

Inspection of Red Boots School (National Institute of Conductive Education)

Cannon Hill House, 14 Russell Road, Moseley, Birmingham, West Midlands B13 8RD

Inspection dates: 13 to 15 June 2023

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Outstanding

Does the school meet the independent
school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy school. They attend well, arrive on time and cannot wait to engage with the school day. Pupils are well cared for by adults who understand their individual needs.

Leaders have created a safe, 'can-do' culture where anything is possible. The specialist curriculum is planned with precision, right from the start in early years. It takes into account the specific needs of pupils and is delivered with expertise. Therefore, pupils achieve well academically, physically, socially and emotionally towards their personal targets.

Leaders have high aspirations. Well-planned learning and skilled staff ensure that pupils learn well. Staff are patient and persistent. They make sure that pupils meet challenging goals. Pupils make gains in their basic skills, including in English and mathematics. Reading is prioritised. Pupils read with confidence and fluency.

Pupils' behaviour is exceptional. Kindness and tolerance are at the heart of the school. Pupils thrive as a result. Positive relationships between staff and pupils make this a happy place to learn. Differences are valued and achievements are celebrated.

Staff prepare pupils for independence. Pupils access a range of trips and visits and engage with outside speakers. These experiences equip pupils well for their future.

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

Leaders are aspirational for all pupils. They want all pupils to experience success. Leaders ensure that the specialist curriculum is well planned and considered to promote movement, communication and independence. These opportunities are placed at the heart of pupils' learning experience. The ambitious and challenging aims span the academic, physical, social and emotional development of each pupil.

Staff are highly specialised. All pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Each pupil has an education, health and care plan supporting a range of complex physical and neurological difficulties. A number of pupils use additional equipment to support their mobility and communication. Staff know pupils well and understand their needs. They adapt learning carefully to make sure that it is accessible to all.

Positive learning experiences start in the nursery. Teachers plan activities with precision to support children with their physical development and communication. Children learn songs and rhymes in an immersive, play-based environment. This language-rich environment develops children's readiness for their next phase.

Reading is prioritised. Pupils access regular phonics sessions with sounds reinforced through movement and songs. Pupils read books that match the sounds they are

learning. They read with fluency and confidence. Teachers ask appropriate questions to make sure that pupils understand and remember what they have read.

In English and mathematics, teachers know the important curriculum content and the order in which it needs to be taught. Key learning and skills are regularly revised and practised. Pupils remember what they have been taught exceptionally well as a result. Regular assessment identifies the next steps for pupils and is used to inform their personal plans. This helps pupils to learn well.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Leaders and all staff set high expectations around behaviour. Pupils learn about turn-taking, manners and kindness. Where gentle reminders are needed, pupils respond quickly to the requests of adults. Pupils told inspectors that school makes them happy and helps them to make friends.

Pupils engage in a wide set of experiences beyond the curriculum. Learning is enriched with purposeful trips and visits. Often, these take time to plan to ensure that pupils are well prepared. For example, to help pupils visit a supermarket, teachers created a pretend shop in the classroom. This provided pupils with the skills to visit a local supermarket. Pupils are encouraged to play an active role within their community. They recall these visits with excitement.

Leaders have carefully implemented the relationships and sex education curriculum. Appropriate emphasis is placed upon safe and healthy relationships, safe touch and consent. This is sensitively delivered as part of the specialist programme.

Leaders are considerate of staff's well-being. They make sure that staff are able to access support if required. Staff speak highly of the professional development they receive. Leaders ensure they get appropriate training and expertise to carry out their roles effectively.

Parents and carers say their children have achieved more than they believed would be possible. The work of the school reaches far beyond the child, into the community. As one parent said, 'The school provides a lifeline to support the entire family.'

The proprietor and governors oversee all aspects of the school's performance. They are aware of their statutory responsibilities and ensure that these are met. The school meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 through a detailed accessibility plan.

Leaders' frequent, robust checks on regulatory compliance ensure that the independent school standards are consistently met.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Processes to keep children safe are robust. Staff are appropriately trained in all

aspects of child protection, including abuse and neglect. High levels of staff vigilance mean they are quick to identify when something is not quite right. Concerns are reported quickly, and leaders take swift action.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. They know about online safety, road safety and stranger danger.

The safeguarding policy is written with due regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State. It is published on the school's website.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	103588
DfE registration number	330/6080
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10267591
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	25
Number of part-time pupils	21
Proprietor	David Wood
Headteacher	Fiona Bilsborough
Annual fees (day pupils)	£35,000
Telephone number	0121 449 1569
Website	www.conductive-education.org.uk/children-services/red-boots-school/
Email address	mlewis@conductive-education.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 to 24 May 2019

Information about this school

- Red Boots School (National Institute of Conductive Education) is an independent special school situated in Birmingham. The school offers a specialist curriculum which places conductive education at the centre of its practice.
- The school was last inspected in May 2019, when its overall effectiveness was judged to be outstanding. A new headteacher has been appointed since the last inspection.
- The school offers places to pupils with complex needs, including physical disabilities and communication difficulties. Most pupils attend on a part-time, dual-registered basis. Full-time pupils are placed by a range of local authorities, including Birmingham and Solihull.
- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.

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.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher. Meetings were also held with the chief executive officer, the proprietor and a representative of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, including reading, mathematics, science and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, discussed the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also spoke to leaders and staff about other subjects.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding leads to explore the school's systems and reporting processes. Inspectors also spoke to all staff to understand their knowledge of safeguarding. The school's single central record was checked.
- Inspectors scrutinised a number of key policies, including the curriculum, behaviour, anti-bullying, health and safety and complaints. The lead inspector toured the premises and checked for compliance with the independent school standards. A sample of risk assessments were also reviewed.

- Inspectors spoke with pupils.

Inspection team

Melanie Callaghan-Lewis, lead inspector Ofsted Inspector

Bev Petch Ofsted Inspector

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