

Inspection of Redwood Park Academy

Wembley Grove, Cosham, Portsmouth, Hampshire PO6 2RY

Inspection dates: 19–20 November 2019

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Redwood Park Academy thrive. They are highly motivated to do their very best. Staff are passionate that pupils become successful, proactive members of the community. Pupils develop their confidence, resilience and self-esteem. They realise what they can achieve, and do so, through hard work and determination. Leaders ensure that this is a 'can-do' school. As parents told us, 'This is a nurturing environment, that enables my child to flourish.'

Leaders ensure that the inclusive, supportive ethos runs through the core of the school. The positive relationships between staff and pupils are palpable. Leaders waving pupils off at the end of each day illustrates the relentless positivity they rightly claim is at the heart of their school. Pupils cannot help but smile back.

Pupils behave exceptionally well. Highly skilled, caring staff have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour. They consistently use thoughtful approaches to help pupils to manage their own behaviour effectively. Pupils understand and appreciate this.

Pupils embrace and accept diversity. They understand people's differences. They go out of their way to ensure that everyone is respected and included in the full life of the school. They are kind to each other and bullying is not an issue.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Staff ensure that pupils are extremely well prepared for their adult lives. Teachers begin planning for pupils' transitions into the next stage of education as early as possible. Parents are fully involved. Pupils leave school with meaningful accreditations. These help them to realise their aspirations and succeed in the next stage of their lives. All pupils move onto a relevant, appropriate college course. Staff support pupils fully to be as independent and confident as possible. Pupils learn to access local amenities such as sports centres. They appreciate the opportunities this opens up for them outside of school.

Every pupil follows their own, personalised curriculum. Pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plan targets are cleverly broken down into achievable, yet aspirational, smaller steps. These sit alongside appropriate elements of a full range of curriculum subjects. Pupils' learning is carefully and individually sequenced. This ensures that they reach the targets teachers set and achieve their full potential.

Leaders have successfully created a culture where staff feel valued and supported. Leaders ensure that all staff receive highly effective training. Staff work collaboratively to share expertise. Usefully, specialist knowledge is shared across the school and the trust. As a result, staff are experts at delivering learning in engaging, interesting ways that pupils fully understand.

Promoting effective communication for everyone is a fundamental part of the school. Every pupil has a detailed, useful communication plan. Staff also use a wide range of communication strategies with pupils. This is a consistent strength throughout the school. As a result, pupils' communication is developed extremely well. For many pupils, this is a key to reducing frustrations and increasing their understanding of the world.

Pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary. Staff provide pupils with regular opportunities to build their resilience throughout the curriculum. Pupils try consistently hard to succeed, even when they find things particularly difficult. For example, pupils in a physical education (PE) lesson persevered with getting yoga and gymnastic moves correct, despite their physical difficulties. Older pupils explained articulately how they felt brave enough to put themselves forward for school council and team captain elections.

Pupils are rightly proud of their achievements. Their commitment to their work in outdoor learning is impressive. For example, they attentively grow ingredients which they then make into a variety of dishes. They donate these to a local charity for homeless people. Pupils understand the impact of their work in this enterprise.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that systems for recording any concerns are very robust. Staff are vigilant in ensuring that pupils are safe. Pupils trust staff to help them with any problems. Staff's in-depth knowledge and understanding of pupils enables them to notice if anything is worrying a pupil who has communication difficulties. If staff notice anything, it is noted and dealt with quickly and effectively.

The family link worker knows pupils and their families extremely well. Families value the varied support they receive. Leaders have developed strong relationships with other agencies. They work closely with these agencies to make sure that families receive any extra support as soon as possible.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	143828
Local authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	10111404
Type of school	Special
School category	Academy special sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	142
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mark Mitchell
Headteacher	Alison Beane (Executive Headteacher)
Website	www.redwoodparkacademy.info
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Redwood Park Academy caters for pupils with complex learning difficulties. All pupils have an EHC Plan. The school is part of the Solent Academies Trust, which also has three other special schools in the area.
- The school converted to become an academy on 1 February 2017. In 2016, standards in the school had declined since the previous Ofsted inspection. The local authority asked the Solent Academies Trust to take on the school. The executive headteacher led the school during the transition stage and the current head of school was appointed in September 2016.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We met with the executive headteacher, the head of school and senior leaders. We met with governors, spoke with the chair of the trust and met with the school improvement partner for the trust.
- To look at safeguarding, we spoke to pupils, staff and governors. We looked at a range of records and documentation, including the school's document which contains details of recruitment checks.

- We did deep dives in these subjects: mathematics; communication; PE; and personal, social and health education. In each subject, this included discussions with leaders and teachers, lesson visits with leaders, talking to pupils and looking at their work.
- We spoke to a wide range of staff about pupils' behaviour and observed pupils in the playground, on the field and in the lunch hall. We also observed pupils in breakfast club.
- We spoke to pupils to hear their views. We considered 18 responses to the online questionnaire, Ofsted's Parent View, including free-text responses, and met with a parent. We also considered the views of 46 staff who completed the Ofsted survey.

Inspection team

Maxine McDonald-Taylor, lead inspector Her Majesty's Inspector

Helen Johns Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2019