

Redbridge High School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104749
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	336358
Inspection dates	11–12 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Terry McKenzie

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	85
Of which number on roll in the sixth form	29
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev M Simmons
Headteacher	Mr Paul Cronin
Date of previous school inspection	January 2007
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Age group	11–19
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 12 lessons and an assembly. Nine teachers were observed and meetings were held with managers, governors and staff. Inspectors looked at the school's work and scrutinised policies, improvements plans and 29 completed parental questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the impact of teaching and assessment on students' achievements
- the impact of the curriculum on promoting future economic well-being
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers in improving the school.

Information about the school

Redbridge gained specialist school status last year, relating to cognition and learning in special educational needs. It educates students with severe learning difficulties and profound and multiple learning difficulties. Many students experience autistic spectrum disorders and behavioural challenges. All have a statement of special educational need. Most enter school at age 11 and continue to 19 although a few leave after Year 11. Redbridge admits students from all districts of Liverpool and some travel for an hour to reach school. Redbridge has the regionally representative cohort of students from minority ethnic groups of around 9%. Four are looked after and more than half are eligible for a free school meal. The school has achieved the Sportsmark and the Gold Artsmark. It has been accredited with Investors in People status and Healthy Schools award. Recent improvements to the accommodation have provided new classrooms and more space for curricular activities.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Redbridge is an outstanding school that provides high quality care and education for students. Enthusiastically supported by parents and carers and staff it is very highly regarded by the local authority. A representative parental comment was 'We are very happy with all aspects of school. Our daughter is happy and thriving.' Students enjoy school, they attend as regularly as their medical conditions allow and they feel very safe. Students receive the support from professionals in and out of school that helps them to maintain exemplary behaviour and outstanding progress. The school's tracking system demonstrates that, from low starting points, consistent gains are made throughout the school and that all groups achieve very well compared to others in similar schools. Consequently, students develop skills in communication and numeracy, prepare superbly for the future and learn how to stay healthy. Despite their difficulties they make excellent contributions to the school and locality. Older students have a highly effective range of work-related learning experiences inside and outside school. Students have high quality social skills, such as respect for each other. Most begin to know about right and wrong, many are successful in managing their own behaviour and they readily observe the code of conduct. Students are sympathetic to each other and provide valuable support by assisting others with mobility.

The outstanding quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Specialist status has encouraged teachers to use assessment information skilfully to understand students' attainments. Consequently, highly focussed targets are devised based upon students' learning needs. However, some equipment is becoming dated and is ready for replacement to enable disabled students to participate even more effectively. The good curriculum is matched well to most students' needs and is effective in helping to improve their basic skills; but there are not yet sufficient curricular pathways to accredit students' efforts.

The school communicates very effectively with parents and carers at every opportunity and this contributes significantly to maintaining good attendance. The senior team has great vision for improving all aspects of school life and is very well supported by a highly skilled and very experienced governing body. Thus, Redbridge is acutely aware of its strengths and weaknesses and it knows how to further improve. Leaders monitor and evaluate the work of the school very effectively and have high ambition for Redbridge. It has an outstanding capacity to improve even further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By 2011 provide older students with more opportunities for accreditation by improving the curriculum.
- By 2011 help students engage even better in lessons by modernising and replacing equipment appropriately.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Students thoroughly enjoy their learning and contribute as well as they can. They pay close attention to staff and respect each other in class. Students take pride in their achievements and complete tasks willingly. Most make very good gains in literacy, numeracy and computer skills. Consequently, they obtain accreditations through the Unit Award Scheme and in the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN). Those in Year 14 also study for City and Guilds vocational qualifications. Because of their learning difficulties students' attainments are not graded but all groups make very good progress and all are fully included in learning.

Students report that they feel very safe in school and this is confirmed by parents' and carers' questionnaires. Students trust the adults to sort out any difficulties that might arise in relationships. Their behaviour is managed expertly and consequently, is of the highest standard. Students are very polite and welcoming to staff, visitors and each other. Many are trained by the school to assist others with mobility and they do this willingly and with pride. Regular exercise is offered as part of the curriculum and some undertake extra physical activity during lunchtimes and after school. Together with the healthy school meals they are, therefore, encouraged to adopt first-rate healthy lifestyles. In lessons, they learn about keeping away from harm and maintaining good health.

Students make excellent contributions to the life of the school. The school council is assertive and representative of their views; it has suggested changes to menus and helped to organise fund raising events. In classes, students willingly accept responsibilities and their interactions with members of the community on trips and visits have resulted in letters of praise to the school. As far as they are able, students participate in projects with other local schools and all parties benefit from these associations.

Students undertake supported work-experience at school and sometimes in the community. They participate in enterprise projects and these experiences contribute to their outstanding development of social and moral education. Visits to cultural centres and places of worship help them to become more familiar with people from different religions and cultures. Redbridge welcomes people from different backgrounds into school for events, such as African drumming.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	*
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is outstanding because teachers know students very well and accurately plan tasks to match their ability. Students' learning has been greatly enhanced through the work undertaken by the school in obtaining specialist status for special educational needs. Teachers are supported by well-trained and skilful classroom assistants who help to maintain students' interest and enthusiasm with a great variety of learning activities in lessons. Teachers are accurate in recording students' achievements and they take careful note of their levels when planning lessons. Thus, students are constantly challenged to meet their individual lesson targets, whilst enjoying outstanding shared experiences.

