

# Reddish Hall School

Denstone Road, Reddish, Stockport, Cheshire SK5 6RN

## Inspection dates

22–24 November 2016

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Outstanding</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Outstanding</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school

- Parents speak warmly about the devotion and care that is wrapped around their children to ensure that they thrive and achieve – and they do.
- Great importance is placed on removing barriers to learning so that all pupils can make rapid progress from their starting points.
- A spirit of inclusion and equality pervades the school. Leaders capitalise on positive relationships with staff, parents and all linked professionals.
- Without exception, all pupils spoken to feel safe and happy in school. Many pupils achieve 100% attendance for the first time in their school lives, which has a positive impact on pupils' well-being and outcomes.
- The large majority of pupils make rapid progress once the barriers to learning are removed. This can happen within weeks of starting at Reddish Hall School.
- Specialist provision provides individual pupils with well-planned support that develops their communication, motor and interactional skills, such as listening, turn-taking and sharing. Dog therapy is also used as a calming strategy, for comfort and support.
- Leaders work tirelessly to ensure that pupils and staff feel valued. As a result, there is a calm purposeful atmosphere in the school where everyone works together to achieve their shared vision.

### Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

## **Full report**

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Widen the range of vocational and academic qualifications available for pupils in the new key stage 4 phase, to ensure that all pupils can choose courses which meet their needs, interests and aspirations.
- Create further links with a greater range of local primary and secondary mainstream schools to support the moderation of pupils' work.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Outstanding

- Leaders work as a seamless team providing extremely effective monitoring of the quality of teaching, planning and marking on a regular basis. They ensure that support and training given to staff are appropriate to staff needs. Leaders are strong believers in sharing best practice, both in-house and with other schools within the group.
- Monitoring and evaluation are strengths of the school. Teachers and leaders carry out baseline checks for all new starters to the school. They quickly identify the gaps in the pupils' knowledge, which results in specific, targeted support for all individual pupils. This ensures that all pupils make rapid progress from their starting points.
- Leaders have designed a curriculum that meets the complex individual needs of virtually all pupils attending Reddish Hall School. They focus on pupils' strengths and interests to capture their attention. In doing so, many pupils are engaged in their learning for the first time in their academic careers.
- Leaders have high expectations and aspirations and a profound and well-justified belief that every child and young person can learn and achieve. They are not disappointed.
- Leaders ensure that visits, such as those to London for the European Union Forum and places of interest such as the Imperial War Museum, are part of the enriched curriculum. These trips play a valuable role in improving pupils' confidence and life experiences.
- Leaders encourage pupils to be aspirational about their future through a comprehensive personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme of learning. They have made the necessary connections to provide further independent careers advice for pupils in the newly formed key stage 4.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have invested heavily in ensuring that all staff are knowledgeable and effective in safeguarding pupils. An appropriate safeguarding policy is published on the school website, alongside guidance to help pupils to stay safe online.
- Staff are very well trained and are alert to the dangers and risks that young people face. For example, they have attended 'Prevent' duty training to help them identify pupils who may be at risk of being radicalised. Training to improve teaching and learning is equally strong and, as a consequence, progress for the large majority of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils are proud of their school and value their education. One parent said that her son would come into school on Saturdays and during holidays if he could, he loves it so much.
- Pupils are tolerant of others and respectful of those who may look and act differently from themselves.
- Parents are kept well informed through detailed newsletters and weekly phone calls. This gives parents the reassurance they need. One parent said, 'Days are structured properly to provide pupils with an environment where they feel safe and able to achieve.'
- The new key stage 4 phase provides a range of courses for pupils. Very occasionally, the courses available do not fully meet the needs, aspirations and interests of all pupils. Pupils would benefit from a wider range of vocational and academic courses from which to choose their options.

## **Governance**

- Governors have ensured that the independent school standards are met.
- Governance is outstanding because governors have an intimate knowledge of the school through regular meetings with school leaders. They have the appropriate knowledge, professional experience and skills to monitor and challenge leaders effectively.
- Governors have taken swift action to support school leaders in this rapidly growing school by agreeing to increase levels of staffing. They support requests for staff training and for professional support such as from educational psychologists.
- Governors are fully conversant with the excellent progress made by pupils and are supportive of leaders in their conversion to a new tracking system.
- Governors ensure that effective systems are in place to hold teachers and leaders firmly to account for their performance.
- Recent governor recommendations ensure that staff vetting processes are extremely thorough and timely.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- A thorough, whole-school approach to safeguarding ensures that all pupils are safe.
- Staff are trained appropriately in child protection and know what steps to take to protect pupils if they identify any concerns. They are alert to risks and act swiftly to pass on any concerns they may have.
- Leaders have ensured that all staff have been trained to recognise the signs of radicalisation and child sexual exploitation and understand how to take prompt action to report it.
- Record-keeping for safeguarding and actions taken when issues arise are appropriate. Pupils have absolute trust in members of staff because relationships are very strong.
- The school provides high-quality safeguarding information and guidance to pupils through planned curriculum time and one-to-one conversations.
- Safer recruitment practices are used when appointing new members of staff. Strong systems are in place to make sure that staff and visitors are vetted to be able to work with pupils.
- Proprietors, governors and leaders fulfil their statutory duties very effectively.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

