



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

A report on

Redhill High School

**Clynderwen House, Clunderwen,
Narberth
Pembrokeshire
SA66 7PN**

Date of inspection: January 2023

by

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

About Redhill High School

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| Name of provider | Redhill High School |
| Proprietor | Mr E Tomp, Mrs A L Tomp, Mrs M Lovegrove, Mr P Lovegrove, Mr A Millington and Mrs B Millington |
| Local authority | Pembrokeshire County Council |
| Language of the provider | English |
| Type of school | Independent secondary |
| Residential provision? | No |
| Number of pupils on roll | 87 |
| Pupils of statutory school age | 73 |
| Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable) | |
| Start date of inspection | 23/01/2023 |
| Redhill High School is not registered with Welsh Government to provide specific additional learning needs provision. | |

Data reported is sourced from the latest available Pupil Level Annual School Census. These figures may be slightly different to those observed during the inspection. Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website: mylocalschool.gov.wales

- a. The term 'additional learning needs' is being used to describe those pupils on the SEN/ALN register of the school.

Overview

Redhill High School has established an aspirational environment, whilst ensuring its pupils are not overburdened by workload or expectations. Its rural location supports the school in creating a calm and purposeful learning environment. There is a strong sense of belonging within the school community to which pupils, parents and staff have great loyalty and affection.

Nearly all pupils make strong progress from their starting points, and public examinations results at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form are outstanding. Pupils who choose to specialise in artistic or creative subjects develop these skills exceptionally well and their standards are especially high. Nearly all pupils at the school are modest, assured, and enquiring. They feel both happy and safe. Pupils know they will be listened to and that they are valued. They are excited to learn, willing to take risks academically, and demonstrate high levels of self-motivation and self-regulation. Behaviour at Redhill High School is exemplary.

Teachers display strong subject knowledge and understand the requirements of public examinations exceptionally well. They are attentive, caring and accessible, and their positive relationships with pupils helps to create an environment where everyone can thrive. Teachers promote learning through a wide range of interesting activities, helped often by smaller class sizes. All staff know the pupils extremely well and they ensure that the provision in Key Stage 4 and the sixth form meets their needs effectively.

Leaders at the school are passionate, experienced, and highly accessible. They are ambitious for all pupils and have high expectations of their staff. During the pandemic, leaders ensured that their pupils continued to receive the same high standard of education and care. Leaders collaborate suitably to operate the school and have an individualised approach to communication with all stakeholders. However, governance arrangements at the school are underdeveloped.

Redhill High School meets all the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003, needed to maintain registration.

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 Formalise governance including quality assurance arrangements to strengthen strategic oversight and the role of directors as a critical friend.
- R2 Ensure that teacher assessment within lessons is used more effectively to plan the next steps in pupils' learning.
- R3 Improve the consistency of written feedback to pupils so that they know what they need to do to improve their work.
- R4 Strengthen the provision for careers guidance and PSHE across the school.

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.

Main findings

Learning

Most pupils make strong progress from their starting points throughout their time at Redhill High School. At Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form, performance in public examinations is outstanding.

Across the school pupils have highly developed communication skills. Nearly all are articulate, and most are assured when speaking to visitors. Most pupils speak clearly and adjust their register and tone naturally to suit their audience. Most pupils use a broad vocabulary and often include correct technical language accurately. They think logically, organise their thoughts and present them coherently. Many pupils demonstrate strong active listening skills, particularly older pupils, and use these to good effect to build on conversations. For example, in A-Level computing, pupils discuss the ecological impact of data storage, and listen carefully to each other before expanding upon and developing each other's ideas.

Nearly all pupils have strong reading skills and interpret a range of texts to extract information and develop their understanding of subject contexts well. They infer meaning and draw conclusions from texts, for example in Year 9 where pupils use a range of sources to deduce what the conditions on slave ships were like. As pupils progress through the school, they develop their confidence when reading aloud. For example, when presenting in assemblies or when Year 8 read aloud the effects that drugs have on people.

Most pupils' writing develops strongly during their time at the school and many pupils write clearly to explain, describe or persuade. They structure their writing well and vary their expression to suit audience and purpose. Pupils apply these skills successfully in many other contexts. For example, in geography they evaluate a variety of strategies to manage a tropical rainforest, or in PE they write extendedly about how to apply the principles of training to their own sport. However, a minority of younger pupils do not always present their work neatly enough.

