

# Reedham Park School

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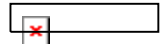
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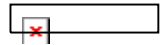
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**Introduction and summary**

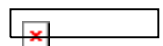


**Purpose and scope of the inspection**



This inspection was carried out by the Office for Standards in Education under Section 163 of the Education Act 2002 in order to advise the Secretary of State for Education and Skills about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

**Information about the school**



Reedham Park School was founded in 1932 by Miss I Routledge MBE who was the headteacher until 1997. The school and traditions which she established so strongly still exist in essence and in spirit. An extended residential property on the outskirts of Purley provides the accommodation for 111 pupils aged from 4 to 11. There are six classes in total, some with pupils from more than one age-group. Pupils in the reception class attend in the mornings only. Pupils come mainly from the local area although some travel considerable distances. About half of the pupils have brothers or sisters in the school and some of the present parents and grandparents attended the school themselves.

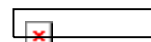
The school aims "to provide a challenging yet supportive environment to stimulate, maintain and develop a lively, enquiring mind." The emphasis is on traditional values, good behaviour and the pupils' development of a positive attitude towards themselves and others. There is a special relationship with the local Roman Catholic church although pupils come from a wide range of faiths. The strong Christian ethos is central to the school's beliefs.

**Summary of main findings**



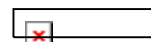
Reedham Park is a well-established, well-organised and efficiently run school. The capable headteacher is managing a programme of gradual change which preserves the strengths of the school's traditions while carefully introducing more varied teaching methods. The school is now well placed to continue its development

### What the school does well



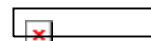
- it provides a broad curriculum clearly focused on literacy and numeracy which enables pupils to achieve high standards by the time they leave;
- it prepares pupils well for secondary education and enables them to gain places at the schools of their choice;
- it cares for its pupils sensitively, encourages very good behaviour and gives good emphasis to moral and social development;
- it introduces pupils to a wide range of European art, music and literature of high quality;
- it has maintained its distinctive traditions which underpin much of its ethos; and
- it takes account of recent developments in education to make improvements under the strong leadership of the present headteacher.

### What the school must do in order to comply with the regulations



- the school meets all the regulations for registration.

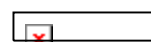
### What the school must do to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2002



In order to comply with the requirements of the DDA, the school should:

- draw up a three-year plan to increase the accessibility of the school premises within the resources that the school can afford.

### Next steps

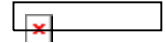


Whilst not required by the regulations, the school should consider the following points for development in order to raise standards further:

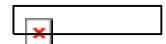
- implement existing policies to provide the right amount of challenge for pupils'

- different abilities;
- include more opportunities for practical and problem solving activities; and
- give pupils more scope to think and learn for themselves.

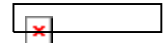
## Compliance with the regulations for registration



### 1. The quality of education provided by the school



#### The quality of the curriculum



The curriculum is broad and covers all the subjects of the National Curriculum (NC) except for information and communication technology (ICT). In addition there are lessons in religious education (RE) and French. The oldest pupils are introduced to Latin, in the context of Roman civilisation, which makes a valuable contribution to their linguistic, historical and cultural understanding. The curriculum places a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy throughout the age range. The school has identified the need to improve its resources so that ICT can be properly introduced into the curriculum and has made sensible plans to do so within the next year.

There is a detailed curriculum statement that makes clear the relationship between the school's schemes of work and the NC programmes of study. There are schemes of work for all subjects. In the two oldest classes there are pupils from more than one year group. Some schemes of work include a two-year rolling programme for these mixed age classes but many do not. These should be reviewed to make sure that pupils who spend more than one year in the same class are given fresh topics to study.

Citizenship and personal, social and health education (PSHE) are taught through several subjects, in assemblies, by inviting visitors and making visits. It would now be helpful to develop a specific PSHE programme of study. Following consultation with parents the school decided not to include sex education in PSHE work.

The reception class follows a programme of work which includes all the areas of learning in the Foundation Stage. The timetable and daily routines should be adapted to give a better balance between these areas. In particular, pupils should be given more regular opportunities to develop physical skills such as balancing, throwing and catching.

Boys and girls are taught separately for games and for design and technology, where the boys do woodwork and the girls do needlework. The school needs to ensure that this division does not prevent pupils from acquiring broadly similar skills and having access to comparable curricular opportunities.

There are some musical and sporting extra-curricular activities for older pupils, who also benefit from visits that enhance their curriculum. Nearly half the parents who completed questionnaires prior to the inspection did not agree that the range of activities is sufficient. Their response is understandable since the home-school agreement signed by parents of pupils across the full age range says that the school will do its best to provide a wide range of such activities.

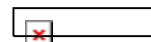
There are detailed policies on the provision for gifted and talented pupils and for those with special educational needs (SEN). These policies are not yet fully implemented, but could provide teachers with useful guidance about how to match tasks more closely to pupils' needs. There are a small number of pupils with SEN. Individual education plans have been drawn up, but targets are not sufficiently specific or measurable. A more systematic approach to the identification of the pupils' needs has recently been introduced.

