



Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all

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
Glenover House
Scarrowscant Lane
Haverfordwest
SA61 1ES**

Date of inspection: June 2013

by

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



During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the school's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

Judgement	What the judgement means
Excellent	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
Unsatisfactory	Important areas for improvement 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:

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Context

Redhill Preparatory School is an independent day school for boys and girls aged three to eleven years. The school is situated on the outskirts of the town of Haverfordwest. It was established in 2001.

Pupils come to the school from the local area and further afield in Pembrokeshire. There are currently 59 pupils on the school roll. They are organised in five mixed-age classes. A very few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Almost all pupils speak English as their first language at home. The school teaches Welsh as a second language to all classes.

The school is non-selective. It identifies 22% of current pupils as having additional learning needs. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs. The proprietors also operate a Montessori Nursery Unit for children aged 0 to 4 years. This is housed in a separate building within a walled garden on the same site as the school. A very few children in the Unit are funded through the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership with Pembrokeshire County Council. The Montessori Nursery Unit receives a separate Estyn inspection report.

The school has two proprietors, one of whom is the principal. She takes responsibility for managing the business aspects of the school, day nursery unit and holiday club. The principal is supported by a headteacher who manages the day-to-day running of the school. The principal, headteacher and nursery manager form the senior management team.

Pupils were responsible for developing the school's motto, which is 'Working, caring, sharing and learning – hand in hand – to be all we can be'.

The school was last inspected in June 2007.

Summary

The school's current performance	Good
The school's prospects for improvement	Good

Current performance

Redhill Preparatory School is a good school because:

- almost all pupils make good and often very good progress;
- standards of speaking, reading and numeracy are very good;
- pupils have a strong sense of wellbeing that makes them confident learners, regardless of their ability;
- there is an appropriate curriculum that is enhanced by a broad range of extra-curricular activities;
- in most lessons, teaching is good;
- staff provide good-quality support for pupils; and
- the learning environment is outstanding.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the principal and headteacher work closely together and provide very strong leadership;
- there is a clear ethos, understood by everyone, where ensuring pupils' wellbeing is central to the school's work;
- self-evaluation is rigorous and leads to appropriate targets for school development;
- the school has a good track record of making improvements; and
- the school has appropriate resources.

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 planning across the curriculum to provide pupils with more opportunities to develop their writing skills
- R2 Make sure that all lessons have enough challenge
- R3 Improve the consistency of marking of pupils' written work and make sure that it provides a clear indication of what pupils need to do to improve
- R4 Strengthen appraisal arrangements to help staff develop their skills further and take more responsibility for developing the curriculum

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 at the school. Estyn will invite the school to prepare a written case study, describing the excellent practice identified during the inspection.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Overall, almost all pupils make at least good progress as they move through the school, regardless of their ability. There is no significant difference in the standards boys and girls achieve.

By the end of the Foundation Phase, almost all pupils show confidence and independence. They speak very well using a good range of vocabulary. Almost all pupils make very good progress in reading and use phonic strategies appropriately to attempt to decode words that they do not know. These pupils enjoy the books they read and show that they understand the texts when discussing the stories. In key stage 2, pupils make consistent progress in developing good reading skills. By the end of the key stage, they choose and read a range of good-quality literature that offers them suitable challenge. Across the school, pupils enjoy reading to an audience and use expression well to dramatise their texts.

In the Foundation Phase, pupils make good progress in developing basic writing skills. They begin to learn to form letters using cursive script, and start to develop appropriate spelling strategies. They enjoy written tasks but do not always produce work of enough length to extend their skills. In key stage 2, pupils' good progress in developing reading skills has a significant impact on their progress in writing. They begin to use a wide range of vocabulary and structure their work well. By the end of the key stage, almost all pupils write and present their work well for a range of purposes. For example, they write a good-quality play script for scenes from Shakespeare's Macbeth and provide considered views of the moral aspects of the story.

Across the school, pupils develop very good numeracy skills. From a young age, they all learn to recognise numbers and quickly start to understand and carry out basic calculations correctly. In the Foundation Phase, pupils use their numeracy skills well and with enthusiasm, for example to measure and discuss comparisons of sizes of structures in the garden. Older pupils use their numeracy skills effectively across a range of subjects.

