

# Inspection of a school judged outstanding for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Redbridge High School

179 Long Lane, Norris Green, Liverpool, Merseyside L9 6AD

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Inspection dates: 18 and 19 March 2025

## **Outcome**

Redbridge High School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils flourish at this school because of the caring and nurturing relationships that staff build with them. The school has very high aspirations for pupils' learning and development. Pupils make strong progress both academically and personally.

Pupils learn how to manage their emotions and improve their behaviour over time. Pupils enjoy a variety of therapies, including walks to the school's large outdoor area, visiting the local park and practising yoga. These help pupils to learn a sense of calm and feel more settled. Most pupils demonstrate exceptional behaviour.

Pupils profit from a wealth of activities that boost their confidence, self-esteem and independence. These include regular residential experiences, such as to the Lake District. Pupils take pride in representing the school in sports competitions. They are able to develop self-expression and creativity through the music workshop, drama club and performing in school plays.

Pupils are exceptionally well prepared for adulthood. Older pupils take turns making and serving sandwiches at lunch in the school café. This helps them to develop communication skills and a strong sense of belonging. Pupils' opinions matter and they have a voice in the school. For example, school councillors help to make decisions about reading books purchased for the library and equipment for the playground.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

The school has developed highly ambitious and effective curriculum pathways that are

tailored to meet pupils' needs. Pupils follow a broad range of subjects, including vocational qualifications, which prepare students well for the world of work. Subject curriculums are carefully designed to ensure that pupils build their knowledge in a logical order. Staff collaborate closely with a range of therapists to support pupils' emotional and mental health needs. This helps pupils to overcome any barriers to learning.

Staff use the information from pupils' education, health and care plans (EHC plans) to expertly design appropriate and engaging practical activities. Staff use their strong subject knowledge to present and explain new ideas clearly. They are skilled at using checks on learning to find out what pupils know and can do. Staff address pupils' misconceptions and errors, which helps pupils to enjoy their learning. Pupils achieve extremely well.

Improving pupils' communication and interaction is a strength of the school. Staff are skilled at supporting pupils to use pictures, symbols and technology to express what they know and understand. Pupils who do not communicate verbally enjoy listening to sensory stories. Pupils at the early stages of learning to read benefit from the support of highly knowledgeable staff. This enables pupils to apply their phonics knowledge effectively to read unfamiliar words. Pupils learn to read with increasing confidence and fluency. The school ensures that pupils have opportunities to use their pre-reading and phonics skills when they are in the local community, for example reading maps and signs on roads and recognising symbols in supermarket checkouts.

Staff are highly skilled at managing pupils' behaviour. They respond quickly and effectively when a pupil experiences distress. This helps pupils to re-engage with their learning as soon as they are ready. At lunchtimes, pupils eat together with good manners and are well supervised. The school monitors pupils' attendance carefully and uses highly effective strategies to support regular attendance. Most pupils enjoy high attendance.

The school promotes personal development exceptionally well. Pupils eagerly anticipate visits to the community, including trips to museums, a beach and local businesses. These help pupils to learn the social norms of life outside school. Visits to shops allow pupils to practise managing money and interacting in social situations. Pupils also develop physical fitness through participation in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme and other activities, such as climbing and swimming. They find out about healthy relationships in ways that are tailored to their age and needs. They enjoy celebrating religious festivals in the multicultural week. This develops their tolerance and understanding of other people.

Careers advice and guidance is exceptionally strong. It is seamlessly integrated into a variety of qualifications. The school offers engaging on-site and off-site work experience placements. These are tailored to pupils' own preferences, such as boxing or working with professionals such as chefs or artists. Pupils receive personalised support when applying for colleges, apprenticeships or social care places. This ensures that they are very well prepared for their futures.

Staff, including early careers teachers, form a committed team that enjoys working at the school. The school considers staff's well-being and workload carefully. The school is continuing to provide effective training and support for a small number of subject leaders

who are recently appointed. This is improving their oversight of the curriculum and its delivery. Governors provide a strong level of support and ask appropriate questions. They know the school well and work closely with it to maintain high standards.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be outstanding for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding for overall effectiveness in February 2015.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and](#)

[protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	104749
<b>Local authority</b>	Liverpool
<b>Inspection number</b>	10347901
<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	146
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	52
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Debbie Barkley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Amanda Hesketh
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.redbridgehighschool.co.uk">www.redbridgehighschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	7 March 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school caters for pupils who have severe learning difficulties and profound and multiple learning difficulties. Many students have autism spectrum disorder and behavioural challenges. All pupils have an EHC plan.
- The school operates at two sites. The main site is at 179 Long Lane, Norris Green, Liverpool L9 6AD. It houses pupils from Years 7 to 14. In addition, since September 2024, a small number of students in the sixth form are also based at Bank View South School, Ganworth Road, Liverpool L24 2RZ for some of their time, to study vocational qualifications. They spend the rest of their time on the main school site.
- Since the last inspection, there have been significant changes in leadership and staffing. This includes the appointment of a new headteacher, who was previously deputy headteacher at the school. In addition, a new chair and vice chair of the governing body were appointed in September 2022.

- The school does not make use of alternative provision.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical-education qualifications and apprenticeships.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, other school leaders and members of staff.
- The lead inspector spoke with members of the governing body, including the chair. He also spoke on the telephone with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors conducted visits to both of the school's sites.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interest first.
- Inspectors spoke with several groups of pupils and observed their behaviour at break and lunch time. No responses were received to Ofsted's pupil survey.
- Inspectors met with groups of staff and also considered the opinions expressed through the staff survey.
- Inspectors took account of the views expressed by parents and carers through Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments.

## Inspection team

Ahmed Marikar, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Tuesday Humby

Ofsted Inspector

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