



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Redhill Preparatory School
The Garth
St David's Road
Haverfordwest
SA61 2UR**

Date of inspection: April 2018

by

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education
and Training in Wales**

About Redhill Preparatory School

Redhill Preparatory School is an independent day school for boys and girls aged three to eleven years. The school, which was established in 2001, is situated on the outskirts of Haverfordwest in Pembrokeshire. Pupils come to the school from Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion.

There are currently 88 pupils on the school roll, an increase of 29 pupils since the last inspection. They are organised in seven classes, including one mixed-age class. Almost all pupils speak English as their first language at home. A few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The school is non-selective. It identifies around 18% of pupils as having additional learning needs. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs.

The proprietor also operates a Montessori Nursery Unit for children aged 0 to 4 years. This is housed in a separate building on the same site as the school. The Montessori Nursery receives a separate Estyn inspection report.

The proprietor is also the school bursar. She is supported by a headteacher who manages the day-to-day running of the school. The headteacher has been employed at the school since 2001 and was appointed to her current post in September 2008. The school was last inspected in June 2013.

Summary

Redhill Preparatory School provides pupils with a very caring, family environment where leaders and all staff place high levels of pupils' wellbeing at the heart of their work.

Nearly all pupils are polite and well behaved. They relate well to each other and to adults. Most pupils make good progress in line with their ability as they move through the school. They develop strong oracy and reading skills in particular and use information and communication technology (ICT) competently to support their learning. The school's provision for supporting pupils with social and emotional needs is excellent. The proprietor and headteacher provide strong leadership and are successful in promoting the school's vision.

The school meets all of the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003.

Inspection area	Judgement
Standards	Good
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Good
Teaching and learning experiences	Good
Care, support and guidance	Excellent
Leadership and management	Good

Compliance with the regulations for registration

Independent school inspections are governed by the Education Act 2002 and related regulations: the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003. These regulations require an independent school to meet an appropriate standard in the following areas:

The quality of education provided by the school

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

The suitability of proprietors and staff

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

Premises of and boarding accommodation at schools

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

The provision of information

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

The manner in which complaints are to be handled

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

Recommendations

- R1 Improve the standard of pupils' writing in all areas of the curriculum
- R2 Ensure that teachers plan activities that challenge all groups of pupils effectively, including those that are more able
- R3 Ensure that there are clear strategies to improve outcomes and that monitoring activities focus on pupils' progress

What happens next

Estyn advises the proprietor to amend its current development plan to show what actions the school intends to take in response to the recommendations. It is also advisable to circulate this plan, or a summary of it, to all parents/carers at the school.

Estyn will invite the school to prepare a case study on its work in relation to supporting pupils' social and emotional wellbeing, for dissemination on Estyn's website.

Main findings

Standards: Good

Across the school, pupils have a wide range of abilities. From their individual starting points, most pupils make strong progress as they move through the school. Many pupils with additional learning needs make good or better progress in relation to their ability.

Many pupils have outstanding oracy skills. Pupils in reception enjoy talking about trips that they have enjoyed and listen attentively when others are speaking. In key stage 2, most pupils are articulate and express their opinions sensibly. For example, in Year 3, pupils describe passionately why they think the law should change to give better protection to police dogs. Most Year 6 pupils express themselves confidently in a wide range of different situations using mature language. For example, they debate thoughtfully whether it would have been preferable to live in Athens or Sparta giving valid reasons for their views.

As they move through the school, most pupils develop their reading skills well. Younger pupils use their knowledge of phonics to help them decode words accurately. Older pupils express their preferences for different authors and types of books. By Year 6, most pupils are confident, fluent booklovers who read with suitable expression and meaning. Many have well-developed skills such as skimming and scanning different texts to locate information. They use their reading skills competently to help support their learning in other curriculum areas, for example to research facts for topics online, such as the life and work of Stephen Hawking.

In the foundation phase, many pupils improve their writing skills quickly. In pre-reception and reception, pupils begin to write using short sentences and known vocabulary. By Year 2, many pupils write well for a variety of purposes. A few more able pupils use adventurous language and a wide range of punctuation to create effect in their writing. For example, pupils in Year 2 write interesting postcards from a day trip to the beach. Most spell common words correctly and use their phonics knowledge to make plausible attempts at words that are more complex. In key stage 2, many pupils write at increasing length for a wide range of different audiences. For example, Year 5 pupils use imaginative gruesome descriptions to create witches' spells as part of their work on Macbeth. By Year 6, most pupils use punctuation effectively and spell accurately. Many pupils develop neat cursive handwriting and present their work with care. Although pupils use their writing skills appropriately in other subjects, they do not always use them at the same level as in their literacy lessons, particularly to organise their work independently and to produce extended accounts.

