioural difficulties.

The Service has not been inspected before.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Sutton Hospital and Tuition Service provides very well for its learners. It meets its aims and objectives of making a significant difference to learners' lives, many of whom are suffering from mental disorders or who have serious medical conditions. The quality of care, guidance and support for learners is outstanding. Learners and parents are very positive about their experiences of the Service. A parent commented, 'What haven't they done? They've rebuilt my daughter!' Learners feel safe and enjoy their learning. Prior to joining the tuition unit, many have had negative experiences of education and poor attendance. Consequently, they have to work hard if they are to catch up and achieve well. The Service is effective in supporting and including each learner in very specific ways, meeting effectively their learning, personal and medical needs. The Service has excellent links and partnerships with external agencies and medical staff as well as having its own strong support systems for learners. Professional colleagues from external agencies speak highly of the quality of the Service's provision.

Achievement is good and standards, particularly in GCSE, have improved and are average overall. In 2005, GCSE results in mathematics were weak when compared to English and science. However, in 2006, results in mathematics improved. Standards were below average but in terms of learners' attainment on entry, achievement for many was still relatively good. Learners achieve well in a range of subjects and other accredited vocational courses.

Learners' personal development is good. A striking feature is how older learners in particular rediscover their interest in education. Their attendance, though satisfactory overall, has improved and in 2006, all those who left at the end of Year 11 continued into further education or other accredited training courses. Reintegration of younger learners into mainstream school is also effective with just over a half returning to mainstream school and the remainder continuing at the tuition unit.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The Service knows very clearly its own strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning. Staff are very well aware of learners' individual needs and capabilities, which helps them to plan their lessons accordingly and get the best out of learners. A good quality curriculum contributes well to the progress learners make. This includes a wide range of academic and vocational courses, as well as activities such as physical education and personal, social and health education to support learners' personal development. Though there is a dedicated information and communication technology (ICT) course for older learners at the tuition unit, planning for the use of ICT to support learning across all subjects is less effective.

The headteacher and her two section coordinators have a clear and shared vision for the work of the Service. Monitoring and self-evaluation of provision is good. The senior team know the Service very well and are clear about what elements are strong and what needs to be improved. The quality of overall provision and the developing track record, since being registered as a pupil referral unit in March 2004, shows that the Service has good capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics at the tuition unit by focusing more clearly on the kind of syllabus learners need.
- Improve planning for the use of ICT to support learning across subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are average. Standards on entry at the hospitals are variable. However, most learners start at the tuition unit with attainment that is well below average. They arrive with a history of poor attendance and a negative attitude to education. As a result, they have to work hard to catch up. Though the focus is on reintegration for younger learners, those who stay at the unit make good progress in improving their National Curriculum levels, as do those learners in Years 7 to 9. In Years 10 and 11, achievement is good. Learners across the Service have the opportunity to take a range of accredited courses including GCSE. In 2005, results in mathematics at the tuition unit were weaker than in English and Science. Provisional results in 2006 show an overall rise, with the numbers achieving a higher grade in mathematics improving. English literature and drama results were particularly strong. The improvement in GCSE results, and the good achievement overall, bear witness to the Service's successful focus on improving learners' standards and achievement.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Learners' personal development is good and is the result of the Service's ability to rekindle learners' interest in education. Spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good. Behaviour in lessons in the unit and the hospitals is excellent. Learners get along together well and with their teachers and other adults they work with. As a result of their mental health disorders, many still find attendance difficult. However, compared with their previous attendance record, there is a substantial improvement. Attendance overall is satisfactory. Learners are pleased with the education they receive and appreciate the opportunities they are given. Learners feel safe and feel they have someone they can talk to should they feel the need. They take part in planned physical activities and are enabled to eat healthy food. Learners' views are sought and acted upon. They participate fully in weekly meetings and are involved in charitable work. Learners develop skills that contribute to their future economic well-being. As a result, all those who left the tuition unit in 2006 continued into further education or accredited training courses.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers are challenging yet sensitive to learners' needs, ensuring good learning through their appropriate targets. In the hospitals, learners are often taught on a one to one basis and here the sensitivity and understanding that teachers have of learners' medical needs enables them to make good progress. The best class lessons at the tuition unit are lively and engaging, learners being given opportunities to contribute and share their ideas and thoughts willingly. This, for example, was the case in a Year 11 English literature lesson where learners were developing their knowledge and understanding of John Donne's poem 'The Flea'.

