

Redwood Park School

Wembley Grove, Cosham, Portsmouth, Hampshire, PO6 2RY

Inspection dates 28–29 January 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The new senior management team, together with many new governors, has made a successful start by building on previous strong practice to ensure at least good progress for students.
- Members of the governing body have received training and linked effectively with other schools so that they are able to challenge leaders well.
- Governors have ensured that disadvantaged students achieve as well as, and sometimes better than, other students in English and mathematics.
- Almost all students make good progress in English, mathematics and science. Progress in art and design is outstanding and was above the national average for all students in the most recent examinations.
- Students all gain qualifications by the time they leave Year 11. No students leave the school without a college place, training or employment.
- Parents who responded to the on-line questionnaire agreed that their children make good progress and that they behave well.
- Topics and subjects gain the interests of most students very well. A wide range of additional therapies and experiences supports students' enjoyment of school and their personal development.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The way in which students have opportunities for exciting trips abroad helps prepare them well for their futures.
- Students' behaviour is good and contributes well to their successes. Students work together effectively and often support each other, enjoying their activities.
- Attendance has improved rapidly in the past year showing that students enjoy school.
- Teaching is almost always good with some that is outstanding. Most tasks are matched closely to the individual abilities of different students so that each succeeds and makes good progress.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Accessing the school's provision by students in the two specialist classes for those with autism is not as effective as for other students and, as a result, they do not make quite as much progress as they should.
- The marking of students' work is not always helpful enough in ensuring that students know how they can improve.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed students' learning in 16 lessons, many jointly with the senior leaders. They also listened to some students reading.
- Inspectors spoke to several groups of students about their views.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior and middle leaders, the safeguarding officer and two members of the governing body.
- Discussions by telephone were held with the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority and with a school adviser from Hampshire who is supporting the school.
- The inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at a number of documents. These included the school's own information about students' progress, planning and monitoring documents used to check the school's performance, safeguarding information and students' work.
- The inspectors took account of 25 responses by parents to the Ofsted online survey (Parent View).
- Responses from 30 staff members were also considered.

Inspection team

Denise Morris, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Fiona Robinson

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school caters for students who are supported by a statement of special educational needs for their moderate learning difficulties.
- A few students also have behaviour, social and emotional difficulties, and/or autistic spectrum disorders. There are two specialist classes for students with challenging autism spectrum disorders. Some students with autism are based in the main school,
- Almost all students are of White British heritage and almost all speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium is well above average. This is additional funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after.
- The school receives additional sport funding.
- Additional catch-up funding is provided for students in Year 7.
- There is off-site alternative provision for students in Key Stage 4 at Portsmouth College where they study vocational courses for one day each week.
- Students are not entered early for examinations.
- The headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body and several governors were all appointed to their roles in the past year.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all students with autistic spectrum disorders have access to communication aids so that their progress improves.
- Improve the consistency of marking so that all students know what is expected of them and how they can improve their work.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The new leadership team has made a positive start in its roles and this has resulted in ensuring the school does well. Effective training for teachers has led to teaching that is almost always good across the school. Changes to the curriculum ensure that students have positive attitudes and behave well because of improved social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.
- Leaders, including governors, take regular learning walks so that they are fully aware of how well the school is doing. Staff questionnaires show that they support the new leaders and have a good awareness of students' achievements.
- Good improvement of the curriculum by middle leaders has ensured that provision meets the needs and abilities of almost all students well. As a result, students have an exciting range of activities to motivate and engage them so that they receive a good education. This results in students' strong achievement in literacy and numeracy.
- Leaders set targets for teachers which are closely linked to the progress that students make. As a result, increases in salary are only awarded when teachers meet these targets.
- The rich range of opportunities offered by the curriculum includes visits to other countries, such as to France and Switzerland. This helps students to learn about the world around them and ensures that they work hard to be part of a trip. Students are currently planning with staff for future visits to Russia and Iceland.
- Behaviour is managed well by staff and any incidents are regularly recorded. As a result, behaviour has improved and fixed term exclusions have rapidly reduced. All of these activities promote students' personal development well and contribute effectively to their academic progress and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Activities provided by the school support British values and engage students in preparing for their futures in modern Britain. For example, in Year 10, students have opportunities to develop their work-related skills through attending Portsmouth College for one day each week. Students talked eagerly about aspirations for future jobs. These activities help to improve their attitudes, behaviour and awareness of safety.
- Leaders regularly check students' achievements to make sure that the students are achieving their best. As a result, any student falling behind can be helped to catch up. This ensures that the vast majority of students make the progress expected of them in English and mathematics, and many exceed this.
- Leaders work closely with other schools to ensure that students' achievements are measured correctly. Checking of achievement and behaviour for those who attend college and those on work experience is rigorous and regular.
- The local authority provides good support to the new leadership team by supporting financial planning, undertaking an audit and providing training for governors.
- Students benefit from good careers guidance and most students who spoke to inspectors had a clear idea of what they hoped to do when they leave school.
- Leaders make sure that equality of opportunity is provided for all students through the wide range of activities offered by the curriculum. Positive relationships are a real strength across the school. Students have regular opportunities to learn about different faiths and cultures. This makes sure that there is no discrimination.
- School data show that the vast majority of students achieve well. Additional premium funding for the benefit of disadvantaged students is used well for its purpose. As a result these students achieve as well as other students in the school, benefiting from extra support, resources and opportunities to support their needs.
- Parents who responded to Parent View are very pleased with all aspects of the school and said that their children were making good progress. School staff are overwhelmingly supportive of the new leadership team.
- Sport funding is used well to improve sports skills. For example, students now take part in matches against other similar schools, benefiting from good quality expertise. Year 7 catch-up is used effectively to provide extra support for these students so that they are helped to improve their progress.
- Safeguarding procedures meet current requirements and arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Training to identify students at risk of harm and systems to keep students safe are rigorous. Risk assessments are appropriately used in school and for all external visits.
- Leadership and management are not outstanding because there is more to do to improve provision for the small number of students with autistic spectrum disorders based in the two specialist classes and to

