

Redbridge Community School

Cuckmere Lane, Southampton, SO16 9RJ

Inspection dates 13–14 June 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Redbridge is an exceptional school which is improving the life chances of every one of its students.
- Everything the school does reinforces its commitment to “aspiration, respect, opportunity and excellence”.
- As a result of the determined leadership of the headteacher, strongly supported by his governors and staff team, this is a continuously improving school
- There are high expectations for all. Redbridge does not allow disadvantage to be a barrier to success or an excuse to allow for failure.
- Teaching is outstanding and meets the learning needs of all students.
- Outstanding leadership has had a full impact on an inspirational teaching team to ensure that all students make outstanding progress and achieve the best qualifications.
- Students make exceptional progress in English helped by the range of school initiatives to promote their reading and writing. Progress in mathematics is also very strong.
- Excellent relationships underpin the success of Redbridge. Staff know all students very well and work exceptionally well as a team to do their best for students. As a result, students feel very safe, supported and cared for in this ‘haven of aspiration’.
- Students’ attitudes to learning are exemplary. They behave exceptionally well in lessons and show maturity in a range of leadership roles. Attendance, although improving well, is not yet high enough.
- Students’ confidence is quickly established and developed so that they become keen, independent learners, ready and skilled to move on to the next stage of their education, training or employment.
- The support for the many vulnerable students and those with special educational needs is outstanding.
- A rich and relevant curriculum, including a wealth of activities and after-school clubs, results in a vibrant, active community ethos.
- It is not surprising that, with such a cohesive, highly supportive and aspiring learning environment, all groups of Redbridge students achieve so much more than similar students nationally.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 45 lessons taught by 43 teachers. Seven of these were joint observations with members of the school's senior leadership team.
- Meetings were held with students, the Chair and a member of the Governing Body, and with school staff, including senior and middle leaders.
- Inspectors took account of the school's own surveys of parents and carers, students' views, the 35 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire and the 26 responses to staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation, including samples of students' work, current assessment information, local authority reports, the improvement plans and the ways in which the school assesses how well it is doing.

Inspection team

Mary Hoather, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Fran Ashworth	Additional Inspector
Stephen Williams	Additional Inspector
Mark Warren	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Redbridge is an average-sized secondary school.
- Over half of all students in the school are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children looked after by the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those from service families. This is more than twice the national average. There are no children from service families attending the school.
- The large majority of students are of White British heritage, with a low proportion who speak English as an additional language.
- Over a third of all students have special educational needs. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is over twice the national average and the proportion of those at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school has a small specialist resource provision unit for seven hearing-impaired students.
- Eighteen students in Key Stage 4 attend extended work placements for part of their time, brokered through the Solent Education Business Partnership.
- A very small number of students in Key Stage 3 and 4 attend the local pupil referral unit full time.
- Nine students in Key Stage 4 currently attend the Prince's Trust Fairbridge Programme.
- Students in both Key Stage 3 and 4 attend a range of off-site support services from time to time as needed.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The school had a new headteacher and Chair of the Governing Body in September 2011.
- The school has Leading Edge status, is a specialist sports college and is about to ratify a memorandum of understanding for partnership work with Southampton University.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- In order to consolidate and raise achievement further, strive to improve attendance and to bring it at least in line with national averages.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Students enter Year 7 with levels of attainment well below the national average.
- Standards have risen dramatically since the last inspection, particularly over the last three years. They well surpass government floor standards at Key Stage 4 and are much closer to national averages on most measures. In 2012, over half of all students gained at least five GCSEs at grade A*-C including English and mathematics and in 2013, based on the analysis of present performance, this looks to be at least sustained and likely to be higher.
- The school's now excellent tracking, and ways of identifying how every student needs to improve in each subject, indicate that that current Year 10 are doing even better, and well on track to meet the school's ambitious target of 64% of students securing at least five A*-C passes at GCSE including English and mathematics in 2014.
- As a result of all the excellent systems and support strategies now in place, all groups of students in Key Stage 3 are doing progressively better as each year comes in to the school.
- Students do very well in English literature, French, and art and design, where the majority of top grades are secured.
- Previous weaker outcomes in history, food technology and drama have been rapidly rectified through changes in staffing. History now looks to be securing some of the highest grades for 2013, food technology has improved by nearly 20% and drama 40%.
- The drop in science grades in 2012 was due to a change in curriculum. Inspectors agree with the school that the move to a far better range of GCSE courses will help all students, particularly boys, achieve better qualifications from 2013 onwards.
- The progress of all students from Year 7 to Year 11 is outstanding, and in 2012, Redbridge was nationally recognised as being in the top 10% of all secondary schools for student progress.
- Progress is particularly impressive in English, where in 2012, Redbridge students exceeded the national averages for both expected progress and more than expected progress from the end of Year 6. Tracking indicates that these levels of progress look to improve even further in 2013.
- Progress in mathematics was also well above national averages in 2011. Although it lagged behind that in English in 2012 for the least-able students, current tracking shows a marked improvement for Year 11 in 2013, bringing expected levels of progress for all students back in line with national averages and more students are likely to secure better than expected progress.
- The school enters students early in mathematics in Year 11 when it feels this will help students manage their examination load during the summer term. Early entry does not affect more-able students as they are only entered at the end of Year 11, in order to maximise their chances of securing the highest grades.
- Students eligible for the pupil premium now achieve as well as their peers. As a result of the excellent tracking and targeted interventions on an individual basis, the gap in achievement between these students and others has closed rapidly over the last three years in both English and mathematics. In mathematics particularly, the gap was halved in 2012. The marginal remaining gap in English and mathematics between students eligible for pupil premium and others in school is much smaller than that found nationally.
- Hearing-impaired students and those with other special educational needs are very well supported and achieve well. Tracking shows that, as with pupil premium students, these students are achieving closer to their peers in each successive year group from Year 11 down to 7. Indeed, those in Year 7 and 8, particularly those at action plus, now do better than their peers in achieving the rigorous targets set.
- Year 7 catch-up funding is being used very effectively alongside pupil premium funding for reading recovery and to support a wide range of strategies promoting wider reading and better writing. Three quarters of students are making substantial levels of progress in reading recovery. More students now take books out of the library and enquire about those promoted by staff