When learners join the Service, both at the tuition unit and in the hospitals, teachers quickly assess where learners have got to and mostly provide work that is appropriately challenging. On occasion, though, some of the work needs to be matched more carefully to learners' needs, particularly in lessons where there is such a wide range of capability. A common feature that underpins the quality of learning is the excellent working relationships that have been established between teachers and learners.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. Both the unit and the hospitals provide a curriculum that caters for the individual needs of each learner, which supports academic and personal development very well. All learners, particularly the most vulnerable, and those with special education needs, benefit from the sensitive arrangements made for them. The curriculum provides a good framework for learners to develop so that they can rejoin mainstream education and progress to work, further or higher education. Though the focus is on the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, the provision is enhanced by a wide range of other subjects and a variety of accredited skills and vocational courses. For example, if there are older learners in the hospitals they are enabled to sit their advanced level examinations. The personal, social and health education programme, other enrichment activities and the citizenship course enhance further the quality of learners' personal development. However, ICT is not used effectively enough to support learning overall across subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The Service provides an excellent caring and supportive environment where learners feel safe, develop their personal qualities and make good progress towards the targets set for them. One commented, 'We are not treated as a number, it is more personal here.' Extremely high quality links have been formed with a wide range of external agencies and medical staff to ensure that very effective support is focused on learners'

needs. Provision for ensuring health and safety is strong. Child protection and risk assessment procedures are securely in place and staff are aware of their responsibilities.

When learners join the tuition unit they are assessed both academically and for their developmental needs. Often, undiagnosed issues are found and addressed, thus learners' individual needs are met more effectively. A parent commented, 'Without the help and support of all the staff at Drapers my son wouldn't have got as far as he has. They have been brilliant. My son is now taking GCSEs and doesn't want to leave.' Although the responsibility for providing assessment data in the hospitals is the responsibility of the 'home' school, teachers often have to make informal assessments to ensure their provision matches fully learners' needs.

Very high quality and challenging and personal education plans are reviewed regularly with learners, parents and staff. Those learners who are reintegrated are very well supported during the transition from the tuition unit to a mainstream school, which ensures the move is successful. Service staff work in close partnership with schools that admit learners and placements are kept under careful review. Older learners benefit from good advice in helping them decide on the next stage of their education.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good with a clear focus on improving standards of achievement, the quality of provision across the Service and making a significant difference to the lives of its learners. Capacity to improve is good as confirmed by the improving trends in standards achieved and aspects of learners' personal development. Good leadership by the headteacher and her section coordinators is founded on an ethos of providing high quality education and care for all. Monitoring and evaluation of performance, including that of teaching and learning is effective. As a result, improvement planning is appropriate and well focused. Assessment and other data is well collated but is not always used well enough to support some aspects of planning. The analysis and use of data is less well embedded. There is a very strong ethos of fairness and equality of opportunity in which every learner really matters. The budget is well managed and outcomes represent good value for money. The management committee acts effectively as a critical and supportive friend.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
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	2

The quality of provision

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

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	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, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

You may remember that another inspector and I visited you recently. We saw some of you working in your lessons and I had a discussion with a group of Year 11 pupils from Drapers. Thanks very much for making us feel very welcome and thanks to the four of you who showed me the way to the canteen! You all benefit from a good quality education at the Drapers building and in the hospitals. At the end of the visit we prepared a list of what is good about your education and another containing a couple of things that could be better.

The things that are done well for you:

* The headteacher and all the staff make sure you are safe and well cared for, * They have your best interests at heart, know you very well and strive to ensure you do well in the future, * Your behaviour is very good and you get on well together with each other and your teachers, as well as other adults who work with you, * You say you are taught well - we agree with you, * A good range of subjects and accredited courses are offered for all of you, which you say makes your education more interesting, * The headteacher and her senior staff have plans to make things even better for you.

A couple of things that could be done better: * Both you and your teachers need to focus more on improving your standards in maths, * There needs to be more use of ICT to support your learning in all the subjects you study.

Once again, thanks for your help and all the best for your future.

Yours sincerely,

James Bowden (Lead Inspector)