

# Red Rose School

28-30 North Promenade, St Anne's-on-Sea, Lytham St Annes, Lancashire, FY8 2NQ

**Inspection dates** 5–7 February 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Pupils' achievement	Outstanding	1
Pupils' behaviour and personal development	Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching	Outstanding	1
Quality of curriculum	Outstanding	1
Pupils' welfare, health and safety	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management	Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings

### This school is outstanding because

- Students make excellent progress during their time in the school. Most make greater progress than is typically expected.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good and often outstanding, and is based on excellent planning and the first-rate evaluation of students' work by teachers.
- Teachers have an exceptional knowledge of the needs of each student and provide individual learning tasks which motivate students and challenge them to succeed.
- Students grow rapidly in self-confidence, enjoy their work, and are prepared thoroughly for adult life. Their behaviour is exceptional and they state that they feel safe in school.
- School leaders, teachers and team teachers ensure that the safety and welfare of students are given a high priority. As a result, students describe the school as a family where everyone is valued.
- The school leaders communicate an effective vision of what the school can achieve and ensure that high standards of teaching and student achievement are maintained.

### Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with half a day's notice.
- The inspector observed 10 lessons taught by six different teachers, of which four were joint observations with the headteacher. Discussions were held with members of the school's management team, two groups of students, three parents, the school nurse, and informally with a number of members of staff.
- The inspector checked the school's compliance with the regulations for independent schools. A wide range of school documentation was viewed, including schemes of work and teachers' planning, records of students' progress, examples of students' work, and policy documents.
- The inspector took account of the views expressed in questionnaires from 13 members of staff.

## Inspection team

David Young, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Red Rose School is located in Lytham St Anne's, near Blackpool. It opened in 1997.
- It provides education for boys and girls, aged between five and 16 years, with specific learning difficulties, principally dyslexia and dyspraxia. Many students also have other disabilities and special educational needs, including those on the autistic spectrum, or with behavioural and emotional needs.
- The school has a Christian ethos and aims to provide a learning environment where children can achieve their potential. The school's prospectus refers to 'eagles who can soar above difficulties'.
- There are currently 43 students on roll, the majority of whom are placed by three local authorities and 40 have a statement of special educational needs.
- The headteacher is also the joint proprietor of the school.
- The school was last inspected by Ofsted in November 2009.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that staff expectations for all students continue to be consistently high by:
  - comparing the rates of progress of students in the school with those of students nationally
  - formalising arrangements for the observation of teaching and learning by senior leaders.
- Formalise the checks made and the analysis of data on students' attendance and its impact on achievement.

## Inspection judgements

### Pupils' achievement

### Outstanding

Students' achievement is outstanding. The majority of students enter the school with reading and literacy levels which are well below those expected for their age. Similarly, their skills and understanding in mathematics have not advanced at the expected rate as a result of their various specific learning difficulties. Students mostly make rapid gains in their literacy and numeracy. For example, their literacy levels progress at a rate which enables them to achieve considerable success in external examinations. Many make rapid progress as a result of the precisely targeted learning activities which are provided for them and all achieve external awards through Entry Level certificates in a number of subjects. The strong emphasis in the curriculum on the development of basic skills enables students to make exceptional progress, and also contributes to the confidence needed to tackle a variety of practical and creative subjects. Those who remain in the school until Key Stage 4 continue to sustain their progress. They demonstrate excellent success in adult literacy and numeracy awards at Levels 1 and 2, together with higher grade awards in GCSE examinations, and more recently BTEC, in a number of subjects. Many of these students have had gaps in their previous education and begin to make up lost ground for the first time. As a result of improvements, particularly in their reading, students grow rapidly in confidence and recognise that they are achieving at levels which they had not thought possible. All those students who left the school in summer 2012 continued on to courses in further education, including BTEC and A-level courses.