## **Outstanding**

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is consistently highly effective within all subjects and for different key stages. This is because leaders provide staff with opportunities to share good practice both in-house and with other schools within the group. Staff receive high-quality training such as the Outstanding Teaching Programme and individual training needs are well met.

- When pupils join the school, complex needs are assessed and comprehensive individual plans are put in place for them. The school checks on pupils' progress regularly and records how well they are doing in each subject, as well as in their social, personal and behavioural development.
- Many pupils make up for any lost learning in previous schools. They develop very positive learning habits and quickly reach the levels of achievement required to be able to consider if statutory testing at the end of the primary and secondary phases is appropriate.
- Reading in the primary years is highly effective. Pupils are able to break down words because their one-to-one guided reading and phonics games, delivered on a daily basis, are helping them to improve their reading skills. Many of the older pupils at Reddish Hall now choose to read for pleasure. This is largely because leaders have invested heavily in a range of fiction and non-fiction texts in line with pupils' interests.
- A kitchen provides pupils with the opportunity to cook healthy meals. Pupils put forward a persuasive argument about what they would like to cook before they make a democratic vote on whether to cook a main course or cake. On this occasion, cake won the vote.
- Support staff offer the perfect balance between providing too much or too little support to their pupils. This instils confidence and encourages independence. They spot potential problems with pupils, and often defuse a situation before it has time to bubble over.
- Such is the relationship between staff and pupils that a comment by one pupil during a meeting with an inspector epitomised the views of others present: 'We like to work hard here because teachers take time to listen to us.'
- Teachers provide pupils and their parents with detailed feedback, in line with the school's assessment policy, about what to do to improve their work. This consolidates and deepens their understanding of ideas and concepts.
- Workbooks in mathematics and English provide pupils with homework tasks that pupils are keen to complete as they are given a school lottery ticket for every page completed. This is not compulsory due to the complex needs of most pupils; however, the majority of pupils complete the work because they are eager to please staff.
- Teachers have created useful links with other schools in the group to moderate pupils' work. This work could be improved further by creating other links with mainstream primary and secondary schools in the area.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Outstanding

### Personal development and welfare

- A spirit of inclusion and equality pervades the school. Leaders capitalise on positive relationships with staff, parents and all linked professionals.
- E-safety is of paramount importance for all pupils. They know how to stay safe and are actively promoting this in Years 7 to 9 through pupils making T-shirts with logos encouraging internet safety, targeting a teenage audience.
- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Leaders have woven together and delivered a well-planned community curriculum. For

example, first aid training for pupils in Years 7 to 9 delivered some valuable skills and techniques, such as recognising the symptoms and signs of asthma attacks and how to place a casualty in the recovery position.

- Each pupil receives a personal welcome every morning. They choose an activity before the start of the day so that they can settle after what may have been a long trip to school. This is always supervised by the staff that they know well and trust.
- The school provides lots of opportunities for pupils to develop socially and emotionally, and as responsible individuals. For example, pupils are able to experience leadership positions in the school council, or by supporting younger children with their reading.
- Leaders have ensured that safeguarding and safety are clearly signposted around the school for staff and pupils. Posters are helpfully used to direct pupils to the right members of staff. For example, clear posters are displayed alerting pupils to the first aiders in school and what to do in an emergency.
- Impartial careers guidance starts in the PSHE lessons in key stage 2 and builds to careers guidance from external agencies for pupils in all year groups.
- Without exception, all parents enthuse about the school. One parent said that her family has their lives back now that their son attends school full time for the first time in years.
- There is wide-ranging promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in the school which enables pupils to thrive. Pupils reflect on other faiths while visiting different places of worship. This develops their respect for other beliefs and opinions.

