

Redbourn Park School

Grovehill Youth Centre, Stevenage Rise, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire HP2 6BH

Inspection date

22 June 2023

Overall outcome

The school does not meet all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraph 2(1), 2(2)(a), 2(2)(b), 2(2)(h) to 2(2)i, 2A(1)(a), 2A(1)(d) to 2A(1)(g)

- At the previous standard inspection in November 2022, these standards were met. These standards continue to be met.
- Despite previous curriculum plans outlining the key knowledge that leaders want pupils to know, the curriculum documentation was not always helpful for new or inexperienced staff. Leaders have recently reviewed and improved their curriculum plans to ensure the documentation provided gives all staff the necessary information to know what to teach and when.
- Each subject area has clear documentation with associated teaching resources that staff can use in the classroom to support pupil learning. A new phonics scheme, with decodable books, is now in place and supporting pupils with their reading. Staff use these plans to support pupils' learning in the class with growing effectiveness.
- Pupils access appropriate relationships education suited to their age and development. Assemblies and other presentations support pupils to know about consent or the 'pants' rule. Leaders continue to ensure wider experiences and trips support pupils to become independent and grow in confidence.

Paragraph 3(a), 3(e), 3(h)

- The requirements for these independent school standards were not met at the full inspection in November 2022 because staff did not have the subject knowledge to support pupils' learning well. They did not have the skill or understanding to plan learning in small steps. Staff were focused on dealing with behaviour which was not always managed effectively. In addition, the previous curriculum documentation was not helpful to staff to support pupils' learning.
- Leaders have prioritised staff professional development. Recent training focuses on further strategies to support staff to manage behaviour. Staff are continuing to attend training and relevant courses to help them improve their subject knowledge and how to deal with behaviour effectively. In addition, the new curriculum plans are more helpful to

staff in allowing them to choose appropriate resources to use in the classroom. Staff knowledge continues to grow and they have a better understanding of the curriculum or the school's approach to behaviour. This is beginning to positively impact on pupils' behaviour so pupils remain in the classroom for longer periods of time. Pupils, through the areas we explored, can remember what they have learned. The improved classroom environment is allowing pupils to engage with their lessons more effectively than in the previous inspection.

- These standards are now met.

Paragraph 3, 3(c), 3(d)

- Despite the positive work that leaders have completed around the curriculum, there is more work to do. While staff knowledge is growing, there are still instances where classroom time is not used effectively enough to support learning. Staff are only recently building their expertise and getting to grips with the new curriculum plans and how they should be adapted and adjusted around the needs of the pupils.
- While the curriculum documentation overall has improved, the individualised bespoke curriculum that aims to ensure pupils' specific learning needs are supported is not effective as it should be. Sometimes pupils' individual learning targets are not clearly linked to what they are doing in the classroom. Staff are not always taking prior needs or what pupils already know into account. This means pupils are not learning as well as they could do.
- Consequently, these standards are still not met.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Paragraph 5, 5(a) to 5(d)

- At the time of the previous standard inspection, these standards were met.
- Developing pupils' wider development remains a key priority for leaders. The curriculum and wider experiences ensure that pupils learn about, for instance, different laws and how they apply to them. A new personal, social, health and economic curriculum is in place and supporting pupils to build better knowledge in this area than they did before.
- These standards remain met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a) to 7(b)

- These standards were met on the previous inspection.
- In the inspection report, the inspection team noted that leaders did not always record safeguarding actions as rigorously as they should be.
- The proprietor took immediate action to this concern. Now, safeguarding records are fully detailed. They should appropriate and timely actions to concerns. Safeguarding records now support leaders to build accurate pictures of pupils' lives and evaluate the support pupils are getting.
- The safeguarding policy is published clearly on the school's website.

- These standards, therefore, remain met on this inspection.

Paragraph 9, 9(b)

- At the time of the previous standard inspection this standard was not met. This is because, despite having a clear behaviour policy, staff were not dealing with behaviour well enough. Pupils regularly disengaged from their learning and did not concentrate of their studies. A few pupils struggled to manage their emotions.
- Since then, leaders have introduced behaviour support plans. These plans outline important strategies staff need to deal with individual pupils' behaviour needs. Additionally, leaders have ensured that staff training focuses on the important techniques staff need to support pupils to behave well. Leaders are making use of the available space to help pupils access therapy or sensory rooms.
- While some pupils still struggle with their behaviour, leaders' records show a noticeable decline in the most serious incidents. Pupils say they enjoy school life and that staff care about them. This was echoed by the parents who inspectors met on inspection.
- As a result of the improvement in behaviour and increased consistency in how staff apply the school's strategies, this standard is now met.