### Pupils' behaviour and personal development

### Outstanding

The behaviour and personal development of students are outstanding. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is given a high priority. The excellent relationships between staff and students encourage students to overcome anxieties about school which many have experienced previously. Relationships within classrooms are warm, good-humoured and involve all students. Students enjoy school and take an interest in their work. Their very good behaviour has a very positive impact on their learning. Levels of concentration are good during teacher-led activities or when students are working by themselves. Students state that they feel safe in school; they also identify the high levels of personal help which they receive from the staff. As a result, they develop the self-esteem and confidence which enable them to benefit from the opportunities available to them. Although attendance overall is below the national average, there is no unauthorised absence and the school is diligent in its relationships with parents and carers in resolving any concerns. Good attendance by most students makes a positive contribution to their learning, but senior leaders have undertaken only a limited analysis of the extent to which absence has an impact on achievement. Disruptive incidents are rare and are managed and recorded appropriately.

An outstanding feature of students' personal development is the extent of their awareness and involvement in national and global issues. Themes within personal, social and health education (PSHE), including the democratic process, the justice system, and knowledge of local services, help to prepare students for the responsibilities of adult life. A number of students have benefited from opportunities to work with students in other European countries through Comenius projects. Themed events, such as Holocaust week, understanding diversity, and support for a village community in Kenya, enable students to develop mature attitudes to contrasting cultures and lifestyles. During the inspection, powerful and thought-provoking images and music were used in assemblies to enable students to reflect on the issues of slavery and exploitation. Students state that they have good opportunities to express their views, for example through the work of the school council, and that their ideas are taken into account by staff. The use of citizenship points within the school's reward system is valued by students and contributes positively to the sense of community.

**Quality of teaching****Outstanding**

The quality of teaching is outstanding. Lessons are consistently good and regularly outstanding. Teachers demonstrate a high level of commitment to their students and have an excellent knowledge of their individual learning needs. Teachers' planning is based on comprehensive schemes of work and identifies clear learning objectives. Teachers work extremely well together and intervene sensitively to encourage, advise or challenge students to greater achievement. Lessons proceed at a good pace, no time is wasted and students are engaged in effective learning at all times. There is a high level of intellectual challenge in the tasks provided, which takes excellent account of students' different starting points. Staff are particularly adept at reinforcing understanding and responding to areas identified by students for revision as they approach external tests. Lessons are varied and interesting, and students take an active part and strong interest, whether finding new methods to calculate averages in mathematics, writing about their personal feelings and experiences in English or designing graffiti art in a group project.

Teachers use a wide range of stimulating visual resources, including interactive whiteboards and computers, to ensure that learning is interesting and enjoyable. Questioning by teachers challenges students to justify their oral responses, and oral work is consolidated by well-chosen writing activities. Students' work is marked thoroughly and students have a good understanding of what they need to do to improve their work. The school's records of progress in reading, spelling and numeracy provide a particularly clear picture of the extent of students' progress over time. National Curriculum levels are also used effectively to identify successful learning and gaps in students' knowledge and understanding. This information is used very effectively to plan the next stage in learning, but is not consistently recorded in a manner which enables senior leaders to easily evaluate the extent of progress in individual subjects over time. The teachers' thorough knowledge of the varied learning styles and personalities of each student results in high expectations of what they can achieve and ensures that each student is working at a level which ensures success.

**Quality of curriculum****Outstanding**

The quality of the curriculum is outstanding and prepares students extremely well for the challenges and opportunities of adult life. Each teaching group takes account of students' previous levels of learning, their ability to work independently, and their readiness for the challenges of external assessment. A major strength of the organisation of the daily timetable is the emphasis on the development of literacy and numeracy. Excellent account is taken of students' reading levels and the requirements of their statements of special educational needs. Activities in their morning lessons provide them with the time required to build confidence, to work as a group and to develop the skills needed to work independently. Students read individually to teachers who provide a variety of well-chosen books which develop their reading strategies progressively. There are many opportunities for students to talk about their work, to ask questions and to make sure that they understand what they are expected to achieve. All students are provided with high-quality personal support as they make up lost ground in developing their basic skills. The PSHE programme contributes strongly to the class-based curriculum, enabling students to consider themes related, for example, to personal relationships, health education, and personal safety.

