

Redland Green

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	130914
Local Authority	Bristol City of
Inspection number	360153
Inspection dates	14–15 September 2010
Reporting inspector	Mary Massey HMI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	949
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Annemieke Waite
Headteacher	Sarah Baker
Date of previous school inspection	21 May 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. The team observed 34 teachers and parts of 36 lessons. Inspectors held meetings with governors, senior leaders, teachers, non-teaching staff and groups of students. They observed the school's work, and looked at documents including the school's planning and monitoring records, 209 parental, 65 staff and 150 student questionnaires.

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

- the degree to which teaching and learning consistently meet the needs of all learners, particularly the most able and the most vulnerable
- how well the school manages and provides for those students with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties
- the effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers
- the degree to which all staff understand their role in driving improvement.

Information about the school

Redland Green is an average-sized school which opened in 2006 and moved to a new site in 2007. About 180 students have joined each year and the oldest students have just entered Year 11, so the school is now at full capacity. The school is in a hard federation with the Redland Green 16–19 centre, which shares the same site, governing body, headteacher and staff. A secondary special school, Claremont School, which caters for students with profound and multiple learning difficulties, is located on the same site but subject to a separate inspection.

Redland Green draws students from a very small catchment area where the proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is very low, as is the number who are at an early stage of learning English. About a fifth of the students come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds.

The school has about twice as many students with a statement of special educational needs as are found nationally. About four out of ten of these students are on the autistic spectrum with accompanying speech and language difficulties. Overall, the proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average. About one fifth each have a specific learning difficulty, autistic spectrum disorder or behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. A few students have hearing or visual impairment or a physical disability.

The school gained specialist science status in September 2010.

This inspection was coordinated with the inspection of Redland Green 16–19.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Redland Green is a good school that has grown since it opened in 2006, and with the entry of Year 7 this autumn, has now achieved a full roll. The senior leaders and governing body have managed the challenge of this steady expansion well. They have ensured that the curriculum and the student support and management systems have developed effectively to meet the needs of increased numbers of students and staff, although the systems for involving parents and carers and the wider community in the school's development have not kept pace.

Students enter the school with above average standards, and this high attainment is maintained as they move through the school. Although the amount of progress students make in lessons is variable, test results show that they make good progress over time, so their overall achievement is outstanding. The quality of teaching overall is good, but there are still not enough lessons that are outstanding, and too many that are satisfactory. A few lessons are planned very creatively and questioning is stimulating and open-ended. Students then contribute energetically and enthusiastically, deepening their understanding of the subject, and developing skills and a love of learning that will serve them well beyond Year 11. However, progress is slower in too many lessons because there is too much teacher talk with too little focus on the quality and depth of students' learning, and too much focus on meeting examination grade criteria. In such lessons, students are not provided with enough challenge, particularly those who are more able. The curriculum is broad and balanced. Although it provides a strongly academic programme for more able students, it is also sufficiently flexible and wide-ranging to ensure that it meets the needs of those with a variety of interests, aspirations and abilities.

The atmosphere in school is calm and purposeful. Students are friendly and articulate and say they enjoy school, and attendance rates are high. They describe the school as multicultural and tolerant. They feel very safe and understand how to assess risk, including aspects of e-safety, and are confident that the very few instances of bullying are dealt with effectively. The new system of mixed-age mentoring groups is encouraging supportive relationships between students of different year groups. Although students say there are many members of staff they could talk to if they had a problem, the heads of house in particular are valued because they listen to their concerns, and are approachable and understanding. Students do not feel, however, that their opinions and concerns are taken into account enough by senior managers, and would like to be able to contribute more to the school's development, especially through the school council.

Leaders and managers have an ambitious vision for the school. Targets are challenging

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and there is a strong focus on ensuring equality of opportunity for all students, whatever their ability or aptitude. A clear cycle of implementation, evaluation and planning ensures that priorities are accurately identified and leaders and managers have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. It has been a challenge to maintain outcomes for students and improve the quality of provision as the school has grown. There has nevertheless been a limited but measurable improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection. All these positive features mean that the school has good capacity for further improvement. □