ensure the consistency of marking of students' books.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Many members of the governing body are new to the school and/or their roles. They have worked hard to acquire the support and training required to support and challenge leaders and to hold the school to account effectively. Governors now understand about the quality of teaching and they are fully involved in managing the performance of staff. Governors understand the process of setting targets for teachers and they use targets to ensure that the best teachers are rewarded. Governors know how well students are achieving and are aware of students' good behaviour and high levels of attendance. Members understand the school's performance data and they are rigorous about comparing it with other similar schools. They oversee the school's finances well. They make particularly good use of additional funding for the benefit of students who are entitled to it. As a result, this funding is used well, ensuring that those students for whom it was intended now achieve as well as, or better than, other students in English and mathematics.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Short-term exclusions have decreased this year due to the school's action and regular checks made on behaviour, but the level of exclusions remains above that in similar schools.
- Students' good behaviour is evident in all areas of the school. Students have positive attitudes towards each other and to staff as a result of effective behaviour management and high quality relationships.
- A new approach to managing behaviour has resulted in a calm ethos across the school. The behaviour policy is regularly reviewed to ensure it meets the needs of current students.
- Students told inspectors that they understand about the different forms of bullying. They said that there is some bullying at the school but that it is quickly dealt with by staff. The playground has been successfully developed to provide a space where students can enjoy playing and talking to their friends.
- School staff and parents agree that students behave well. The majority of parents who completed the questionnaire said that behaviour is good at the school and that leaders manage bullying incidents well.
- The personal development of all students, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is effectively promoted through strong support, particularly by teaching assistants.
- Students are aware of right and wrong and draw understanding from the broad religious education programme which has mainly Christian content but includes learning about different world faiths.
- Students' attendance has improved this year and almost all students now attend every day.
- Students are well prepared for their futures through their good achievements, good behaviour, their vocational opportunities and their resulting qualifications.
- Behaviour is not outstanding because just occasionally the more challenging behaviour of students in the two specialist classes disrupts the learning of others.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. There are effective policies and good procedures in place that fully ensure the safety and welfare of students. As a result, students are safe.
- Students fully understand risks and learn how to deal with them. Students told inspectors that they have been made aware of internet safety both at school and at home.
- Leaders ensure that all students are fully aware of risk and know how to deal with it. Students learn about their own personal safety.
- Good quality risk assessments ensure that meeting each student's individual needs is well planned. This ensures students are safe in school and when out and about.
- The behaviour and safety of students during their alternative provision are well monitored.
- Safety is not yet outstanding because although exclusions have decreased they are still higher than in other similar schools.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The vast majority of students make good progress in English and mathematics because teaching is almost always good. This is a result of regular checking of lessons by leaders and extensive training for staff.
- Most teachers have high expectations of students' behaviour and achievement. Questioning is a regular feature of lessons and good questions challenge students to think for themselves to find answers. As a

result, progress in literacy and numeracy is good.

