

The Redway School

Farmborough, Netherfield, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire MK6 4HG

Inspection dates

8 and 20–21 February 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders are ambitious and have a clear vision for the future of the school. Their leadership has led to improvements in the quality of teaching and early years provision.
- Pupils' well-being is at the heart of all that the school does. Pupils are well cared for and looked after. Staff treat pupils with dignity and respect at all times.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding. Staff are well informed and have an excellent understanding of pupils' needs. They use this information to ensure that all pupils are able to access learning.
- Staff support pupils to manage their behaviour. The school provides high-quality therapeutic provision, which contributes positively to pupils' well-being.
- Teaching in the early years is outstanding. Children receive imaginative and carefully personalised support to help them feel secure and enjoy school.
- Pupils make sound progress across the curriculum. They make rapid progress in literacy, their communication skills and their behaviour.
- Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the quality of care and education their children receive.
- Governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, governors do not robustly challenge leaders in all aspects of the school's work. Plans have been implemented to improve this aspect of governors' work.
- The innovative and meaningful 'Redway curriculum' is precisely matched to pupils' individual needs. Leaders' tracking of how well pupils do across this new curriculum is in its infancy. Consequently, leaders do not have a comprehensive overview of how well pupils are doing in all aspects of their learning.
- Students are safe and well supported in the transition department. The 16 to 19 study programmes are individualised for each student and include a variety of opportunities for students to develop their skills.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that recent actions to develop the governing body provide governors with an increased understanding of their responsibilities to hold leaders to account for the school's work
 - continuing to develop ways of assessing the impact that the school has on all aspects of pupils' academic development, including in the transition department, in order to secure outstanding outcomes for pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The Redway School is driven by the strong moral purpose that has been successfully established by school leaders. The senior leadership team works effectively to model high expectations for all staff and pupils at the school.
- Parents are complimentary about the leadership of the school. Parents spoken to, along with those who expressed their views on the Ofsted survey, Parent View, said that they would unreservedly recommend the school to another parent and appreciate the work that the school does to support their children. One parent stated: 'Staff and the headteacher work tirelessly to make sure each child feels included and has a voice, even when they cannot speak.'
- Leaders have established systems for communication throughout the school that are consistent, understood by all and which enable pupils to understand their environment and communicate their needs effectively. Leaders' investment in a therapy team for the school has enhanced the approaches to communication.
- Pupils benefit from a stimulating and innovative curriculum. The 'Redway curriculum' is designed to precisely match pupils' differing needs to their abilities. Leaders' curriculum plans carefully consider what pupils can already do and include the use of therapeutic support to help pupils access learning. As a result, pupils enjoy their work in lessons and make strong progress, both academically as well as socially and emotionally.
- Relationships between staff, pupils and parents are extremely positive and fundamental to the success of the school. Staff have an in-depth understanding of the difficulties that these vulnerable pupils face, which enables them to support pupils' development well.
- Pupils who are eligible for additional support through pupil premium funding have their needs met well. Leaders understand the complex needs of these pupils and have developed interventions to support pupils effectively, for example through music and equine therapy.
- Staff morale is high. Staff speak favourably of school leaders and the high-quality training that they receive. Staff appreciate leaders' open-door policy and feel that their views and ideas are listened to.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is an important part of the school's work. Pupils benefit from a wide range of trips and extra-curricular activities, for example going on residential trips, attending Boccia tournaments and taking part in fundraising activities. These activities help to ensure that pupils are prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders have developed robust systems to assess pupils when they arrive at the school, and are developing ways to track pupils' progress against the stages of the 'Redway curriculum'. However, this system needs further time to embed in order for leaders to secure a comprehensive picture of how well pupils are performing across the school.

