

Rednock School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115758
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	357815
Inspection dates	12–13 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Robert Pyner HMI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1412
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	240
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sally Winterbottom
Headteacher	Dave Alexander
Date of previous school inspection	7 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 44 lessons and observed 40 teachers. They held meetings with senior leaders, governors, staff and groups of students. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at progress tracking and performance data, the school development plan, governors' minutes, students' work and numerous policies, guidelines, plans and reviews. The questionnaire responses from 224 parents, 159 students and 36 staff were also analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.



- The extent to which teaching and learning improve the achievement of all groups of students.
- How well teachers use assessment, progress tracking and target setting procedures to support the students' achievement. well teachers use assessment, progress tracking and target setting procedures to support the students' achievement.
- How effectively the curriculum meets the needs and aspirations of all students, including the impact of the specialism, science.
- The effectiveness of governors, senior and middle leaders in bringing about improvement in achievement.

Information about the school

Rednock is larger than the average comprehensive school and serves the town of Dursley and surrounding area. The school was a Building Schools for the Future Pathfinder and occupies a new building which was opened in September 2009. Since 2003, the school has been a specialist science college.

The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is considerably lower than average. Most students are from a White British heritage. The number of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average but the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is similar to the national figure.

The school is an Investor in People organisation and has achieved the Artsmark, International School and Healthy School awards.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Rednock School provides a satisfactory standard of education. The range of curricular opportunities and the care, guidance and support for students are good. The school is rightly proud of its nurturing approach and the success of this can be seen in the good personal development of students across the school. They say they enjoy lessons and take advantage of the increasing opportunities to participate in shaping the direction of the school. Students are polite, articulate and behave well.

Over the last three years, the school has been subject to a complete re-build, taking place on the site of the original school. This meant considerable disruption for the whole school community and, although the outcome has been excellent accommodation, it had the consequence of diverting focused attention from raising achievement. During this time, attainment has remained broadly average but students' progress from their starting points, particularly in English and mathematics, has been weaker. However, the latest tracking data from the school and evidence from lessons show an improvement so that overall progress is satisfactory. The school's specialism in science is a strength and provides a broad range of opportunities for students and effective links with the community.

The headteacher displays a strong commitment to the development of opportunities for students to achieve in all aspects of school life. He is popular with students, staff and parents. The school is in a satisfactory position to accelerate improvement across all aspects of its work because self-evaluation generally demonstrates a clear understanding of the school's strengths. In addition, senior leaders are developing improved systems for tracking students' progress along with strategies for monitoring teaching and learning. However, these processes have yet to result in a sustained improvement in achievement because they are not always consistently applied. Also, they are not always used constantly to support and hold middle leaders and teachers to account. Governors are fully committed to improving achievement. They are satisfactorily involved in accountability procedures, although the information they receive from the school has not led to sufficient challenge resulting in a sustained impact on achievement. ♦

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but variable across the school. There are some models of very effective teaching but in other lessons, the lack of pace and challenge means that some students lose concentration and progress slows. Too often, teachers do not use information about students' prior learning to plan enough challenge into learning activities in order to accelerate progress. Marking is of variable quality. Inspectors did find some examples which provided students with a clear idea of how well they were doing, but there was limited evidence of marking which gave students specific advice on what they needed to do to improve. In addition, the presentation of work by some students is poor and this is not challenged by some teachers in their marking.

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Most parents are happy with their children's experience at the school and feel that it is led and managed well. The school seeks the views of parents and carers through surveys and specific consultations. However, a small minority of parents noted in the inspection questionnaire that communication could be improved.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and improve rates of progress, especially in English and mathematics, by:
 - using assessment information more effectively to plan lessons that take into account prior attainment and the learning needs of individuals and groups
 - ensuring that all lessons display the appropriate pace and effective challenge found in the best teaching in the school
 - ensuring that marking and class assessment procedures are regular and engage students so they know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
- Develop current accountability procedures further at all levels of management, with a prime focus on accelerating the progress made by students. ♦
- Report on the analysis of the progress made by students including key groups at each full governing body meeting so that senior and middle leaders can be held to account in a regular and systematic way.
- Explore and resolve the issues regarding communication with parents to develop support for students.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

The 2010 unvalidated examination results show that students' attainment has remained fairly constant over the last three years, slightly above national figures. However, national averages have increased year on year and so this has meant that, relatively, the gap has closed in the proportion gaining five GCSEs at grades A* to C including English and mathematics and for these individual subjects at the same level. Overall, students perform well in science at GCSE, including the separate subjects of physics, chemistry and biology. Other strongly performing subjects in 2010 were art and design and GCSE business.