through the “i-read” scheme. Literacy initiatives in all classes such as ‘i-spell’ contribute to the high levels of success in English.

- Students achieve very well in the off-site placements and appreciate the wide range of support they receive through the referrals to off-site agencies.
- As this equality in achievement reflects, Redbridge is exemplary in the promotion of equal opportunities for all.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- The quality of teaching is outstanding over time, and reflects an exceptional level of expertise and leadership that continuously improves teaching to meet the needs of all students.
- Teachers are always enthusiastic, often charismatic and at times quite inspirational. Expectations are always high.
- Lessons are well planned, with a variety of interesting and engaging activities.
- The focus on ‘guided learning’ strategies over the last year has had a real impact. It enables those needing more support in all classes to benefit from closer teacher guidance and peer support. Those ready to move on quickly become independent learners and class ‘experts’ who then support others. Students in both key stages have really appreciated this initiative and say it has been central to their improved learning and achievement.
- Because students have been very well trained to take such an active part in their learning, teachers can ‘let go’ and allow students to discover, explore and experiment mainly in very practical ways. Inspectors saw many activities going on in the corridors, school garden and around the site. Students were always impeccably behaved and totally focused on the task in hand.
- All lessons were well planned to focus on the progress of all individuals. Highly skilled teaching checked students’ learning throughout the lesson using a range of strategies such as ‘traffic light’ stickers. Most teachers questioned students in expert ways to further their learning.
- Most lessons constantly referred to the grades or levels to which students were working and usually challenged students to strive to the highest levels for their abilities. As a result, and as students told inspectors, ‘We know where we are and what our challenging targets are.’
- The use of teaching assistants is impressive. As they themselves agree, they have been well trained and now have dedicated time to plan with teachers. The recent ‘pilot case studies’ are really enabling them to explore and refine the best strategies to use in supporting students.
- Marking shows students how to improve their work. The school is currently improving the dialogue between all teachers and students to ensure all comments are followed up by students.
- Most lessons clearly promote students’ literacy through key word spellings and help develop students’ writing by providing good examples of how to set out their work.
- Students take pride in their work. Their presentation and handwriting is generally very good.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are outstanding

- As a result of an ethos based on motivation, aspiration, reward and support, students’ attitudes to learning are exemplary. They arrive punctually to lessons, respond very well to teachers’ excellent classroom management routines and display an exceptional contribution to their own learning. They readily work together in pairs or groups in most lessons and speak out with confidence.
- Students feel very safe in school and know how to keep themselves safe in a variety of contexts. Almost all parents and carers are confident that their children are well looked after, safe and

happy at Redbridge.

