



Redbridge Community School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number 116453
LEA Southampton

Inspection number 274788
Inspection dates 4 - 5 May 2005
Reporting inspector Faysal Mikdadi

Inspection deemed to have been carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996 according to section 12(3) of the same act.

Type of School	Comprehensive	School address	Cuckmere Lane
School category	Community		Southampton
Age range of pupils	11 - 16		Hampshire
			SO16 9RJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	(02380) 771 381
Number on roll	810	Fax number	(02380) 510 004
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr N Thornton
Date of previous inspection	13-17 September 1999	Headteacher	Mr Richard Schofield

Age group	Published	Reference no.
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Introduction

The inspection was a pilot of the new arrangements for inspection announced by Ofsted in its consultation paper of February 2004. It was carried out with the support and co-operation of the staff of Redbridge Community School and of the local education authority.

The inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Redbridge is a popular Southampton 11 to 16 school with 810 students. Almost all are from white British backgrounds. Most join the school with literacy skills that are well below average with many needing additional support. A small number have hearing impaired educational needs. A significant number of students come from homes experiencing economic hardship and an above average number are eligible for free school meals. The school has Specialist Sports Status.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Redbridge provides outstanding quality education. Whilst the school modestly judges its overall effectiveness to be good, inspectors judge it to be excellent. Students speak very highly of their school and show considerable pride in it. Parents are happy with the provision that the school makes for their children.

Standards on entry to the school are well below average. Many students have difficulties with their use of English, which the school quickly and effectively starts to address. Although standards are below average in both national tests at the end of Year 9 and in the GCSE examinations, students make very good progress in relation to their starting points.

The students' personal development and well-being are outstanding. They receive very good quality teaching, which enables them to learn well although students lack sufficient opportunities to learn independently. They are given outstanding care in a warm and helpful environment. Links with the local community and with outside agencies are excellent. Particularly good use is made of the school's sporting facilities, both by its students and by the local community. The school recognises the need to broaden the curriculum for students in Years 10 and 11 in order to ensure further opportunities for learning. Attendance by older students needs to be improved further.

The school's leadership, management and the evaluation of its main strengths and weaknesses are outstanding. The improvements made over the last few years support the school's and inspectors' view that it has an outstanding capacity for further improvement. The main priority is to ensure that the outstanding practice seen in certain subjects is spread to all subjects. The school achieves very good value for money.

Grade: 1

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop students' skills to work independently.
- Develop a broader curriculum for students in Years 10 and 11.
- Ensure that the outstanding practice in some subjects is fostered in all subjects.
- Continue to improve students' attendance in Years 10 and 11.

Achievement and standards

On entry, students have very low levels of literacy. Their results at the end of Key Stage 3 in national tests for mathematics and science are well below the average for all schools, but better than those in similar schools. English test results showed a marked improvement in 2004, but results in science declined.

GCSE results are below average, but have improved considerably since the last inspection. The percentage of students achieving 5+ A*-C grades increased from 27 per cent in 1999 to 43 per cent in 2004. Considering the well below average standards on entry to the school, results now being achieved represent very good progress. Students do particularly well in some subjects. Standards are very high in art and design and design and technology. Results have been very strong in GNVQ business. Science results were high in 2004. Progress in mathematics is satisfactory. Although below average, mathematics results have improved. Other subjects have also shown good improvement. By Year 11, girls do better than boys in some subjects. Students with special educational needs make very good progress.

Weak literacy skills remain a constraint on progress. Sound skills in using computers help students to complete tasks well. The emphasis placed on developing the skills of leadership, initiative and independent learning is having a very positive effect on student achievement, although students still find it difficult to work independently, especially in completing their homework.

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being

Students' personal development is outstanding. They get on very well with their teachers whose help they value. Students develop very positive attitudes to learning and they enjoy school, which helps them make positive progress. Behaviour is exemplary. The atmosphere at lunch is calm and relaxed. Students are attentive and work carefully and safely. They value the school's systems of rewards and sanctions. They consider fixed term exclusions to be used fairly. Arrangements for monitoring and actively following up absences help reduce the absence rate, although the school recognises the need to achieve further reductions in Years 10 and 11. Permanent exclusions are rare.

Students respond very positively to opportunities for spiritual, moral, social, cultural and physical development. Many show pride in the school's sporting successes and appreciation of cultural visits and activities run. Students develop self-confidence and self-esteem and are well prepared generally for the next stage of education or employment. Older students value the opportunities to take responsibilities. The house system introduced in 2004 has provided

opportunities for students to act as mentors. Students feel they are given a genuine voice and, for example, their suggestions on how to deal with bullying and provide more healthy eating options at lunchtimes have been influential. Students make a very good contribution to the community. They learn increasingly about other cultures and have good opportunities to reflect on the experiences of others. The links established with a high school in South Africa provide an additional, invaluable focus.

Grade: 1

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Inspection evidence supports the school's judgement that teaching is good and often very good. The range of teaching approaches is adapted very well to meet the students' different needs. Students respond enthusiastically to some dynamic and varied teaching and consequently make very good progress. Teachers employ a blend of encouragement, praise and humour to motivate students. Students show clear commitment to their learning and are challenged to do better.

The use of assessment for targeting students has improved since the last inspection and it is now good. The school successfully takes very great care to give students the best opportunities to achieve. Students have a clear understanding of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Careful marking and effective questioning enables the teachers to determine what students know and understand. In several subjects, they are increasingly expected to evaluate their own and others' work. Opportunities for independent work are improving, but the school has already identified the need to build on that further, particularly when learning at home. The assessment and tracking of progress are outstanding for students with learning difficulties, including those with hearing impairment. All teachers and teaching assistants are fully involved in this process, along with outside agencies.