The curriculum is enriched by the many well-established traditions and routines that punctuate the school year. For example, at the time of the inspection, pupils across the age range had made displays of autumn fruits. The increased wealth and detail in the older pupils' displays showed the progress they had made through repeating this activity year by year. The preparations for the annual pantomime were just beginning, offering all pupils an opportunity to participate in a dramatic and musical performance.

There are strong, well-understood, common approaches to aspects of the curriculum that have been established for many years. For example, a particular style of cursive handwriting is taught consistently throughout the school. The school is also open to new ideas and influences and has drawn upon national materials from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and from the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The new scheme of work in mathematics has established a more balanced programme. It offers good opportunities for the pupils to begin to apply mathematical skills and develop strategies for solving problems.

The traditions of the school often sit comfortably alongside approaches that have been introduced more recently. The target that the school has set itself, to develop more investigative and experimental work in science, could be applied across all subjects. There are, however, sometimes tensions between the old and the new. There are aspects of the schemes of work, for example, the choices of literature and of class readers, and the development of independent writing, that are in need of review.

### **The quality of the teaching and assessment**



Most teaching is of a satisfactory standard and some is good. The quality of teaching is more consistently of a higher standard for the older pupils. Teaching quality is variable for the pupils in Foundation Stage to Year 3 and this should be monitored more closely. In the few lessons which were not successful pupils did not make enough progress.

The school makes good use of staff skills and knowledge and the pupils benefit from these arrangements. For example, the two teachers in Year 4/5 and Year 5/6 swap classes to utilise their strengths in mathematics and English. Teachers mostly have good subject knowledge for the lessons which they teach and this adds to the quality of the learning. They help pupils to acquire new knowledge. In the best lessons there is a frequent reinforcement of the key points in order to check pupils' recall. Key words are often underlined in written work to help pupils recall important facts. There is a strong emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge and this is sometimes at the expense of discussion and opportunities for the pupils to contribute their own ideas. Lessons generally move forward at a good pace and most of the pupils are able to keep up. Some finish quickly and may waste time waiting for other pupils to finish copying from the board before the lesson can proceed.

Teachers make reasonably good use of the limited range of resources. The school is careful in the purchase of new materials. The new maths text-books provide more opportunities for teachers to give pupils work which is better matched to their ability and to allow pupils to work at different rates. This is something which is not currently a feature of the teaching in the school. Pupils are expected to work hard. Standards of presentation are high and work is very neatly organised and recorded. There are many good features in the traditional approach to teaching employed by the school but

these do not often encourage pupils to think and learn for themselves.

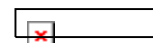
Teachers frequently test pupils' ability to recall facts, but less frequently test their understanding. Assessment of pupils' learning and achievement is beginning to improve. Teachers mark work conscientiously but do not always indicate how improvements are to be made. The school has recently introduced a good system for recording pupils' progress in lessons. Information from tests and assessments is carefully recorded and used to inform reports to parents. It is less well used to identify short-term targets for improvement. The assessment information is beginning to be used by teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching.

Pupils in Year 2 complete the national tests each year. The last three years' results show that almost all the pupils attain the nationally expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics. A very good proportion of pupils attain a standard which is higher than that expected of most seven year olds. Most of the older pupils are successful in the 11+ and other entrance examinations. The national tests which are taken in Year 6 cannot be used in national comparisons of pupil performance as they are taken a few weeks late and not marked by appointed markers. The school is considering participating in the national testing arrangements for Year 6 pupils in 2006.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes

**2. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils**



The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is generally very good, although there are some aspects of multi-cultural awareness that are in need of improvement.

There are short assemblies every day that reflect the school's Christian ethos and once a week there is a longer period of collective worship. These assemblies are carefully planned on a three-year rolling programme to cover a range of spiritual and moral topics. During the inspection the main weekly assembly featured a visit from a Paralympics medal winner who gave the pupils a positive image of the achievements of disabled people, as well as an insight into the determination and dedication needed to compete successfully at this level.

The pupils' behaviour is very good. They are courteous and considerate to each other, to their teachers and to visitors. Throughout the age range they are given responsibilities within their own class. The oldest pupils also take on wider responsibilities throughout the school, for example by helping to look after younger classes at the beginning of the school day.

There is a good citizenship programme. Older pupils have successfully participated in the Croydon Young Citizens Scheme organised jointly by the Metropolitan Police and the London Borough of Croydon. They have also visited the Palace of Westminster and Downing Street and the local member of parliament has come to the school. Pupils of different ages experience democracy for themselves when they elect the captains of their forms and the May Queen.

Pupils are given rich opportunities to appreciate European culture, through literature, art and music of high quality. Art appreciation is a regular feature of assemblies. Important paintings by prominent artists are introduced each week and hung around the hall so that pupils can be reminded of the artists, titles and particular features. A special book, a classic of good literary quality, is shared each holiday by all the families in the school who are asked to read it to their children. Older pupils attend concerts, visit the theatre and take part in the Croydon Music Festival.