Younger students follow courses linked to the National Curriculum which is adjusted well to take account of ability. This encourages extremely good progress in lessons. The good curriculum for older students is appropriately designed to develop skills for living and it successfully prepares them for moving on to the next stages of their lives. However, a few of the more-able learners are limited in their choices of accredited courses and cannot, therefore, gain some of the qualifications appropriate to their levels of ability. The extensive work-related learning programme ensures that all gain experience through undertaking enterprise activities and supported work experience. For some, alternative education provision is available away from school, such as in horticultural studies. Exciting assemblies and some lessons are rich in cultural activities, such as music and drama and themes are developed to introduce students to other countries and communities. Opportunities for reflection occur in lessons whilst personal, social and health education provides the support that students require to care for themselves.

The welfare of students is the particular strength of Redbridge. Staff work very closely and effectively with therapists, medical professionals and others, such as

¹The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

welfare officers. Consequently, students are able to spend the maximum time at school and in the classroom. The very effective guidance provided to older students ensures that they receive the best possible advice about moving on to the next stages of their lives. It is remarkable, for example, that all school leavers last year had somewhere to go in education, training or employment.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Since the last inspection senior leaders have improved the quality of learning by raising the status of assessments and encouraging teachers to use them effectively. Leaders scrutinise assessments and planning to ensure that all students have equal opportunities to progress and none are discriminated against. Harassment in any form is not tolerated. Other improvements include the gaining of specialist school status and extending the school accommodation and these have helped teachers to provide better matched courses for students and more interesting lessons. The governing body is extremely enthusiastic and very supportive. Governors are decisive in taking actions to ensure the well-being of students and staff, for example, governors recently used their personal skills to ensure that new building work was undertaken correctly and on time. All policies and procedures are in place to ensure that students are safeguarded and the required checks are carried out on staff. Designated safeguarding staff and some governors have completed much more than the required levels of training and good links are maintained with the local safeguarding body. School managers and governors demonstrate good practice in safeguarding.

The school places great importance on its contribution to the community and reviews this work rigorously. Consequently, as far as they are able, students understand about maintaining the best relations with others, including people from different backgrounds and religions. Contacts are established with other organisations through events, such as attending ceremonies for the Duke of Edinburgh Award. Aspects of the curriculum help students to learn about civic responsibility and respecting the law. Parents and carers engage very effectively with Redbridge and are very well informed about the education and care undertaken with their children during the school day. Teachers make extremely good use of the resources, for example, in using communication and mobility aids to help students to be ready to learn. The school provides outstanding value for money, but some information and communication technology items are out of date and lack effect. For example, some interactive whiteboards are difficult for students with mobility aids to access and the boards are rendered ineffective by shadows.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Sixth form

Throughout the Post 16 provision students receive individualised learning programmes based on their needs. However, the prime focus remains the development of skills in communication and numeracy together with those required for moving on to the next stages of their lives. Outstanding progress is maintained throughout Post 16 as students continue to gain ASDAN qualifications, undertake work related learning and study for a City and Guilds accreditation in horticulture. Post 16 is expertly managed to ensure that all students are very well supported and cared for. Redbridge is highly successful in ensuring that all have an appropriate place to go upon leaving the school.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth Form	1
Taking into account: Outcomes for students in the sixth form	1
The quality of provision in the sixth form	1
Leadership and management of the sixth form	1

Views of parents and carers

Twenty nine parents and carers returned questionnaires and the vast majority agreed with the inspection team that their children enjoy school, are very well cared for and are extremely safe. Many took the trouble to write supportive comments about the staff. One typical comment was 'Redbridge is a happy school, it is a friendly environment and all staff are there for help if needed. My son has improved in all aspects since being at Redbridge.'

A very few returns indicated concerns about progress for students being affected by adverse staffing ratios. However, the inspection found no evidence of this. One or two parents reported that comments in the daily diaries focus on care and support, but provide little information about educational progress. The inspection team agreed with parents and carers to some extent about this and expressed the concern to the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Redbridge High School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 29 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 86 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	19	66	9	31	1	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	22	76	7	24	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	23	79	5	17	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	20	69	7	24	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	23	79	6	21	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	16	55	13	45	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	52	13	45	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	17	59	9	31	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	21	72	6	21	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	62	9	31	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	69	9	31	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	22	76	7	24	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	24	83	5	17	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the students' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well students acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of students.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets students' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which students are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the students' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



15 March 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Redbridge High School, Liverpool, L10 1LW

Thank you for making the inspectors so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you and watching you in your lessons and during assembly.

Redbridge is an outstanding school. You very much enjoy going to school and you attend as much as you are able. You try your best in lessons and make exceptional progress. Your behaviour is very good indeed and you are extremely polite to staff, visitors and to each other.

The teachers and classroom assistants look after you very well. They produce the best possible lessons and provide many interesting things for you to do. The headteacher, other senior leaders and governors are also doing everything that they can to make sure that you get the education and care that you deserve. You have many exciting opportunities outside school and Redbridge works very well with your parents and carers.

The inspectors judge that the school could be even better than it is. For example, by providing more opportunities and choices for those of you older students to gain qualifications and credits to help to prepare you even better for when you leave school. Also, some of the equipment you use is becoming out-of-date and is ready for replacement as quickly as possible to help you with your learning.

We wish you all the best for the future and once again thank you for your help and interest in the inspection.

Yours sincerely,

Terry McKenzie
Lead inspector

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