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the proportion of good and outstanding lessons in order to accelerate the rate at which students make progress, by:
 - ensuring a stronger focus on the quality of learning and the level of challenge provided, particularly for those who are more able
 - planning creatively to ensure that lessons are more stimulating and exciting, and encourage active participation and discussion
 - developing independent learning skills, to improve motivation and prepare effectively for post-16 study.
- Improve engagement with parents, carers and students by:
 - systematically asking for, and taking more account of, their views
 - providing more opportunities for them to contribute both to the life of the school and to decision making.
- Press ahead with plans to improve links with the local and wider community, so as to broaden students' awareness of their role within the wider world.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Students arrive at the school in Year 7 already achieving well above national standards. The first year group of students will sit GCSE examinations in 2011 and so a full set of external examination results is not yet available. The limited external examination data from Year 10 modules taken in 2010 and teacher assessments of students' attainment by the end of Year 9 indicate that overall, students' attainment is high. Students' progress is tracked carefully and, although the amount of progress students make in lessons is variable, test results show that overall they make good progress over time. Upper ability boys and the very few students who are known to be eligible for free school meals are currently making less progress than other groups, and the school has appropriate plans in place to tackle this. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities, especially those with a statement of special educational needs, make good progress in response to well-targeted support.

□ Students' awareness of the need for tolerance is good. For example, they are clear that homophobic bullying is not tolerated and value their close links with Claremont special school. Religious education and some other subjects provide awareness of other

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cultures but not always time for reflection. Students have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, although they do not always make good food choices. Many take part in a wide range of competitive extra-curricular sports. Recent changes to the physical education curriculum in Year 11 are encouraging those who are less committed to exercise to take part.

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

How effective is the provision?

The proportion of good lessons is increasing, although, as at the time of the last inspection, the quality of teaching is inconsistent. A comprehensive and accessible programme of staff development, using in-house and local expertise, is already beginning to have a positive impact on the quality of teaching across the school. Good relationships and a positive work ethic amongst students ensure that in most classrooms the atmosphere is purposeful and cooperative. Teachers have secure subject knowledge, which in good lessons stimulates skilful questioning to develop students' understanding and ensure good progress. Lessons have more pace than at the time of the last inspection, but sometimes the speed of delivery does not allow opportunities for

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

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reflection and more in-depth learning. Many students are very able, but the predominance of teacher-led activities means that opportunities for them to participate in group work, leadership activities and discussion are limited. Although they are likely to achieve highly in GCSE examinations, they are not consistently developing the lifelong learning skills that will be needed for their future success.

Teaching assistants are well informed about the themes and intention of lessons so their involvement in supporting those with special educational needs and/or disabilities is both valuable and effective. However, teachers' planning to ensure that students' individual needs are met, including challenge for the most able and supportive, differentiated materials for target groups, is inconsistent. Sometimes, this means that students are less engaged and restless in lessons. Some teachers lack the flexibility and confidence to deviate from their plan in order to confirm understanding or enrich learning. Teaching staff understand that a school priority is for higher ability students to develop independent learning skills, but do not always have a clear view of what this means in practice.

A new marking policy was introduced after the last inspection. It is not yet fully embedded, so the quality of feedback is still variable, particularly to students in Years 7 to 9, although older students appreciate the support they receive as they complete examination coursework. Parents and carers and students both express frustration that sometimes the efforts made in home-learning are not valued through regular marking. The lack of regular scrutiny means that some students take little pride in the presentation of their work. In some subjects, it is clear that students and their teachers commit to a written dialogue where targets for improvement are acknowledged and responded to by students. Sometimes, these targets are general, rather than subject-specific, which limits their usefulness.

The curriculum meets the needs of students well, with some vocational, well-monitored off-site provision and strong partnerships with other organisations. The school has recently introduced a new programme to develop learning skills for younger students, but some are finding it hard to understand the purpose of the course or transfer the skills they learn to other subjects. Although information and communication technology (ICT) is taught discretely to Years 7, 8 and 9, at Key Stage 4 it is provided through other subjects and three enrichment days during Years 10 and 11. There is currently no overview to ensure that this provision meets statutory requirements.

The care, guidance and support provided for students contribute well to their development. Systems for ensuring smooth transition for all students into Year 7, and for helping students make appropriate option choices as they enter Year 10, are well established and effective. Guidance for older students as they prepare to transfer to post-16 study or employment is not yet fully in place. The school provides good opportunities to develop students' awareness of sexual health and relationships. Students, especially those who are vulnerable, greatly appreciate the support provided by skilled heads of house. However, rewards and sanctions, and strategies for managing those students with behavioural difficulties, are not consistently applied by teaching staff, and this limits their impact. The school works very well with other agencies to

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support vulnerable students, including those who are in care or have special educational needs and/or disabilities. These partnerships lead to very good outcomes for some individual students. The needs of students on the autistic spectrum and those with physical disabilities are met well.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers track, analyse and use data well. Priorities are clearly linked to evaluation and monitoring of previous actions taken and are strongly focused on raising students' achievement. Teaching staff are all aware of those groups who are underachieving and, even when the group is small, understand that they have a role in improving outcomes. There has, for example, been improvement in achievement for the very small group of Indian boys over the last year. Expectations of middle leaders are greater than at the time of the last inspection and they are now systematically involved in monitoring provision through thorough faculty reviews and then planning for improvement. Teaching staff are aware of the school's priorities and are motivated to develop their skills. The focus of much professional development has been on improving the quality of teaching, and some support staff feel that they have had less opportunity for training.

