

Inspection of a good school: Durants School

4 Pitfield Way, Enfield EN3 5BY

Inspection dates:

31 October and 1 November 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might be outstanding if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to Durants School. They are happy and they feel safe. Pupils like their lessons and the adults that teach and support them. Lessons are fun and interesting and help pupils to learn important knowledge and skills and to be independent. The school's ambitious vision to prepare pupils for society and adulthood is clear to see in the curriculum that pupils learn.

All pupils at the school need extra help because of their special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers and support staff are kind and patient. They give pupils the time and specialist support they need to understand and remember new information. The school has high expectations of what pupils can achieve and how they should behave. Pupils sometimes need support to manage their emotions and behaviour. When this happens, staff provide this support in a respectful and expert way so that pupils can carry on with their lessons as quickly as possible.

Pupils say that bullying is not a problem at the school. If there are ever any problems with friendships or unkind behaviour between pupils, this is sorted out quickly. Pupils know who they can talk to if they are worried about anything.

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

Leaders, including governors, have a clear ambition for all pupils which shines through at this delightful school. They have high expectations for every pupil. The curriculum is well designed and implemented and teaches pupils academic subjects as well as important skills and knowledge for life, such as how to behave in public and how to keep yourself safe and healthy. The curriculum is adapted to meet the needs of all pupils.

Durants School is an outward-facing school that is proud of its partnership working with other schools. Leaders at all levels are restless for continual improvement and constantly develop their curriculum thinking. This has led them to make recent refinements to the curriculum, which are based on a clear vision to prepare pupils for adult life. Leaders carefully consider staff workload when implementing change. Staff have regular and focused training so that they understand what leaders expect of them. Staff feel valued by leaders and say that their well-being is taken into consideration.

Pupils are very vulnerable because of their SEND. The school understands each pupil's needs very well. They research and reflect on what works best for pupils with autism and strive to be at the forefront of good practice. Specialist therapists who work at the school are included in the curriculum thinking at all stages. Staff understand and contribute to the school's established vision.

Staff induction and training is systematic and high quality. It focuses on giving teachers and support staff the skills and knowledge they need to do their job well. The school's approach to communication and behaviour is well thought out and consistent at all sites of the school. There is a sharp focus on teaching pupils to be able to regulate their emotions with increasing independence and to be able to communicate what they want and need in positive ways. There is very little disruption to lessons because of pupil behaviour. When pupils do need support for their behaviour, the school takes fair and well-considered action, involving external specialist agencies when appropriate.

The school has a well-organised approach for teaching pupils to read. This includes teaching phonics to pupils who are at the early stages of decoding text. Many pupils can already read confidently, but still need extra help with comprehension. The curriculum teaches pupils strategies to understand the full meaning of what they have read, for example by learning about idioms and figures of speech.

Leaders, including governors, have ensured that there is a rich programme of activities to develop pupils' character. Pupils go out in the local community to deepen their understanding of the concepts they have learned in school. This includes visits to the local shops, places of worship and green spaces. Pupils take part in physical and sporting activities and learn about healthy lifestyles. The curriculum includes lessons about how different people live their lives, including those from different cultures and religious beliefs. Pupils learn about safe and healthy relationships and how important it is to treat other people's views with respect. Students in the post-16 department receive support and advice about what they might do when they leave the school. They experience workplaces and visit local colleges and other providers, including those that offer supported internships. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their life after leaving the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. 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 higher or 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 school to be good in December 2014.

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

Unique reference number	102066
Local authority	Enfield
Inspection number	10289833
Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	195
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	58
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jenny Tosh
Headteacher	Rachel Carli
Website	www.durants.enfield.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 May 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The number of pupils at the school has increased significantly since the last inspection.
- The school has three sites: 4 Pitfield Way, Enfield, London EN3 5BY; High Street, Southgate, London N14 6BN; a satellite provision co-located with Winchmore School at 20 Laburnum Grove, Winchmore Hill, London N21 3HS.
- All pupils who attend the school have an education, health and care plan identifying autism as a primary area of need. Many pupils have other needs as well, including social, emotional and mental health needs.
- The school does not use any 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 met with the headteacher, the deputy headteachers and the leader in charge of the secondary school satellite provision. Inspectors also met with some curriculum leaders and the school business manager. Inspectors met with the chair of governors, who is also the safeguarding governor.
- Inspectors met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, communication and 'My Health'. 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, including personal, social and health education, physical education and humanities.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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.
- Inspectors took into account the responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and the responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

Gary Pocock, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Janice Howkins

Ofsted Inspector

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