## **Behaviour**

- The complex behaviour of most pupils is quickly transformed when they start at Reddish Hall School, so that they are able to learn.
- Leaders have put into place a simple, four-step, easy-to-follow removal process. Pupils respect the system and understand that they could lose the trips that are available on Fridays if they are removed from class. As a result, behaviour logs show that removal incidents have fallen dramatically over the past year.
- All pupils observed were on task. This represents fast progress in pupils' personal behaviour management given that some pupils with complex needs have only been attending school for a few weeks.
- There is a 'calm space' which is always staffed so that pupils know they can take charge of their own behaviour. They can leave a classroom in order to talk to an adult they trust.
- All staff manage challenging behaviour with absolute consistency. Pupils feel secure as they work with different adults.
- Pupils with a history of poor attendance or part-time timetables in previous schools are so keen to come to school that their overall attendance has improved significantly and, as a result, attendance is at least in line with the national average for all schools.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning significantly improve within weeks of arriving in the school. Their behaviour improves so much that they are able to access a wide range of activities, some of which are off site at the local high school or leisure centre.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Outstanding

- All pupils arrive with considerably complex barriers to learning. Information on pupils' achievements shows that pupils' starting points are usually well below those expected.
- Leaders ensure that the curriculum is matched extremely well to the pupils' individual needs so that the majority make progress which is at least in line with other pupils nationally with similar starting points.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities ensures that good practice and recorded evidence are shared between professionals. This evidence is used to inform the fortnightly pupil progress meetings. As a result, teachers adapt their practice so pupils are able to access learning whatever their starting points. Consequently, they make rapid progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils thrive in this setting. They make fast progress from their starting points, sometimes within weeks of starting at the school.
- Pupils benefit from the small classes and positive learning environment. In the lessons observed, pupils understand what they are learning about and are clear about what they need to do to improve.
- Leaders and teachers are quick to identify the additional needs of pupils. They are able to adjust the curriculum or provide additional support on an individual basis so that barriers to learning are removed. Mathematics tuition is used to support one pupil, singing lessons for another. The curriculum is built around individual needs so that every pupil has the opportunity to shine.
- Pupils have a thirst for learning and an interest in reading because the school uses the new library resources to encourage wider reading among pupils. Books are chosen by pupils based on their interests. The inspector listened to a range of pupils read confidently.
- Leaders analyse current pupils' progress across subjects, using half-termly assessments to identify possible gaps in their learning. As a result, teaching and learning is adapted so that pupils in all year groups make rapid progress across a range of subjects.

## School details

Unique reference number	142536
DfE registration number	356/6012
Inspection number	10020876

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Independent special school
School category	Non-association independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 18 with no sixth form provision
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	32
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Acorn Care and Education
Executive principal	Mike Stobart
Chair	Julie Taylor
Headteacher	Christopher Newiss
Annual fees (day pupils)	£33,592
Telephone number	0161 442 1197
Website	<a href="http://www.reddishhallschool.co.uk">www.reddishhallschool.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@reddishhallschool.co.uk">admin@reddishhallschool.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Reddish Hall School is a co-educational school catering for pupils aged 5 to 18 years with complex emotional and educational needs, communication difficulties and challenging behaviour. However, there are no post-16 pupils on roll at present.
- The school website meets requirements.
- The school is part of the Acorn Care and Education Group which has headquarters in Bolton.



- Reddish Hall School is registered for 40 pupils, with the number currently on roll being 32 pupils.
- The school accepted its first pupils in January 2016 after providing taster sessions in December 2015.
- The large majority of students have either an education, health and care plan or a statement of special educational needs.
- No pupils attend any off-site alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed the work of the school across a range of subjects and year groups. Some observations of teaching and learning were undertaken jointly with the deputy headteacher.
- The inspector viewed pupils arriving at and leaving school and during less structured times of the day. Pupils' conduct around the school was also noted.
- The inspector also listened to several pupils of different abilities read.
- A wide range of documents were scrutinised, including the school's policies, records relating to behaviour and attendance, safeguarding records and teachers' performance information. Development planning, self-evaluation documents, minutes of meetings, and records relating to teaching and learning were also considered. During the inspection, detailed consideration was given to policies and practices relating to safeguarding and how the school prepares its pupils for life in modern Britain.
- The inspector considered four responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as one response from a parent on Ofsted's free text service. The inspector also considered the information from three meetings with parents and two telephone calls with representatives from local authorities.
- Meetings were held with the director of education for Acorn Care and Education, the executive principal, headteacher, deputy headteacher, other members of staff and a group of pupils.

## Inspection team

Maggie Parker, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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