Throughout their time at the school most pupils develop advanced mathematical and numeracy skills. Younger pupils develop sound understanding of mental arithmetic processes and partition numbers skilfully to make these calculations easier. Older pupils use their skills to create and implement effective strategies for solving multi-stage problems, for example when calculating where two lines intersect in three-dimensional space. Pupils also draw upon their numerical knowledge and skills effectively in other contexts, such as Year 8 plotting scatter graphs and drawing trend lines in science.

Overall, many pupils develop their digital skills well and pupils throughout the school are confident users of digital technologies. In a few subjects across the curriculum, pupils make very strong progress in their digital skills. For example, they develop their basic coding and web-design skills in Year 7 and create digital art in Year 11. Pupils who choose to specialise in A-Level computing, identify errors in more complex programs written in a programming language often used to build websites and software, automate tasks, and conduct data analysis.

As pupils progress through the school, they develop their ability to think with greater complexity and solve problems competently. For example, in Year 10 pupils use their knowledge to make contextual inferences about unseen pictures from The Great Depression of the 1930s, articulating clearly the underlying reasons for each scene. Younger pupils hypothesise and investigate the effectiveness of different types of thermal insulation successfully. However, throughout the school pupils do not direct their own independent learning frequently enough.

Pupils across the school enjoy varied opportunities to be both active and creative and most develop these skills well. For example, pupils in drama demonstrate an excellent creative interpretation of 'exaggeration' through physical movement. Nearly all pupils who choose to specialise in artistic or creative subjects develop these skills exceptionally well and their standards are especially high.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Pupils' attitude to school and to each other is exemplary and the atmosphere is respectful, purposeful and inclusive. Nearly all pupils feel safe and secure. They enjoy being part of the Redhill High School community and demonstrate respect for each other and for members of staff. Together, pupils and staff create an environment which values positive behaviour and learning.

Throughout the school, nearly all pupils demonstrate exemplary behaviour and value their friendships and interactions with each other. Pupils demonstrate confidence and modesty, and nearly all pupils feel encouraged to offer valuable contributions in lessons. Pupils have strong working relationships with staff and have exceptionally high levels of trust, confidence and respect for their teachers. Importantly, pupils know that staff will address any concerns that they have.

Nearly all pupils value their learning opportunities and arrive to lessons punctually and ready to learn. Outside of structured lesson time they demonstrate a strong sense of community, respect and togetherness. The school's focus on academic attainment is understood by pupils who are ambitious and focused without feeling overwhelmed by workload or expectations.

Most pupils respond positively and effectively to feedback and feel that the support they receive is valuable. Verbal feedback is effective and most pupils feel their teachers praise their efforts and encourage them to learn. Formal rewards are well understood by most pupils and are effective in motivating them. Sixth Form pupils in particular demonstrate a strong sense of motivation and satisfaction driven by internal rewards.

Nearly all older pupils demonstrate that they can work independently. They solve problems and persevere when challenged by their learning activities. Most pupils enjoy the opportunity to work in pairs and small groups, displaying strong levels of respect and focus as they do so. Pupils develop their physical skills well and have excellent opportunities to develop their creative skills in various learning activities.

Many pupils explore and understand the benefit of healthy lifestyles through the curriculum and value the discussions they have in personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons. Nearly all pupils feel comfortable to approach staff with concerns and seek advice if required.

The majority of pupils believe that the school listens to their suggestions through the work of the school council, questionnaires and through approaching staff informally. Throughout the school, elected members of the school council proudly represent their year-groups in meetings with the headmaster. A few pupils are selected by school leaders to act as ambassadors in a variety of different areas, for example diversity, as a result pupils make valuable contributions which help direct the school's work.

Pupils make suggestions for school improvement through a variety of mechanisms and recent curriculum changes have been made as a result of pupil voice. Younger pupils now choose additional physical, creative or technical activities on Friday afternoons. Direct approaches by pupils to staff are also encouraged and some of these have led to changes directly.

Teaching and learning experiences

The school's curriculum provides pupils with a broad and flexible range of learning opportunities that support the individual needs of pupils very well. The curriculum meets the requirement for the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003.