Parents and carers have given substantial support to the very recent successful bid for specialist science status and to the parent-teacher association. A parents' forum has recently been set up, although it has yet to have an impact, but there is no clear and systematic mechanism for collecting and acting on parents' and carers' suggestions and views, or to give them a real opportunity to contribute to the school's decision making or to its work. A small minority of parents and carers, through the inspection questionnaires, raised concerns about the quality and accessibility of the school's communication with them, and others felt that their concerns were not responded to promptly or effectively.

The effectiveness of the governing body is good. Child protection procedures are robust and well understood by staff. Procedures for staff recruitment are rigorous and meet government requirements. There are clear policies and procedures to ensure the safety and welfare of students. A few very minor issues identified during the inspection linked to health and safety requirements were quickly remedied, but indicate that monitoring of this area is not yet sufficiently rigorous. □

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The school has recently carried out an audit of its provision to promote community cohesion. A plan to extend this work further is in place, but has yet to be implemented fully, especially developing students' awareness of their place in the national and international community. Local links are in place, for example with Claremont special school and a home for the elderly, but only limited use is made of the school's location within a supportive community.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

Most parents and carers are happy with their child's experience, and say that their child enjoys coming to school and is making enough progress. An overwhelming majority believe that the school keeps their child safe. Only three quarters of parents and carers feel that their views and suggestions are taken into account. About a third included comments on the questionnaires, of which three times as many were negative than positive.

Positive comments include:

- the effectiveness of specific support their child received for learning, medical or emotional difficulties
- good induction into Year 7
- the increase in their child's self-confidence since attending Redland Green.

The main concerns, many of which have been addressed in the report, are:

- variation in the quality of teaching, which is sometimes not sufficiently inspiring, providing enough challenge or encouraging students to be ambitious

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- the quality of communications with parents, including the inconsistent use of planners, organisation of parents' evenings and sometimes a lack of response to concerns
 - the quality and consistency of home learning and the lack of regular helpful marking
 - 'unhealthy food' provided in the dining room, and the short lunchtime which means students have to eat quickly
 - the lack of extra-curricular sports opportunities for those who are not competitive or in school teams
 - concerns about the organisation of the curriculum for modern foreign languages.
- The school is currently reviewing arrangements for languages.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Redland Green 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 209 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 949 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	92	44	109	52	6	3	1	0
The school keeps my child safe	98	47	107	51	3	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	74	35	113	54	15	7	1	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	73	35	108	52	13	6	4	2
The teaching is good at this school	61	29	129	62	8	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	50	24	118	56	19	9	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	53	25	118	56	25	12	2	1
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)	61	29	111	53	11	5	2	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	61	29	112	54	24	11	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	53	25	114	55	21	10	1	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	46	22	110	53	30	14	2	1
The school is led and managed effectively	58	28	121	58	14	7	2	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	89	43	101	48	12	6	2	1

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 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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 pupils' 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 pupils 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 pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' 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.



16 September 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Redland Green, Bristol BS6 7EH

After our visit to Redland Green, I would like to share our findings with you and thank you for your friendly welcome and for taking time to talk to us. You told us that most of you enjoy being at school and that you feel safe.

We judged the school to be good overall. These are the school's particular strengths:

- your high achievement
- a good curriculum which meets your needs
- your good behaviour around school and the low incidence of bullying
- the high quality support provided for students who find learning more difficult
- the school's partnerships with other schools and agencies.

However, while a lot of teaching is good, too much is only satisfactory, and you do not make as much progress in these lessons. We have asked the school to make improvements to the quality of teaching, by:

- making sure that the work you are given is consistently challenging
- making your lessons more interesting so you are more involved
- helping you to develop the skills you will need to be successful lifelong learners.

We have also asked the school to find better ways to ensure that both you and your parents and carers are given an opportunity to express your views, and become able to contribute more to decision making and the life of the school. The school also needs to implement its plans to promote community cohesion more effectively.

Your school now has a full roll of students and has recently gained specialist science status. This a good opportunity for you all to contribute as much as you can to ensuring its successful future.

Yours sincerely

Mary Massey

Her Majesty's Inspector

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