Governance of the school

- The governing body makes a strong contribution to the school's work and shares leaders' passion and commitment to meet the needs of all pupils at the school.
- Governors are enthusiastic in their desire to ensure that pupils and staff have access to high-quality resources that contribute positively to pupils' outcomes.
- Governors have a well-developed strategic plan in place to provide clarity about the future direction of the school's leadership, governing body and the roles and responsibilities of governors. Governors have correctly identified that there are some aspects of the school's work that they need to understand further in order to robustly hold leaders to account.
- Governors provide effective support to leaders. They undertake regular visits to the school and liaise with the external agencies involved in supporting pupils at the school. Consequently, governors have an increased understanding of what it is like to be a pupil at the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders ensure that staff are up to date with the latest safeguarding advice and legislation.
- Staff are vigilant and show a deep understanding of the additional risks that pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities may have, for example through medication administration and its associated risks.
- Staff know pupils' needs, for example their medical conditions and intimate care needs, fully. The school's multi-agency work with therapists and social workers combines to help ensure that pupils are not only safe but that they are treated with respect and dignity at all times.
- Pupils confirm that they feel very safe in school. This is echoed through the views of parents who agree that their children are well looked after and cared for at school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teachers and teaching assistants have extremely high expectations for all pupils. They have a detailed knowledge of what pupils know and understand and use this to build on what pupils have already achieved.
- Teaching assistants are highly skilled in helping pupils to access learning and move their learning on. All staff are knowledgeable about the teaching strategies used to meet individual pupils' needs and deliver these effectively.
- Teachers use a wide variety of activities and stimuli to best meet the needs of pupils. For example, teachers choose to use a range of sensory techniques to assist learning for pupils with sensory processing difficulties. They also capture pupils' interests through movement and sound. As a result, pupils enjoy their lessons and are eager to learn.
- Communication is fundamental to the highly successful teaching and learning seen

across the school. Staff use signing, pictures, symbols and other communication tools in order to facilitate pupils' access to the curriculum. Consequently, pupils are able to engage in learning activities independently.

- Leaders have ensured that pupils' wide-ranging and complex needs are supported by additional therapists such as speech and language therapists, physiotherapists and occupational therapists. Teamwork throughout the school is very strong. Therapists and teachers work very effectively together to ensure that all aspects of pupil development are incorporated into the curriculum.
- Teaching promotes pupils' confidence and life skills. Pupils are encouraged to take part in a range of activities to develop their independence over time. For example, by learning how to pay for items in the school café and preparing healthy meals, pupils are learning how to live as independently as possible in the community.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Parents and staff feel that pupils are safe and well looked after in school. Leaders prioritise pupils' welfare and safety at all times. Staff are alert to any change in a pupil's behaviour or medical condition. Pupils receive high-quality care and attention.
- The extremely positive relationships between pupils and staff reinforce the culture and ethos of the school. Staff intervene effectively when pupils' behaviour is challenging, and support them well to develop their self-regulation skills.
- Staff work very effectively with social workers, the community nursing team and a range of therapists to ensure that pupils and their families receive the assistance they need, both inside and outside of school. This helps pupils to become successful learners.
- Pupils are encouraged to participate in a range of social settings. They spend a large amount of time accessing the local community and have led a number of fundraising events. This supports pupils to develop their social skills and become integrated members of the local community.
- Pupils express a joy and fascination in learning about themselves and others around them. Pupils respond positively to external stimuli and when interacting with others.
- A number of pupils at the school have life-limiting conditions. Helpfully, leaders provide extensive support to families, staff and pupils in managing these extremely difficult life events. A range of speakers are invited into school to provide information on particular medical conditions and the complications that are associated with them. A team of health professionals is also available for families, staff and pupils to speak with during difficult times.
- Pupils state that they feel safe in the school and feel that bullying is not an issue. While they acknowledge that very occasionally unkind behaviour does occur, they are confident that adults act promptly to resolve any issues. All pupils spoken to by inspectors knew who to go to in the school should they have any worries or concerns.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Given pupils' complex needs and their varying starting points, their conduct and self-discipline is highly developed.
- Positive handling plans are used very effectively to prevent incidents of challenging behaviour occurring, by identifying triggers for pupils and providing clear strategies for staff to use in high-risk situations. Because of this, low-level disruption in classrooms is rare and dealt with in a low-key, effective manner.
- The school is extremely successful in improving pupils' behaviour, particularly for those pupils who have complex behavioural needs. Both the frequency and/or intensity of pupils' behaviour reduces dramatically over time. This is because of the enhanced provision in place to support pupils in managing their own behaviour.
- Although pupils' attendance is below that seen nationally for special schools, it is improving. A number of pupils have complex medical needs which involve them staying in hospital for prolonged periods. Leaders ensure that these pupils have access to education wherever possible and provide extensive support for them to reintegrate back into school.
- Leaders work hard to ensure that all pupils attend school. Staff celebrate good attendance and liaise regularly with parents and carers to ensure that pupils are safe when not in school. Because of this work, there are marked improvements in the attendance of pupils who have previously had high levels of absence.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Outcomes are good because most pupils make strong progress from their different starting points, particularly in their communication skills. Photographic evidence of pupils' progress and scrutiny of pupils' work confirm this.
- Pupils enter the school with attainment below that expected for their age. The effective use of assessment means that staff quickly gain a clear picture of where pupils' strengths and weaknesses lie. They use this information to plan individualised curriculums that meet pupils' varied needs.
- Because of pupils' complex needs, most pupils make very small steps of progress in reading, writing and mathematics over time. However, for most pupils, these small steps represent good progress when viewed alongside their low starting points and profound and multiple learning needs.
- All pupils have individual learning profiles which outline their needs. These learning plans outline pupils' needs across all areas of learning as well as their health, medical and care requirements. Leaders have developed this well-organised system and they ensure that these plans are frequently adapted and adjusted as pupils progress.
- Leaders' tracking of the progress pupils make has been developed since the previous inspection. Leaders can clearly demonstrate pupils' progress in communication skills, but have only recently begun the process of developing tracking systems to evidence the progress made in other areas of the curriculum. Consequently, leaders do not have a comprehensive overview of the progress pupils make in all aspects of their learning.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the early years is outstanding. This is because teachers and teaching assistants know children well and plan activities that are precisely matched to children's individual needs.
- Literacy and numeracy skills are very well developed from an early stage. During the inspection, a group of children were involved in a number of activities centred on the story of 'The Three Little Pigs'. Because of the way that learning was organised, most-able pupils were expected to mark-make independently, while other children were given varying support to access appropriate sensory activities. Consequently, all children were highly engaged in their learning, experienced success and made excellent progress.
- The early years department supports children who have a wide range of SEN and/or disabilities. The highly nurturing and specialised support offered by staff helps children and their families adjust to the routines of attending school.
- Staff are highly skilled at engaging children in their learning through the use of a variety of communication strategies. Questioning from staff helps children to develop their communication skills quickly and deepens children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them.
- The leader for the early years has an in-depth knowledge of how well children are doing across the curriculum. She uses this knowledge to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum in the early years and adapts it where necessary. As a result, the curriculum meets the needs of all children well.
- Children are safe in the early years phase. Their pastoral and medical needs are met well by staff, who ensure that every child's well-being is given the highest priority. Because of this, children thrive and quickly begin to make outstanding progress from their starting points.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Leadership of the transition department is good. There is a clear vision and commitment to provide students with the skills they need in order for them to become fully integrated members of society.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are ambitious for students. They have high expectations of themselves and for the subject areas that they teach. Teachers plan and personalise learning to meet the needs of most students. As a result, students make good progress while in the department.
- Students have a range of opportunities to engage with the local community and access suitable work-related learning initiatives. For example, students currently attend the local farm, work in the school café and produce a range of goods to sell to the community through the school's enterprise projects. Students appreciate these experiences, which contribute positively to the development of students' independence skills.
- Staff work closely and successfully with students to help them to identify their next