In the foundation phase, most pupils develop secure numeracy skills. In reception, many pupils work confidently with numbers up to 10, and by Year 2 add and subtract numbers up to 100 accurately. By key stage 2, many pupils apply their understanding of number well to solve real life problems. For example, pupils in Year 4 use fractions to investigate whether there is an equal distribution of flavours in different packets of sweets. Throughout the school, pupils apply their numeracy

skills well in other areas of the curriculum. For example, Year 6 pupils measure and find the mean time in seconds it takes different objects to fall. However, overall pupils' data handling skills are underdeveloped.

Most pupils have competent ICT skills that they use well to support their learning effectively across the curriculum. In pre-reception, pupils use computer games to practise letter and word recognition, while Year 2 pupils combine graphics and text successfully to produce posters of their favourite animals. Pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 design and construct attractive wild flower seed packets. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils have secure ICT skills and use them expertly in a wide range of different contexts. For example, Year 6 pupils create and interrogate databases to compare the sugar content of snacks and create simple animations to represent germination.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Throughout the school, nearly all pupils exhibit exceptionally high levels of wellbeing and most have positive attitudes towards their learning.

Nearly all pupils are polite, well mannered and caring. They treat their peers and adults with respect. Pupils are extremely welcoming to visitors and are keen to share their pride in the school. Due to the school's mixed-age 'families', most pupils develop strong friendships across all age groups. This contributes significantly to their strong sense of belonging.

Nearly all pupils understand the importance of healthy eating and the need to exercise regularly to stay fit. For example, members of the school nutrition action group work closely with the school cook to develop healthy seasonal menus. Many pupils participate enthusiastically in a range of physical activities, such as football, ballet and swimming. Nearly all pupils feel safe and happy in school and know whom to talk to if they are upset. Older pupils in particular have a strong awareness of how to stay safe when using the internet.

Consistently high attendance rates reflect the fact that most pupils have positive attitudes to learning and enjoy school. Most pupils behave well in lessons. They are enthusiastic learners who engage quickly with tasks, concentrate well and work effectively with their peers, for example in small groups when planning a science experiment. However, a few pupils are over reliant on support and guidance from staff and do not always persevere if they find activities too difficult.

Most pupils develop their social skills to a high level. Pupils take part enthusiastically as members of school committees such as the school council and eco club, and as ecadets who support other pupils to improve their ICT skills and help promote online safety. They take these roles seriously and are proud of the contributions they make to school life. For example, the sports ambassadors organise the annual sports extravaganza for younger pupils efficiently. Older pupils show maturity in their ability to take on additional responsibilities.

Teaching and learning experiences: Good

The school provides a curriculum that is broad and balanced and meets the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003.

Teachers plan an engaging and stimulating curriculum that generally builds successfully on pupils' skill development and knowledge. The school provides pupils with a wide range of extra-curricular learning experiences that enhance the curriculum effectively and match pupils' interests well. For example, the exciting science, mathematics and technology club stimulates pupils' interest in these subjects. The choir and individual instrumental lessons enrich provision for music successfully. The school also provides pupils with valuable opportunities to take part in physical activities such as horse riding and gymnastics.

The school offers pupils a comprehensive programme of visits to places of interest to extend their learning. For example, pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 attend a residential trip at Llangranog, while Year 6 pupils recently visited a 'Young Scientist and Engineers' fair to reinforce their science knowledge. Teachers use the extensive outdoor environment well to plan exciting experiences for pupils. For example, all pupils in the foundation phase take part in interesting weekly investigative activities in the school's attractive forest area.

Nearly all teachers provide pupils with beneficial opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills in a wide range of curriculum areas. However, a minority of teachers do not always plan activities that enable pupils to use their literacy skills at an appropriate level. Throughout the school, teachers provide pupils with extensive and relevant opportunities to use their ICT skills to support their learning.

Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Teachers know each pupil well and have particularly positive working relationships with them. Most teachers manage pupils' behaviour effectively. They use a range of different approaches to engage pupils successfully, including the use of ICT. Many teachers plan stimulating activities that match most pupils' needs effectively. They use high-quality questioning skills to gauge pupils' understanding and to move their learning forward. Where teaching is less effective, a few teachers do not always plan activities that match pupils' prior attainment well enough and do not challenge all groups of pupils to achieve as well as they could.

Most teachers provide pupils with useful verbal feedback on what they have done well and how they can improve their work further. Although many teachers provide older pupils with detailed written feedback, the impact of this on improving pupils' performance is variable. Where it is most effective, teachers give pupils time to respond to their comments by making improvements to their work. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 have worthwhile opportunities to assess their own work, but this work is less well developed in other year groups.