Analysis of previous results and lesson observations show variable progress for groups of students including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school has refined its systems for tracking students' progress and made this information more accessible to teachers and support staff. The result of this is that the latest tracking data show improvement for key groups of students compared with 2009/10. This data is also beginning to be used more effectively to target interventions and track the outcomes of these over time.

Most students are keen to do well, respond thoughtfully to adults and other students in lessons and demonstrate good attitudes to learning and behaviour. However, where lessons lack pace and challenge, the learning and progress are weaker. Discussions with

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students show that they feel safe and generally enjoy their lessons. Parents appreciate the safe environment found in the school. Attendance is above average. The school is committed to the students having a voice in the life of the community and the new building has led to good examples of student involvement in the development of procedures, for example the provision of catering facilities. Overall, students have a good understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good, and well supported in the specialist subject, for example through the emphasis of the importance of scientific enquiry to improve the wealth of knowledge.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

There are models of good, and outstanding, teaching in the school. Relationships with students are positive. In effective lessons, teachers use good pace and challenging activities to ensure that students build on their previous learning in a systematic way. Successful activities are sharply matched to the specific needs of groups of students. However, overall, teachers do not use assessment information effectively in their planning. In the main, lesson objectives are too general and do not provide specific challenges to identified groups such as higher attaining students. Consequently, they do not impact sufficiently on learning. There are some effective assessment procedures, for example where teachers use questioning to test understanding or when students work in pairs or

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larger groups. Marking is variable. There were few examples of students being given specific indications of how they can improve their work. ❖❖

The school has been effective in developing an imaginative and innovative curriculum for Year 7 following consultation with parents and staff. This skills-based curriculum forms an important part of the learning experiences for the younger students. Plans are in place to develop this provision for older age groups in order to broaden opportunities for students. An example of this is healthy living and/or CoPE for Year 10 students. Students are involved in cross-curricular links which challenge their thinking and problem-solving skills. During the inspection, a group of Year 8 students were using their understanding and skills making a film as part of an anti-bullying promotion. Activities are developed into extended learning opportunities outside the classroom. The school has been the lead for four diplomas offered within the Stroud district partnership and a wide range of extra-curricular activities are offered. The school is developing a good range of qualifications suitable for the needs of the whole cohort of students. The specialist subject is effective in developing provision, for example with courses on astronomy and environmental science together with separate sciences.

The students receive good care, guidance and support and these are strengths of the school. The vertical tutor groups have been effective in developing support across age groups. There are good integrated systems which support students, for example The Link. Vulnerable students are identified at an early stage and good quality advice and guidance enables them to make confident and well informed choices. However, although systems and interventions are effectively driven by senior leaders, they are not yet consistently well embedded at all levels.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Since he was appointed, the headteacher has worked well to move the school forward. He is well supported by the senior leadership team and middle managers who together have a shared commitment to improvement. Advances have been made across a range of aspects. For example, staffing structures have been developed to include teaching and learning coordinators within subject departments, skills managers and community leaders, all part of an increasing focus on raising achievement. The school is developing a more cohesive approach to tracking students' progress. An assistant headteacher has recently been appointed to make data more accessible to teachers so they can use the resultant information to better plan their lessons and further improve teaching and learning. For the current Year 11 students, indications are that progress measures have improved.

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However, systems are not yet used consistently to support the progress of individuals and groups of students. Moreover, the use of this information by governors, senior and middle leaders has yet to lead to a sustained impact on students' achievement. Governors are well led, supportive and understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They demonstrate a determined commitment to play a full part in the challenge of raising students' achievement in all aspects of school life.