The school has adapted the Key Stage 3 timetable to give pupils the opportunity to participate in sport, information communication technology (ICT) or art activities on a Friday afternoon to support their well-being. In addition, at both Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form the school's curriculum is tailored to meet the needs of the individual pupil. In a very few cases, where the school is unable to offer a subject, pupils study at a local college. This results in timetables crafted to the needs of individual pupils.

In the best examples, the school curriculum is supported by detailed schemes of work. These build systematically on pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills to secure progression as they move through the school. However, curriculum planning does not always identify suitable opportunities for pupils to build their broader skills for example literacy, numeracy, or digital competency across the curriculum areas.

The school has begun to reintroduce school trips following the COVID-19 pandemic, including fieldtrips and orienteering in the local area, and skiing and language trips to Austria and Spain, respectively. These opportunities help to develop pupils' teambuilding skills successfully. The school supports pupils who have an interest or talent that they are developing outside of school, often to a very high standard, including football, ballroom dancing and equestrianism. However, due to the geographical location of the school and the difficulties of arranging transport, the provision of co-curricular opportunities beyond the school day is limited.

The allocation of curriculum time for PSHE is inconsistent at Key Stage 4 and does not feature in the sixth form curriculum. The planning for the teaching of PSHE for older pupils is undeveloped. As a result, pupils miss the opportunity to address important aspects of this subject.

Across the school, nearly all staff have positive working relationships with pupils and know them extremely well. Learning takes place in a calm, purposeful atmosphere of mutual respect. In nearly all lessons teachers show strong subject knowledge and plan an interesting range of activities that develop pupils' understanding. Teachers'

understanding of examination technique is highly effective and enables pupils to achieve outstanding public examination results.

In many lessons, teachers use a range of questioning techniques to confirm and extend understanding and are strong language role models. In a few lessons learning activities are too heavily teacher-led for pupils to direct their own learning successfully.

Teachers and leaders use half termly assessment data well to evaluate and monitor pupil progress and identify those who may need additional challenge or support. However, teachers inconsistently use their assessments of learning within lessons to support or challenge pupils and to plan for the next steps in their learning.

Most teachers provide pupils with effective verbal feedback. However, the quality and regularity of written feedback is less consistent and does not always ensure that pupils know what they need to do to improve their work. Parents receive regular informative reports about their child's progress. These reports identify what their child has achieved and most subjects identify targets so that pupils know how to improve.

Care, support and guidance

The well-being of pupils at Redhill is a high priority for school leaders and staff know all pupils extremely well.

The school is developing a wide range of opportunities for pupils to take on responsibility and develop their leadership skills. The pupils who currently hold these positions take pride in their role. Subject ambassadors speak enthusiastically of the responsibilities they are given, such as supporting staff on sports day and developing a reading list for pupils. All Year 9 pupils complete the bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award, which develops their resilience, leadership and teamwork skills.

Through assemblies, PSHE and their studies across the curriculum pupils develop their understanding of issues relating to equality and diversity and develop values such as respect and empathy. For example, in English pupils study 'I am Malala' and look at the issue of the education of girls in Pakistan and in science pupils consider the contribution of female scientists such as Mary Anning, the fossil hunter.

The planned provision for careers guidance across the school is currently undeveloped. Pupils design curriculum vitae in Year 9 and are guided in their choice of options to study at GCSE and A Level. However, there is no coordinated provision for careers and the world of work across the school and the provision for work experience is underdeveloped.

The school celebrates both Welsh culture and heritage successfully. For example, visiting Laugharne and studying 'Under Milk Wood' in drama and considering the controversy surrounding Sir Thomas Picton in history. International cultures are also celebrated successfully in the curriculum and through assemblies, for example during Chinese New Year, pupils look at Chinese art and food as well as older pupils considering the geopolitical position of China in the World.

The school works effectively with families to support pupils' emotional, health and social needs. Where appropriate, the school guides families to external agencies, for example to provide specialist support for pupils' mental health.

The school is not registered to provide specific additional learning provision. In the few cases where the school identifies that a pupil has additional learning needs, the school responds swiftly to provide effective support in school or by directing families to external agencies when appropriate.

Leaders are developing a sound culture of safeguarding at the school. There are robust arrangements for recording and following up when pupils are absent. The designated safeguarding person provides all staff with regular safeguarding updates. There is a well understood system to report safeguarding concerns relating to pupils. However, not all staff know who they should report to if they have concerns about the designated safeguarding person.