steps in education. As a result, a number of students go on to supported further education or local authority provision.

- Leaders have been actively refining and moderating the curriculum in order to create study programmes that are meaningful and relevant for students. Although these changes are in students' best interests, further development is needed to ensure that study programmes build on students' prior attainment.

School details

Unique reference number	110592
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	10012616

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	2 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	171
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Rowlands
Headteacher	Ruth Sylvester
Telephone number	01908 206 400
Website	www.theredway.net
Email address	info@theredway.net
Date of previous inspection	16–17 May 2013

Information about this school

- The Redway School provides education for pupils who have severe and profound multiple learning difficulties. There are also an increasing number of pupils who have autism. Some pupils also have complex medical conditions and end of life care plans.
- All pupils have an education, health and care plan or statement of special educational needs.
- There are more boys than girls at the school.
- Almost all pupils stay at the school until the end of Year 14. Students in the sixth form attend community learning initiatives and college courses as part of their provision.
- Due to the nature of the severe and complex learning difficulties of pupils, formal assessments are rarely appropriate.
- The school does not use any alternative provision for pupils.
- Pupils are organised into class groups based on their age, area of need and

compatibility with their peers.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection began as a one-day Section 8 inspection. During that inspection, the lead inspector had concerns about the effectiveness of leadership and management and safeguarding. The inspection was converted to a full Section 5 inspection that took place 12 days later.
- Inspectors observed teaching and learning over the three days of the inspection. They also spoke to pupils and examined pupils' progress through photographic journals. Lessons were jointly visited with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with pupils, senior leaders, governors and representatives of the local authority. Parents were spoken to informally.
- Inspectors took account of 41 responses recorded on Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including free-text responses, and considered 45 responses to the online staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors examined documents relating to governance, the school's self-evaluation, school improvement planning, pupils' progress, attendance, behaviour, the curriculum and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Emma Sanderson, lead inspector (20–21 February)	Her Majesty's Inspector
Liz Bowes, lead inspector (8 February)	Ofsted Inspector
Hilary Goddard (8 February)	Ofsted Inspector

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