The afternoon curriculum provides students with a wide range of subjects and experiences, including practical and creative learning. Students enjoy their work in science, information and communication technology, humanities, expressive arts, and food and design technology. Much work is practical and includes good opportunities to work as teams. Students enjoy the range of sports and games which they take part in each week. Individual strengths are recognised and used to motivate and encourage students to excel. Excellent use is made of visitors, such as religious leaders, the local fire service or the school nurse to contribute to specialised themes, often linked to the PSHE programme. As students progress into Years 10 and 11, good account is taken of their personal interests and their career aspirations. Students opt to study a variety of subjects such as

geography, history, art, food technology or child development to GCSE or BTEC levels. All students have the opportunity to take part in work experience and, for some students, additional work-related learning in sports or catering. Students are proud of the awards they achieve and recognise their value in helping them to prepare for further education and employment. The school places a strong emphasis on national and international awareness. Students speak warmly about the details of these activities and what they have learned from them. The curriculum is particularly successful at broadening horizons for students so that they are ambitious about their future aspirations.

### **Pupils' welfare, health and safety**

### **Outstanding**

The school's arrangements to ensure the safety and welfare of students are outstanding and all requirements are met. Students state that they feel safe in school and they particularly value the high quality of the personal relationships they develop with the staff. Each student is well known as an individual and staff are meticulous in ensuring that their personal needs are met. Policies and procedures for the recruitment of staff and their training in safeguarding are robust and comprehensive. Details of all the required checks on the suitability of staff to work with children are recorded in a suitable single central register. All staff have been trained to the required levels in child protection and implement their responsibilities to a high standard. All policy documents, including those for the management of behaviour and the prevention of bullying, take excellent account of up-to-date statutory guidance and are reviewed on a regular basis. The implementation of school policies and procedures is thorough and consistent. Risk assessments for the premises, for school activities including off-site visits, and for fire safety are rigorous and updated regularly. There is a good emphasis on the development of healthy lifestyles, particularly through themes in the PSHE programme, and students state that they understand how to eat and live healthily. Suitable records are maintained of any incidents, although these are rare, and of the sanctions imposed for any serious incidents.

### **Leadership and management**

### **Outstanding**

The quality of leadership and management is outstanding. Staff have a shared vision, communicated effectively by senior leaders, of how to meet the needs of students with often complex individual needs. Leaders have set high expectations of what can be achieved for students' personal and academic development, and the school is very successful in making this happen. The Principal and headteacher have created an atmosphere within which students feel comfortable in attending school, and relationships between adults and students are based on mutual respect. Staff have high expectations, work hard and place the needs of students at the heart of the school's daily routines. Staff, through their questionnaire responses, demonstrate a high level of agreement with the aims, purposes and quality of what the school provides. School leaders and staff have established high standards in teaching and, as a result, students make sustained improvements in their learning. The school's curriculum is kept under review and is responsive to the changing needs of external partners, such as local colleges. The premises have been refurbished to provide a range of suitable accommodation for teaching, including specialist rooms, and this provides safe and appropriately-sized accommodation for effective learning. The school has established strong and effective partnerships with placing local authorities and with parents and carers which ensure that their views are taken into account in the school's work with individual students. The school prospectus and website provide access to the full range of school policies and information, including details of the complaints procedures. School leaders and staff make good use of mutual lesson observations and discussion about performance to maintain the high quality of teaching and learning. This is not currently organised in a way which ensures regular formal feedback for each teacher by senior managers. Staff act as excellent role models for students and work tirelessly to maintain the sense of community which is highly valued by students. School leaders have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and have identified key areas for improvement. Excellent attention to detail has ensured that policies and procedures are kept up to date and that the school meets all the independent school standards.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	A school which provides an exceptional quality of education and significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 2	Good	A school which provides a high quality of education that exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 3	Adequate	A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of education it provides.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school where minimum requirements are not met and/or the quality of education has serious weaknesses.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	131163
<b>Inspection number</b>	408718
<b>DfE registration number</b>	888/6032

This inspection was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, 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.

<b>Type of school</b>	Day special school
<b>School status</b>	Independent School
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	43
<b>Proprietor</b>	Colin and Sionah Lannen
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sionah Lannen
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 November 2009
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£14,070
<b>Telephone number</b>	01253 720570
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