Grade: 2

Curriculum and other activities

Since the last inspection, the school has made good progress in extending the curriculum for students of all ages. A number of programmes have been put in place including an innovative Year 7 course and a range of vocational courses in Years 10 and 11. The school needs to consider further ways of broadening the curriculum in Years 10 and 11 in order to address students of differing abilities.

Following recommendations in the last inspection report, religious education is now taught in Year 11 through a range of conference days on a variety of subjects. A particular strength of the school is the extra-curricular sports provision, expanded by the Specialist Sports College Status. A very high number of students regularly attend these sporting activities. They gain a great deal from participating in ways that contribute significantly to their self-esteem and their experiences of success.

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support

Inspectors agree with the school's evaluation that care, support and guidance are outstanding. Academic progress and personal development are effectively monitored. Where individuals are at risk of not achieving challenging targets, quick intervention is effective. As a result, students achieve or exceed their targets. They feel well supported and have very good relationships with their teachers. Students with special educational needs have clear individual education plans which are well used. All teachers have comprehensive information about standards previously achieved by students and any special needs, so that they can support individuals effectively.

Students feel very well informed about courses when making GCSE choices, choices for employment or further education. They have very good access to careers advice and guidance, which has significantly increased the numbers of students who carry on with their education after they leave school.

The school offers a very high level of care for students. Procedures to promote good behaviour and to counter bullying are very effective. Procedures for health, safety and child protection are clear, well documented and highly effective. The provision of water fountains in corridors and encouragement to students to drink frequently is good. Sixty per cent follow a GCSE course in physical education, which raises awareness of the importance of healthy lifestyles and next year the plans are for all to take a course in the subject with additional time allocated.

Grade: 1

Leadership and management

The headteacher provides outstanding leadership, which has improved provision significantly. His ambitious aspirations and high expectations are shared by an outstanding senior team, a committed and hard working staff and a supportive governing body. The result is a school that makes a great difference to the development of every student. There is evidence of

outstanding leadership in most subjects. This should now be extended to apply to the leadership of all subjects.

Senior managers have an excellent understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses but are modest in their evaluation of the overall effectiveness of the school. Parents and pupils are increasingly involved in surveys and their views are taken on board. The school is particularly effective at monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. The school is successful in assessing the students' achievement and in setting up systems to help them improve their work further. The system for target setting ensures that every student is given clear and equal opportunities to achieve well.

All staff feel valued. They are given clear opportunities to excel. The result is a happy, safe and healthy working staff. Staff turnover is low and the selection and appointment in order to serve students' needs are very good. Resources are managed very well. In particular, the school has been very successful in making the best use of its Sports Specialist Status. Links with other providers and the community are exemplary, particularly in providing alternative curriculum arrangements for students.

The school has moved from strength to strength and is very well placed to improve still further its impressive performance.

Grade: 1

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INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Key to judgements: Grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate.	School Overall	16-19
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OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	*1	*
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	*N/A	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Y	Y/N
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Y	Y/N

ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS

How well do learners achieve?	*2	
The <i>standards</i> reached by learners	4	
How well learners make <i>progress</i> , taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	*1	
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The behaviour of learners	1	
How well learners enjoy their education	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	

THE QUALITY OF PROVISION

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	*2	
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	*2	
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	*1	
How well does the provision promote the well-being of learners?	*1	

Annex A

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	*1	
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Y	Y/N

The extent to which school enables learners to be healthy	Yes/No/NA
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Y
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Y
Learners are taught about sexual health risks	Y
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Y
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	Yes/No/NA
Procedures for Child Protection meet the requirements of <i>Working Together to Safeguard Children</i>	Y
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Y
How well learners enjoy and achieve	Yes/No/NA
Support is given to learners with poor behaviour and attendance	Y
Learners' personal and academic development are monitored	Y
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	Yes/No/NA
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Y
Learners, individually and collectively, are consulted when key decisions affecting them have to be made and their views are listened to	Y
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Y
The extent to which school enables learners to achieve economic well-being	Yes/No/NA
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Y
Learners have opportunities to develop their enterprise and financial skills, and work in teams	Y
Education and training for all learners in 14-19 is co-ordinated to give experience of work-based learning	Y

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Redbridge Community School
Cuckmere Lane
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6 May 2005

Dear Students

We spent two really good days in your school. You were very helpful. You welcomed us and answered a lot of questions. Thank you very much. Your help made it easier for us to find out about your school. We would like to tell you about the main findings from the inspection.

Almost all of you spoke about how proud you are of your school. You said that the teachers were helpful, the headteacher listened to your views and, where possible, acted on them. You also mentioned that many other adults were kind and helpful to you. We agree with all your positive views of the school and we understand why you are rightly so very proud of Redbridge.

Yours is an outstanding school. There are many reasons why; here are a few:

- The teaching is good and often very good. Teachers work very hard to support you so that you make very good progress. They and others also care for you and give you outstanding guidance and advice.
- The headteacher's leadership of the school is outstanding. He is helped and supported by an equally outstanding senior team and a supportive group of governors.
- Your behaviour is outstanding. You are polite, pleasant and courteous. This makes your school a very pleasant place to work in.
- You make a very positive contribution to your school and to your community.

To keep the school working so well and to improve things even more, we have asked your school to:

- Help you learn how to work on your own both in and out of the school. You can help in doing this by making sure that you put aside enough time each day to do your homework properly
- Give students in Years 10 and 11 more choice of subjects to study. You could discuss this in the school council.
- Ensure that students in Years 10 and 11 make a greater effort to come to school every day.

Thank you very much for all your help. We all wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Dr Faysal H Mikdadi
Lead Inspector