Care, support and guidance: Excellent

The care, support and guidance provided by the school are exceptional and contribute successfully to pupils' high levels of wellbeing. There is a strong sense of community and belonging. All staff know the pupils extremely well and provide a close network of support that nurtures positive working relationships.

The school's arrangements for meeting the additional learning needs of pupils are highly effective and help these pupils to make strong progress. Staff identify pupils' needs promptly when they first join the school, implement personalised support strategies for these pupils and monitor their progress closely. Examples of strategies used successfully include one-to-one support and touch typing classes. These initiatives contribute well to the strong progress made by these pupils. The school also makes effective use of outside agencies to support the specific needs of individual pupils when necessary.

The bespoke support offered to meet pupils' emotional, health and social needs is beneficial and promotes their wellbeing successfully. For example, at the weekly 'paramedics' group, staff provide key stage 2 pupils with beneficial emotional guidance and support.

The school has an effective system to track and monitor the progress of pupils using a range of appropriate formal tests and teacher assessments.

Staff have exceptional working relationships with families. The open door policy and workshops provided by the school support this close working relationship well. The school makes effective use of newsletters, social media and homework diaries to ensure strong communication between school and home. As a result, parents know how to support their child's learning and wellbeing. Annual reports to parents are highly personalised and celebrate pupils' achievements and their progress accurately.

The school offers pupils many opportunities to take on additional roles and responsibilities that helps develop their maturity. Through personal, social and health education and assemblies, staff actively promote the importance of good citizenship amongst pupils and support their spiritual development well. They encourage pupils to acquire a sense of mutual respect and kindness. For instance, pupils are empowered to 'step up and make a difference'.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Leadership and management: Good

The headteacher provides the school with passionate and thoughtful leadership that has pupil and staff wellbeing at the centre of the school's aims and priorities. She communicates a clear, shared vision that underpins all areas of the school's work. All stakeholders embrace and understand the school's motto, 'working, caring, sharing and learning, hand in hand, to be all we can be'. The motto makes an important contribution to the strong sense of community, friendship, kindness and the high levels of wellbeing.

The proprietor provides high levels of support to the headteacher and the school's senior management team. She is forward thinking, has a broad range of expertise, is well informed and provides effective oversight of the school's work. Together with the headteacher, she gives a strong strategic direction to the school.

Leaders undertake regular and sustained monitoring activities such as lesson observations and book scrutiny. These help leaders monitor many aspects of the school's work effectively. However, many lesson observations do not focus closely enough on judging pupils' progress and assessing the standards that they achieve. Leaders use the findings from their monitoring activities, along with the views of stakeholders, to evaluate the school's strengths and areas for improvement appropriately.

The school development plan links closely to self-evaluation findings and sets out the school's priorities clearly. However, it is not apparent how leaders will accurately judge the progress the school is making on addressing these priorities as the plan does not identify success criteria sharply enough.

In response to a recommendation in the last inspection, the headteacher has developed a supportive and robust appraisal system for staff. Overall however, the school has made limited progress on addressing the recommendations from the last inspection.

The school has an appropriate number of staff who are suitably qualified and experienced. Staff are able to access a range of relevant professional development opportunities both within the school and with external providers. There is a clear culture of sharing expertise gained from this training and embedding skills learnt. For example, there has been a strong focus on training staff to meet the needs of pupils with autism successfully. In addition, staff have had recent training to improve their ICT skills. This has resulted in improving the school's provision for ICT and raising pupils' standards in this area significantly.

The school site is vibrant, well maintained and well resourced. Staff make good use of inside and outside spaces to provide imaginative and a stimulating learning environment for all pupils. There have been beneficial recent improvements to the school buildings and grounds. Leaders deploy staff efficiently to teach their subject specialisms and to lead extra-curricular activities well.

The proprietor manages the school finances prudently and monitors expenditure carefully. In partnership with the headteacher, she allocates spending appropriately in line with priorities agreed in the school development plan.

The school meets all of the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003.

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.wales)

Under the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003, the school must provide copies of the report to all parents of the school. Where a pupil is subject to placement by a local authority, a copy of the report should be sent by the school to each relevant authority.

Estyn evaluates a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

Excellent	Strong, sustained performance and practice
Good	Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
Adequate and needs improvement	Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths

The report was produced in accordance with section 163 of the Education Act 2002. The main purpose of inspection under this section is to report on compliance with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2003. In schools that provide non-maintained nursery education, this report also satisfies the requirements of Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

Publication Section
Estyn
Anchor Court, Keen Road
Cardiff
CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.wales

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: www.estyn.gov.wales

© Crown Copyright 2018: This report may be re-used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re-used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the report specified.

Publication date: 28/06/2018