- Reading, writing, mathematics and science are taught well. This is evident in lessons and in school assessment data. Information shows that most students make at least the progress expected in these areas, and often better than expected progress. In Year 8 lesson observed by an inspector, for example, students made excellent progress in reading and spelling because tasks were closely matched to each student's different ability.
- Assessment of students' achievements is regular. School assessment procedures are known and understood by staff, who use them effectively to check how well their students are doing. Excellent assessment was used in Year 9 to match mathematics tasks to the needs of individual students and to plan their next steps.
- Marking of students' work is too variable. There are excellent examples of marking which helps students to move successfully to their next steps. However, not all staff comply with the school's marking policy and occasionally it is difficult for students to understand how they can improve their work or what they need to do next.
- Most students with additional needs receive good quality support from teaching assistants. They also benefit from additional therapies to accelerate their progress. As a result, they achieve as well as other students in the school.
- Provision for some students with autistic spectrum disorders is not quite as effective. In the main school students with autism achieve at least as well as other students. Two classes have been set up to cater for those with more challenging difficulties. As yet, there has not been enough time for staff to take up enough training in the use of communication aids, including symbols, to ensure that this group makes good progress. Leaders have already recognised this and are working to improve all aspects of the provision.
- Students' behaviour is well managed in lessons. A range of rewards is used effectively to ensure that students want to do their best. For example, students can earn a trip out of school through their rewards. This is highly valued.
- The most able students achieve particularly well because they benefit from the excellent skills of staff in subjects such as mathematics, science and art and design. In these subjects students are highly challenged by their tasks and by their homework. As a result, by Year 11, they achieve very well in their GCSE results compared to their low, or very low, starting points.
- Teaching is not yet outstanding because there is more to do to ensure that students in the discrete classes for those with autistic spectrum disorders have better access to communication aids. This includes better access to the use of symbols so that students can make choices and respond to questions independently and in ways that more precisely help them to achieve well.

The achievement of pupils is good

- The attainment of students on entry to Year 7 is well below most other students of this age. Attainment in reading and writing at that age is particularly low. This is due to the students' learning difficulties.
- Whilst at Redwood Park the vast majority make at least good progress in reading, writing and mathematics and start to catch up. Students benefit from a wide range of support and therapies to help them improve their skills.
- Excellent opportunities for students in Year 7 to improve their reading skills ensure that they make rapid progress. They learn about the sounds that letters make and this helps them with their reading. Many regularly take books home and talk to staff about their reading. Students talk eagerly about their favourite authors and they are proud of their improving skills.
- School data, along with students' books, show most students also make at least good progress in science and excellent progress in art and design.
- Learning in both Key Stages 3 and 4 is good because staff are highly trained and know students very well. This ensures that students pay attention in lessons and try hard to please. At Year 11, learning is effectively fostered through Saturday morning classes which almost all attend.
- The achievement of students who attend alternative provision at Portsmouth College for one day a week is good. Students see the relevance of their work and the associated achievements that this brings. Frequent checks are made to ensure students are benefiting from these placements.
- Learning in the two classes for students with autistic spectrum disorders is usually good. At times their learning dips however because they do not have access to appropriate resources such as communication aids or work bays to fully meet their needs. At these times their achievement dips.
- Students usually go into sustained education when they leave the school to acquire more qualifications. A

very few take on work-related opportunities. All of the students who left the school last year found appropriate places.

- Students in Year 11 attained well in their GCSEs and Functional Level examinations in 2014. School predictions are for even better results in 2015. Older students regularly attend Saturday morning classes to help them make the best possible progress.
- The most able students achieve well in their examinations and show a real eagerness to do well in their futures.
- Students who receive additional funding, those who have additional social, emotional or behaviour difficulties and those from ethnic minority backgrounds achieve equally well.
- Students who have additional special educational needs are provided with additional support so that they make the same good progress as their classmates.
- Achievement is not yet outstanding because students with autistic spectrum disorders do not make quite as much progress as other students.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	116628
Local authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	449793

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community Special
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	139
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jeanette Smith
Headteacher	Lynda Butt
Date of previous school inspection	13–14 October 2011
Telephone number	023 92377500
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