- All students appreciate the impact of the steps the school has taken to improve behaviour over the last two years. 'Eduk8', the new on-site support base for about 40 students with extreme behavioural difficulties, has improved the behaviour and attendance of these students, and meant a calmer atmosphere around the school for all. The new 'nurture groups' in Years 8 and 9 similarly have improved the behaviour of a key group of students who previously found the challenges of school and learning too much. There is an isolation room if needed for any persistent offenders but nearly all students prefer to enjoy the learning in their classrooms.
- The wide range of community events keeps students actively engaged during social times. Inspectors saw in the 'Live Lounge' hundreds of students all behaving superbly as they applauded and encouraged their peers' singing performances on stage.
- Student leaders were evident all around the school during the inspection, and students confirm that such leaders, including the prefects and head boy and girl, often 'sort out problems' without staff needing to be involved.
- The students going out on the extended work placements attend regularly, are closely monitored and behave extremely well.
- Bullying has much reduced and is now rare. Students, parents and carers are confident that if it does occur, it is dealt with effectively. All, including staff, agree that the focus on progress throughout the school has had a strong impact on improving behaviour. The move to year group tutoring from mixed-age houses has enabled students to have closer contact with their year 'progress' leaders, resulting in improved behaviour as well as progress. The improved curriculum and focus on literacy engages students, particularly boys, better.
- The raft of changes over the last two years, and the constant evaluation of their impact, have seen exclusion rates fall dramatically.
- The school is doing a great deal to improve attendance. As with progress, attendance in Key Stage 3 is now better, and in Year 7, above average. Overall attendance, however, is still below average, and the numbers still persistently absent, too high. The school accepts attendance is the remaining key issue to address.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The leadership of Redbridge is exceptional. In the two years since his appointment, the headteacher, ably supported since January 2012 by a new senior assistant headteacher, has achieved a staggering amount. This has resulted in improved achievement, improved teaching, better behaviour and more effective engagement with parents and carers. As a result, the school has an outstanding capacity for further improvement.
- Through the effective sharing of an uncompromising, passionate and ambitious vision for the success of all students, based on great empathy for their needs and context, the headteacher has galvanised the staff team to work in unison to do their utmost for students.
- A sophisticated tracking system is now in place to ensure the progress of all students is carefully monitored, interventions put in place and their effectiveness evaluated regularly.
- Inadequate teaching has been eradicated. Teaching is monitored closely and improving through regular department reviews. Best practice is shared through a range of 'school improvement groups' steered by 'lead practitioners'.
- Leadership has been developed extremely well at all levels and clearer lines of accountability are in place for all staff.
- A literacy co-ordinator now oversees the strategies used by all staff teams.
- There are robust performance management procedures and staff performance is clearly linked to pay and progression.
- The curriculum in both key stages has been changed to provide a fuller, more appropriate range

of academic subjects and students have more choice in their pathways at Key Stage 4 and beyond.

- Pupil premium funding and Year 7 catch-up funds have been used highly appropriately.
 - The lively and engaging new website is inspiring to students, celebrates their successes and keeps parents and carers well informed.
 - Students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is outstanding. This is helped by the excellent teaching strategies, advice and guidance, inspirational assemblies, outstanding range of appropriate courses, enrichment and wider community activities. Trips, visits and links such as those with South Africa, and the wide range of business partners broaden students' horizons beyond their local community.
 - The school continues to work hard with parents and carers to involve them in the school and gain their confidence and support. Most of those who responded to the surveys would recommend Redbridge and are very happy with all aspects of their children's education.
 - The school has been ably supported and appropriately challenged by the local authority.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance at Redbridge is strong. Under the leadership of the new Chair, members of the governing body have adopted a much more professional approach to holding the school to account and are very conversant with how well the school is performing when compared to schools nationally. They have a good grasp of the quality of teaching across the school, have bought in the full range of governor services from the local authority and are up to date on all training. Governors have fully reviewed the performance of the headteacher and are instrumental in ensuring that pay increments are directly linked to the quality of teaching and teacher performance. They are now much better informed about all aspects of the school and, through the new curriculum committee, are able to hold the school to account through regular reports from all subject and pastoral teams. Governors are fully aware of the way pupil premium funding is spent and successfully ensure that the systems to keep students safe meet statutory requirements. They regard the memorandum of understanding with Southampton University as an important step in securing a higher education link, alongside all business and community partners, as the school moves towards becoming an academy.
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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	116453
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	411757

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	994
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Matt Atkinson
Headteacher	Jason Ashley
Date of previous school inspection	4 December 2008
Telephone number	023 8077 1381
Fax number	023 8051 0004
Email address	head@redbridge.southampton.sch.uk

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