

Inspection of Red Moor School

Red Moor School, Churchtown Farm, Lanlivery, Cornwall PL30 5BT

Inspection dates: 15 to 17 September 2021

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at Red Moor School. For most, this is a new experience as they arrive at the school having experienced significant disruption to their previous education. This is typically the first time their needs have been met well by a school. Parents are fulsome in their praise for the school and the impact it has had on their children.

Pupils develop very strong, trusting relationships with teachers and other staff, providing a solid base upon which to build. All staff are highly ambitious for pupils and believe that success is possible for all. As a result of this ethos, pupils are happy, safe and ready to learn. They enjoy the wealth of activities open to them, from mountain biking to boxing, chess to music tuition.

The school's caring and expert approach means that pupils' attendance, behaviour and attitudes to learning begin to improve once they join. Pupils state that there is little or no bullying. If it were to occur, they believe staff would be good at dealing with it.

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

Since the school opened in September 2020, the headteacher and other leaders have taken giant steps towards realising their vision of a high-class education for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This is all the more remarkable considering the school opened in the middle of a national pandemic. Staff are driven by the clear moral purpose that pupils, whatever their level of need or educational history, have a right to experience success. In their drive for excellence, leaders demonstrate a clear understanding of the independent school standards (the standards) and their importance.

Governance is strong and the proprietor body, through the regional director, has an excellent understanding of the school. The proprietor provides high levels of both support and constructive challenge to leaders. Leaders respond well to this in their drive for improvement. All the standards are met, and the school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Leaders have created a curriculum that is well planned to allow pupils to succeed. Ambition for pupils who have had disrupted educational histories prior to joining the school shines through this planning. The curriculum provides an adaptable framework for teachers to plan for individual pupils' needs. Accurate use of assessment means that this planning is based on an understanding of what pupils already know and what they need to learn next.

Leaders have rightly put developing pupils' reading at the heart of the curriculum. Pupils arrive at the school with reading abilities well below those typical for their age. The early reading programme helps pupils to catch up as quickly as possible. It is firmly embedded in a coherent English curriculum. All staff see themselves as teachers of reading and they have a good understanding of what makes for effective

phonics teaching. Pupils' motivation to improve their phonics knowledge is clear. Since arriving at Red Moor, many pupils are enjoying reading for the first time. The mathematics curriculum is similarly well constructed and implemented. This means that pupils are catching up quickly on the mathematics learning they have missed in the past.

Pupils experience a very broad education that covers all the required elements outlined in the standards. Academic subjects are combined with a wide-ranging outdoor education curriculum. In some academic subjects, however, curriculum planning is not quite as strong as it is in the highly developed English and mathematics curriculums. As the school enters its second year of operation, leaders are actively reviewing the curriculum to address this.

Pupils and parents are clear that the school has transformed their experience of education. Most pupils join the school with a history of disrupted education, including long periods of very low attendance and/or multiple exclusions. This changes at Red Moor. Over time, pupils begin to attend more often and are excluded less frequently. The need for staff to use restrictive holds for pupils' own safety also declines. In short, the longer pupils are in the school's caring atmosphere, the more they thrive.

The school's outstanding contribution to pupils' personal development is built upon secure, trusting relationships with staff. On top of this, leaders have been determined that the impact of the national pandemic should not interfere with the wide range of character-building activities that pupils can do. The personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum makes a key contribution to pupils' personal development. Relationships and sex education is a strength of the school. For example, pupils discuss with maturity and insight the issue of sexual harassment and the dangers of sharing inappropriate images. In addition, the careers programme is exemplary, and leaders have thought imaginatively about how to facilitate work experience for older pupils in the context of a national pandemic with repeated lockdowns.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong culture of safeguarding. They understand the vulnerabilities that pupils with SEND can have and how these might be affected by the context of living in a largely rural county. Vigilance is the watchword of staff. They build on the positive relationships they have with pupils to develop an acute understanding of signs that a pupil might be at risk. Staff use well-developed professional curiosity to identify and help such pupils. They act promptly and appropriately, challenging other agencies if necessary. The school's safeguarding policy is published on its website.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- The quality of curriculum planning is not as strong in some subjects as it is in others. This means that the high degree of sophistication seen, for example, in the English and mathematics curriculums is not consistently seen elsewhere. As part of their planned curriculum review, leaders should seek to ensure that curriculum planning is strengthened further across the full range of subjects the school offers, so that pupils experience an increasingly coherent and well-sequenced curriculum.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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 are the provider and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

School details

Unique reference number	148038
DfE registration number	908/6010
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10189126
Type of school	Other Independent Special School
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	35
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Acorn Care and Education
Chair	Richard Power
Headteacher	Laura Horne
Annual fees (day pupils)	£46,399.50 to £146,399.50
Telephone number	01726 219472
Website	www.redmoorschool.co.uk
Email address	enquiries@redmoorschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school opened in September 2020, following a pre-registration inspection in July 2020.
- The proprietor, Acorn Care and Education, operates a number of schools across the country. There is also a board of governors, chaired by the regional director, which includes the headteachers of the proprietor's five schools in the south west.
- The vast majority of pupils are boys.
- The school provides education for pupils with an education, health and care plan, specifically for those with cognitive and learning needs; specific learning difficulties; moderate learning difficulties; behavioural, emotional and social development needs; communication and interaction needs; speech, language and communication needs; and autistic spectrum disorder.

Information about this inspection

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

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, assistant headteachers and heads of faculty to discuss all aspects of the school. They also met with the regional director for Acorn Care and Education, who is also the chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors did deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, PSHE and design and technology. These involved talking to leaders and teachers, visiting lessons, talking to pupils and looking at their work.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's safeguarding culture by talking to leaders, other staff and pupils. They also looked at records of the school's safeguarding practice.
- In making their judgements, inspectors took into account the responses to Ofsted's online survey of parents, Parent View, and the findings of the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Stephen Lee, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Non Davies

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 2021