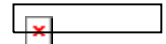
There is a good policy on multi-culturalism and anti-racism, but it is not yet fully implemented. There

is a strong multi-faith element in RE in two classes but in the rest of the school the work relates only to Christianity and incidental opportunities to draw on the diverse religious and cultural backgrounds of pupils are often missed.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes

**3. The welfare, health and safety of the pupils**



The school is aware that particular vigilance in matters of health and safety is necessary because of the constricted nature of the site and the unusual collection of buildings on it. There is a health and safety co-ordinator who carries out risk assessments conscientiously and following any incidents reviews procedures to minimise hazards. For example, it was decided last year that hot drinks should not be taken into classrooms.

The headteacher is a member of the Croydon Area Child Protection Committee Reference Group and has ensured that the school has a clear and detailed child protection policy that is effectively implemented. All teachers are required to sign a form to say that they have read the policy and agree with it. They have all had training in child protection matters.

The school has a good level of fire safety. Emergency lighting has recently been added. Fire drills take place every term and the buildings are evacuated in less than two minutes.

Two members of staff have up-to-date First Aid qualifications and at least one of them is on the premises at all times of the school day. The First Aid procedures are satisfactory in nearly all respects but accidents, including minor accidents, need to be recorded in more detail.

The school has considered ways in which the accommodation can be made more accessible to disabled people, but the proprietor has not yet drawn up a written plan, as required by the DDA.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

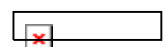
Yes

***What does the school need to do to comply with the DDA?***

In order to comply fully with the requirements of the DDA the school should:

- draw up a three-year plan to increase the accessibility of the school premises within the resources that the school can afford.

**4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff**

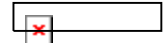


The school is owned by a company, limited by guarantee, which has four directors. There are good, thorough procedures for checking the suitability of all newly appointed staff. All the necessary checks are made on the adults newly employed in the school or who visit for teaching purposes.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes

**5. The suitability of the premises and accommodation**



The school occupies an assortment of original buildings and additions which provides sufficient accommodation for the number of pupils currently attending the school. The classrooms vary in size but space is at a premium in most rooms.

There is generally a lack of storage and display space in classrooms but resources are stored tidily. Tables and chairs for pupils have recently been replaced and are of good quality. Classrooms are clean, tidy and well maintained. Heating and ventilation are not always well regulated despite adequate facilities for both, with some rooms becoming too warm and stuffy. The school hall, which is also a classroom, is used for bringing together the whole school at assembly and other times including for eating packed lunches at midday.

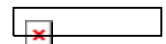
Access passages and walkways are relatively narrow. Steps and sills are occasionally steep and deep, but the pupils and staff are careful when walking around the site. A new surface, designed to minimise the risk of injuries, has recently been installed on the playground which is used for break times and for physical education (PE). The school field provides a good outdoor PE space. Much use is made of the school grounds, especially for nature study.

The Parents' Association (PA) is very active in the physical maintenance of the school. Rotas are organised for essential works. Other building and recurring projects are frequently funded and managed by the PA, such as interior and exterior painting work and the forthcoming cloakroom remodelling.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes

**6. The quality of information for parents and other partners**



The school places a high priority on its relationship with parents. The headteacher and teachers are always available to meet with parents to discuss any issues. The school newsletter keeps parents well informed about current news. There is a good range of general information available for parents. This includes clearly written and informative policies and procedures. The school should do more to make sure that parents and prospective parents are fully aware of the information which is produced.

Parents receive reports twice a year about their children's progress. The reports are based on assessments and tests which have been carried out during the term and at the end of each teaching programme. In Years 4 to 6 these reports are very detailed, informative and clear about pupils' strengths and areas for development. This is not the case in Years 1 to 3 and there should be greater consistency across the school.

The introduction of parents' evenings to give a more formal opportunity for the discussion of pupils'

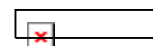


progress is being considered as not all parents make use of the school's 'open door' approach. Although the teachers are always available informally for discussion, and more formally by appointment, the school is aware that some parents would like to have dedicated evenings. Opinion was recently canvassed by the PA and the school intends to explore this further.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes

**7. The effectiveness of the school's procedures for handling complaints**

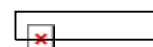


The school has a very detailed and clear complaints procedure which sets out all the stages for informal and formal resolution of complaints. It was recently revised to clarify ambiguities with regard to the formal panel hearing and the keeping of written records.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes

**School details**



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Name of school:	Reedham Park School
DfES ref number:	306/6063
Type of school:	Preparatory
Status:	Independent
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll (full-time pupils):	Boys 39, Girls 59, Total 98
Number on roll (part-time pupils):	Boys 7, Girls 6, Total 13
Annual fees (day pupils):	Full-time £2,280 Part-time £1,980
Address of school:	71A Old Lodge Lane Purley Surrey CR8 4DN
E-mail address:	reedhampark.school@btinternet.com
Telephone number:	0208 660 6357
Fax number:	0208 660 6357
Headteacher:	Ms Louise Shaw
Proprietor:	Reedham Park School Ltd
Lead Inspector:	Mr Peter Way HMI
Dates of inspection:	1 - 4 November 2004