Paragraph 11, 12, 14 and 16

- On the previous inspection, the above standards were met. The health and safety policy is implemented rigorously. Risk assessments are dynamic and regularly altered to reflect changing circumstances, for instance considering pupils' changing behaviour when out in the community. Fire safety is taken seriously, with staff comprehensively trained and clear procedures in place for evacuation.
- There is suitable supervision of pupils both in class and when out on the playground or in the community.
- These standards, therefore, remain met.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

Paragraph 18(1) to 21(8)

- These standards were met in the November 2022 inspection.
- Leaders have made sure that all the necessary checks on staff, prior to employment, are in place. Relevant individuals are safer recruitment trained.
- Where the school has used supply staff and volunteers, the correct checks had taken place before these individuals start work.
- These standards, therefore, continue to be met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 22 to 29(1)(b)

- On inspection in November 2022, these standards were met.
- Leaders continue to maintain the building suitably well. Leaders ensure that classroom environments are welcoming and looked after to be as inviting for pupils as possible.

There is appropriate space for pupils at lunch and break time to 'let off steam' and be with their friends.

- Leaders have thought carefully about how the premises would be adapted if they were to be granted a material change, for instance suitable changing accommodation for pupils aged 11 and over.
- Toilet facilities are clean and looked after, with appropriately hot water for handwashing.
- These standards continue to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1) to 34(1)(b)

- At the previous inspection, these standards were not met. This is because the proprietor had not ensured that the leadership and management of the school made sure that the independent school standards were met securely and consistently.
- After the inspection, the headteacher left the school. The proprietor stepped into the role as acting headteacher.
- Using support from external consultants, the proprietor quickly put into action changes to the curriculum and how the school deals with behaviour. The proprietor acted with determination, taking on board the issues highlighted in the previous inspection report.
- Working closely with staff leaders' actions are beginning to yield results. Better training for all staff means that they are growing in confidence and competence in how to best support the pupils in the school.
- The proprietor has appointed a new headteacher starting in September 2023. This is adding much needed capacity to monitor and track the improvements to the school's curriculum.
- There is still more work to do to ensure that the curriculum is implemented well and the positive changes in behaviour are sustained and embedded.
- As a result, these standards are still not met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school continues to comply with Schedule 10 of the Equalities Act 2010.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection, as set out in the annex of this report. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

The school now meets the following independent school standards

- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching in the school-
 - 3(a) enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their abilities so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught;
 - 3(e) demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught;
 - 3(h) utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly;

- 9 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor promotes good behaviour amongst pupils by ensuring that-
 - 9(b) the policy is implemented effectively

School details

Unique reference number	148472
DfE registration number	919/6018
Inspection number	10284300

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	Other independent school
School status	Independent special school
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	12
Proprietor	Mr Richard McCabe
Headteacher	Mr Richard McCabe
Annual fees (day pupils)	£52,000
Telephone number	01442601252
Website	www.redbournpark.co.uk
Email address	richard.mccabe@redbournpark.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	15 to 17 November 2022

Information about this school

- Redbourn Park School is an independent day special school.
- The proprietor is currently the acting headteacher until a new headteacher joins the school in September 2023.
- The school is currently owned by the Redbourn Park Group with three directors, two of whom work in the school. One, the acting headteacher, is the proprietor.
- All pupils have an education, health and care plan. Pupils are funded by three local authorities.
- The school uses supply staff where necessary.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

■ Inspection history:

- In November 2022, Ofsted conducted the school's first standard inspection. The school was judged to require improvement. Some of the independent standards were not met.
- An action plan was evaluated in February 2023. It was judged to be not acceptable.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection. In addition, this inspection was asked to consider a material change in the number and age range of pupils attending the school.
- This is the first progress monitoring inspection since the full standard inspection in November 2022. At the standard inspection, the school did not comply with all of the independent school standards.
- This progress monitoring inspection was carried out with no notice.
- The school proposed a change to the age range of its pupils and its maximum number of pupils.
- The school applied to the Department for Education (DfE) to make a 'material change' to its registration. At the DfE's request, we checked whether the school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the DfE decides to approve the change. This part of the inspection was carried out under section 162(44) of the Education Act 2002.
- The outcome of this part of the inspection is: the school is unlikely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material change relating to the school provision is implemented. This is because while the building has clear capacity for the proposed number of pupils, there is still work to do to improve the curriculum for all.
- Inspectors met with the acting headteacher, who is also the proprietor.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their learning. Inspectors looked at pupils' work and records of their learning, including information about pupils' individual needs.
- Inspectors considered a range of documentation, including curriculum plans, behaviour information and training records.
- The lead inspector reviewed the information available on the school's website. He scrutinised safeguarding records. The lead inspector reviewed the single central record of pre-employment checks and other safeguarding documentation.

Inspection team

Damian Loneragan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Charlie Fordham

His Majesty's Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet the following independent school standards

Standards that were not met at the previous inspection and remain un-met at this inspection

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school-
 - 3(c) involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time;
 - 3(d) shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons;

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school-
 - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and

The school now meets the following requirements of the independent school standards

- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching in the school-
 - 3(a) enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their abilities so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught;
 - 3(e) demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught;
 - 3(h) utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly;

- 9 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor promotes good behaviour amongst pupils by ensuring that-
 - 9(b) the policy is implemented effectively

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
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M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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