There have been good partnerships developed with other schools and the wider community, particularly through its science specialism and through other subjects, for example masterclasses in mathematics with primary schools. The procedures to ensure the safeguarding of students are good. Policies, procedures and training are subject to regular review to ensure effective compliance with regulations. The school is satisfactory in meeting its duties to promote equality and tackle discrimination. ♦ There are imaginative opportunities for students to contribute to the school and wider community and link this to life in very different societies. For example, work on promoting understanding of sustainable development in Kenya has led to students and a community group working in the school garden to grow similar crops to those found in Africa. ♦

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Sixth form

Students make satisfactory progress overall when their starting points are taken into consideration, although girls' achievement is better than that of boys. The trend in achievement is generally increasing for A levels but declining for AS courses. Aspects of students' personal development are good. They enjoy lessons and work collaboratively, valuing the more mature relationships and ethos of the sixth form. Attendance is good and

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students play a significant part in the school through, for example, the sixth form committee.

Provision in the sixth form is satisfactory overall. There is evidence of some strong teaching, with effective and productive relationships between staff and students. However, this is not the case in all lessons where opportunities for collaborative discussions are sometimes not fully exploited. There is a good range of A level courses but the school acknowledges that these need to extend the choice of more vocational options. Students feel well cared for and staff provide good quality advice. Students who join the sixth form from other schools are well integrated.

The director of the sixth form is well supported by two skills managers, and day-to-day management is good. Leaders have a clear idea of strengths and weaknesses in terms of provision. Self-evaluation, whilst generally accurate, does not focus sufficiently on the progress made by groups and individuals in subjects. Furthermore, development planning does not consistently use focused targets based on achievement which can be used to measure success and monitor improvements.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	3
The quality of provision in the sixth form	3
Leadership and management of the sixth form	3

Views of parents and carers

Most parents are happy with their children's experience at the school. Responses show parents feel strongly that their children enjoy school, are safe and cared for and that they are happy with the standard of teaching. Most parents also feel that the leadership and management of the school are effective. A small minority felt that the school was less effective in helping parents support their child's learning. Furthermore, a few felt that the school should take more account of parental suggestions and concerns and that their children could make better progress. The same proportion noted that the school did not help children to develop healthy lifestyles. The inspection team found that there are issues regarding the rate of progress made by some groups of students and communication with parents, but judged that the school was effective in encouraging healthy lifestyles.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Rednock School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 224 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1412 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	65	29	134	60	17	8	3	1
The school keeps my child safe	75	33	136	61	6	3	1	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	70	31	130	58	18	8	1	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	68	30	126	56	22	10	3	1
The teaching is good at this school	49	22	146	65	12	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	37	17	117	52	54	24	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	29	13	149	67	28	13	1	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	52	23	128	57	19	8	1	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	55	25	128	57	21	9	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	55	25	141	63	16	7	6	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	33	15	132	59	26	12	4	2
The school is led and managed effectively	64	29	129	58	16	7	1	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	68	30	130	58	12	5	2	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



14 January 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of Rednock School, Dursley, GL11 4BY

Thank you for making the inspection team so welcome when we inspected your school recently. Special thanks go to the student guides who helped the inspectors find their way around and to those of you who completed the questionnaire; we found this very useful. We enjoyed talking with all the students we met and found what you had to say very informative and relevant.

This letter is to tell you about our findings. Rednock School provides a satisfactory standard of education. We were impressed by your good behaviour and the quality of your relationships with adults and other students. This was clearly seen during the vertical tutor group sessions. Your attainment at the end of Year 11 and 13 is broadly average; the progress you make is improving and is satisfactory but could be greater. The opportunities you have through the specialist subject of science is a strength of the school. You are cared for and supported well and you told inspectors that you appreciate this. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some that is good and better. Your teachers provide you with a good curriculum that meets your interests and needs, developing independent learning through, for example, the skills-based curriculum.

The headteacher is well respected and he, the senior staff and governors provide clear leadership and management. They recognise that there are aspects of the school that need improvement, and these are the areas the inspection team identified.

- Increase achievement further, especially in English and mathematics, by sharing the good practice found in the school to improve all teaching to that of the best, ensuring that the systems for tracking progress and attainment are used effectively by all teachers to plan lessons which will challenge students and increase rates of progress.
- Develop the systems by which the governors and leaders of the school can monitor the progress you make more effectively and support you when you are not achieving as well as you could.
- Consider ways to improve further the systems for communication with parents.

You too have an important part to play by continuing to work hard, making the most of the good range of opportunities you have at school and attending regularly. I am sure that you will and wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Robert Pyner

Her Majesty's Inspector

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