The school has thorough safer recruitment procedures and ensures that all new members of staff receive safeguarding training. A few issues relating to school policy and record keeping were raised with the school and these were addressed during the inspection.

Leadership and management

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

Redhill High School was established in 2018 by a cohesive group of six directors, including the current headmaster and deputy head. In the relatively short period of time since its launch, these leaders have successfully established an aspirational culture and developed a close family community to which pupils and parents have great loyalty and affection.

During the pandemic, the senior leaders took swift and decisive actions to help ensure the continuity of provision to support pupils' learning and well-being. Supported by a resilient and unified staff team, the school adapted quickly to learn to use new IT platforms and develop ways of teaching and nurturing pupils remotely.

The headmaster and deputy head team are experienced, cohesive and have complementary skills. They are well-respected, highly visible, accessible, and lead the school by example with sensitivity and compassion. They are ambitious for all pupils and have high expectations of their staff.

Senior leaders have built and maintain outstanding relationships with parents. Both informal and formal lines of communication between parents and the school are effective, and as a result, parents complement the work of the school and have the capacity to support their children at home with their learning and well-being.

Leaders have formed a beneficial strategic partnership with a local college which helps to facilitate Redhill High School to offer sixth form pupils a bespoke suite of A-Level subject choices. This partnership enhances pupils' experiences through access to specialist facilities, further opportunities to compete or perform, and develops their social skills within the wider community.

Leaders provide staff with worthwhile opportunities to engage in professional learning beyond statutory requirements such as annual safeguarding training. This includes supporting staff to undertake post-graduate qualifications, attend examination board training, or to learn new strategies to adapt their teaching to meet the needs of a

broader range of pupils. However, professional learning is not tied strongly enough to the individual developmental needs of staff.

Leaders' operational management of the school is extremely strong. Throughout the school staff have clearly defined roles and responsibilities, supported by suitable job descriptions. The directors have accurately identified the need to build more leadership capacity within the school to protect more time for senior leaders' strategic planning and discussion. Middle leaders have been recently appointed, although these roles are at a very early stage of development.

Leaders analyse pupil assessment data robustly and working collegiately with staff, use this to conduct an annual review of each subject and half-termly reviews of pupil progress. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths and shortcomings across the school and in the very few cases where underperformance is identified, take robust and swift action to bring about improvement. However, following the pandemic leaders have not yet re-established the full worthwhile range of quality assurance activities to monitor the school's work effectively. For example, the evaluation process does not include regular lesson observations or individualised performance management. Consequently, leaders' have not identified the very few areas of teaching that may benefit from development.

The directors are committed to the improvement of the school and apply their broad range of expertise to support the school's work. All directors undertake statutory training and most directors have extended this training further in their areas of responsibility. For example, the link director for safeguarding has successfully completed training above that required by the designated safeguarding person. However, the formal arrangements for the governance of the school are not defined clearly enough. Whilst important areas of the school's work such as safeguarding, education, or premises are the responsibility of individual link directors, much of the school's strategic planning and self-evaluation work is conducted informally and not clearly recorded. Consequently, directors have not established robust systems for the strategic oversight of the school and their ability to act as a critical friend is underdeveloped.

Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from parent/carer and pupil questionnaires and consider the views of teachers and support staff through their questionnaire responses

During an inspection, inspectors normally:

- hold a meeting with parents/carers to hear their views on the school and its effectiveness
- meet the headteacher, governors/proprietor(s), leaders and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work and to gain their views about various aspects of their school
- meet groups of pupils in leadership roles, such as representatives from the school council and eco-committee
- visit lessons and undertake a variety of learning walks to observe pupils learning
- look closely at the school's self-evaluation processes
- consider the school's improvement plan and look at evidence to show how well the school had taken forward planned improvements
- scrutinise a range of school documents, including information on pupil assessment and progress, records of meetings of staff and the governing body (where appropriate), information on pupils' well-being, including the safeguarding of pupils, and records of staff training and professional development

After the on-site inspection and before the publication of the report, Estyn:

- review the findings of the inspection alongside the supporting evidence from the inspection team in order to validate, moderate and ensure the quality of the inspection

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website ([Estyn Website](#))

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 publication. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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