

Insights Independent School

Independent Special School

Inspection report

DCSF Registration Number	307/6339
Unique Reference Number	135493
Inspection number	332746
Inspection dates	15 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Jill Bainton

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended.

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Information about the school

Insights Independent School, registered as Insights Education Centre, is a co-educational day school located on two sites in close proximity in Ealing, West London. Students at the school are aged from 10 to 16 years and all have special educational needs. The school can accommodate up to 30 pupils. There are 18 pupils on roll at present, 17 of whom have a statement of special educational needs. Pupils have a wide range of general and complex educational needs, associated with communication difficulties and challenging behaviour. The school is planning to relocate to alternative teaching premises in the near future. The school was registered in 2008; this is their first inspection under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002.

Evaluation of the school

Insights Independent School has made a positive start. It provides a good quality of education using an interesting curriculum. The teaching engages and interests the students, many of whom have had an unsettled time in previous schools. The provision for the welfare, health and safety of the students is outstanding. The school has met all the regulations for registration.

Quality of education

The curriculum is good and has been carefully devised to meet the differing needs of the students. This is achieved through a carefully planned programme for the students and fulfils their statements of educational needs. They each have a well-devised and focused individual education plan (IEP) which is reviewed termly. The curriculum is based on the National Curriculum and all students have access to mathematics, English, information and communication technology, science, humanities, physical education and the creative arts. These cover several key stages as some students have missed a lot of school through exclusion and non-attendance. In addition, each student has additional support in numeracy and literacy to enable them to access the other subjects more effectively. In order to meet the more specific social needs of the students the school has put in place a skills programme called 'Core Values' which helps equip the students to meet the challenges of life outside school and aspects of this programme are discussed in the daily assembly. There are detailed written schemes of work for all subjects which include personal,

social, health and citizenship education. One feature of the curriculum is the emphasis the school places on getting the students to understand why they are at the school, what they can do to help themselves and what the school and their parents or carers can do to support them. This is implemented partly through a planned pastoral care programme and through daily contact with the student and family support staff. Students can also participate in a wide range of enrichment activities, which include boxing, martial arts, athletics, canoeing, football, swimming, kayaking, wall climbing, orienteering, horse riding and hair and beauty therapy. The Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) cross-curricular programme is also used to prepare the students in life skills. A range of educational visits outside school further extends the curriculum with students recently visiting central London, the Imperial War Museum, the Natural History Museum and the London Eye. There are planned trips this term to London theatres, which involve workshops.

The quality of the teaching and assessment is good and, as a result, students are making good progress according to their starting points. The experienced and dedicated staff team devises a range of interesting lessons, which are very carefully differentiated to meet the individual needs of the students. They deliver them in a sympathetic way, responding to each student in a quiet, positive way, avoiding confronting their more challenging behaviour or attitude. They continually encourage the students to engage with the lesson and are pleased by the positive response when they do. Some students respond very well, for example in media, editing films, trying hard and making good progress. Other students are less willing to engage but staff remain calm, positive and helpful resulting in most students completing their task, despite their initial unwillingness. Some students are more likely to become distracted when the pace of the lesson is slow or the task set lacks challenge. The shorter, more focused lessons are successful in engaging students with very limited attention spans. Students are taught in very small groups or individually. The teaching assistants give consistently good support. Staff are adept at supporting the students through dialogue, praising and rewarding positive behaviour, encouraging respect for the other students and staff. The staff are very good role models. The students' behaviour is satisfactory. Generally, individual students behave well when on their own with staff but some are less well behaved when in groups.

The assessment of students' progress is good. There is a range of effective assessment procedures in use, which give the school a clear picture of the progress each student is making. The parents and carers are given two detailed reports on the progress their children are making and have the opportunity to speak to staff. These reports give a good overview of the student but some subjects lack detail as to what the student has been learning and what they need to do next to improve. The weekly tutorial meeting with students, having set targets for their behaviour, academic and social progress is proving effective. Students score themselves out of ten, which the whole group also score and give verbal feedback. The school complies with the annual review requests from the local authorities placing the students. Two questionnaires from local authorities were very positive about the school.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the students is good. The school has had some considerable success with students attending school who have been absent from school for long periods prior to joining. Most students reported, both in their questionnaire and through informal discussion, that they like the school, they feel safe and the staff are very good at supporting and listening to them when they need it. It is a measure of the school's success in building up the students' self-confidence that the students were willing to talk to a visitor, wanting to show them around the building and even engage them in their latest card trick during break time. Students, some of whom have had considerable difficulties in previous schools, attend lessons, share school meals with the other students, where healthy eating is consistently promoted. They speak enthusiastically about the activities they are to do during the afternoon, which, during the inspection, was boxing at a local specialist club.

During the run up to Christmas the students entertain a group of old people to lunch. They raise money for charity for those less fortunate than themselves. The students' behaviour is satisfactory; they are learning that unacceptable behaviour is not tolerated in the school. The students are aware that bullying is also unacceptable and the school implements its policy effectively. The students know the difference between right and wrong and the staff continually remind them about the simple school rules. The school is working hard to prepare students for their future economic well being outside school. The curriculum and additional visits outside school give the students an understanding of public institutions and services in Britain. The cultural mix of students and staff within the school is welcomed and embraced.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The provision for the welfare, health and safety of the pupils is outstanding. The school has devised and effectively implemented a well thought out range of policies for behaviour, anti-bullying, safeguarding children and safety on visits outside school. The designated persons with responsibility for safeguarding are up-to-date with the current training and all staff have received training. Very detailed risk assessments are carried out for all activities outside school and students are very well supervised. The school is vigilant about fire safety with regular fire drills, maintenance of equipment and a detailed fire risk assessment completed. There are several first aiders on each site and all accidents and incidents are fully recorded. The attendance and admission registers are kept in accordance with the regulations. The school has devised a three-year plan to fulfil its duties under the Disability Discrimination Act 2002.

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school has checked all staff for their suitability to work with children and the information is held on a single central register.

School's premises and accommodation

The premises and accommodation are satisfactory. Currently, lessons are held on two sites, one being the main office site and the other a detached house a short distance away, which will only be used until the end of the summer term 2009. The school has purchased new premises, which are currently being refurbished, and it is hoped that these will be in use for the start of the next academic year.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

Parents, carers and others are provided with a good range of information. There is an attractive brochure, informative website and regular newsletters. Parents are kept well informed and have very regular contact with the school. However they now need more detailed information in the reports.

Procedures for handling complaints

The school has a set of procedures, which meets the regulations.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003.

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- include more detail in the reports about what each student has learnt and what they need to do next to improve
- ensure that the pace of lessons and the task set, sufficiently engage all the students.

Inspection Judgement Recording Form

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education		✓		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		✓		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		✓		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		✓		

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		✓		
The behaviour of pupils			✓	

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils	✓			
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School details

Name of school	Insights Independent School		
DCSF number	307/6339		
Unique reference number	135493		
Type of school	Special		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	2008		
Age range of pupils	10-16		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 13	Girls: 4	Total: 17
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 1	Girls: 0	Total: 1
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 13	Girls: 4	Total: 17
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 1	Girls: 0	Total: 1
Annual fees	£ 30,000 - £44,000		
Address of school	1 Sutherland Road West Ealing London W13 0DX		
Telephone number	020 8997 9722/07961 113771		
Fax number	020 8840 9673		
Email address	Barbaraquartey@intuitionppims.co.uk		
Headteacher	Ms Barbara Quartey		
Proprietor	Insights Education and Social Care Limited		
Reporting inspector	Jill Bainton		
Dates of inspection	15 January 2009		