Pupils use information and communication technology competently to word-process and carry out internet research. However, they do not use technology enough, for example to develop skills in exploring relationships in data samples.

The school uses a range of externally marked standardised tests. The results show that pupils make very good progress at an individual level. However, comparing data to show trends in outcomes over time is not appropriate as the number of pupils in each year group is small and pupils' abilities vary too much from year to year.

The internal assessment of pupils at the end of the Foundation Phase and in National Curriculum tests in key stage 2 indicates that all pupils attain at least the expected

levels. The proportion of pupils who attain the higher levels at both key stages is well above the average for the local authority and Wales. However, these outcomes are not subject to external moderation.

Wellbeing: Excellent

Pupils are very proud of their school. They are polite and courteous. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary. They are enthusiastic and eager to learn, and sustain their concentration well. Pupils feel safe, know whom to go to if they are worried and enjoy coming to school.

Nearly all pupils are aware of the importance of eating a healthy diet. They have helped the school to plan a nutritious lunch menu that uses seasonal produce grown in the school grounds. Pupils enjoy regular opportunities for exercise. For example, all pupils have regular swimming lessons. They participate well in extra-curricular activities and develop excellent skills.

There are excellent relationships between pupils of all ages and genders. Pupils develop a very strong sense of self-worth that enables them to make good progress regardless of their ability. The school encourages pupils to understand each other's learning needs, for example through the outstanding pupil-led initiatives, such as the dyslexia workshop. Here, older pupils researched and delivered a presentation to parents and pupils that widened everyone's understanding and appreciation of dyslexia. Across the school, pupils speak knowledgeably about other pupils' learning needs. They have an unusual depth of understanding for their age and are very supportive of each other. This is an example of sector-leading practice.

The school organises all pupils in social groups from across the age range to participate and collaborate in activities to promote their wellbeing. These opportunities strengthen relationships and allow older pupils to take responsibility for others' wellbeing within their group. Pupils value the opportunities they are given to contribute to school life and development. They celebrate each other's achievements with enthusiasm.

Pupils feel that the school council is having a positive impact as representatives seek their opinions during weekly circle time and because the school has implemented many of their suggestions. For example, the council suggested improvements to the playground that have been realised, and has organised fundraising activities and community events such as a Wellbeing Day.

Pupils of all ages have many opportunities to hold positions of responsibility and play an active role in decision-making that affects their learning and provision. For example, last year's prefects were responsible for rewriting the school's motto.

Attendance rates are above the national average for primary schools. Pupils' punctuality is good and has improved since the last inspection.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Good

Learning experiences: Good

The school meets the requirements of the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003 in providing pupils with appropriate experience in the seven areas of learning.

The curriculum places suitable emphasis on daily lessons in English and mathematics and ensures appropriate coverage of a broad range of National Curriculum subjects, including Welsh second language lessons. In addition, the school offers French to pupils in key stage 2. There is a particular focus on ensuring that pupils develop good reading skills. All pupils read individually to an adult on a daily basis and also have time allocated for silent reading to promote the habit effectively.

In the Foundation Phase, the curriculum is based on Montessori method principles that emphasise the importance of pupils developing key skills and independence through structured play activities. This enables pupils to make choices about how they learn.

The school has a consistent approach to planning. Plans for every subject are clear and set out key learning objectives and strategies well. Although plans include consideration of key skills, there is not always enough focus on ensuring that pupils have suitable opportunities to write at length.

The curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular activities. There are many educational visits in the immediate locality and further afield. Activities include a recent camping trip for older pupils as well as opportunities for pupils to take part in horse riding, fishing, ballet, music tuition and sports.

The school makes good provision for pupils to learn about the language and culture of Wales. There is growing attention to developing pupils' awareness of sustainable development and global citizenship. The eco council take their role seriously in promoting good practice in the school.

Teaching: Good

Pupils and staff have very good working relationships that have a significant impact on pupils' achievement and progress. There is a comfortable atmosphere where staff know the pupils' individual needs well and pupils recognise that they receive very good levels of individual support.

In most lessons observed, teaching is good. In these lessons, teachers:

- have good subject knowledge, often showing particular expertise;
- plan interesting lessons and offer appropriate challenge;
- deliver lessons at an appropriate pace and use time well;
- make good use of paired and group work; and
- manage the class well.

In a few lessons, where there is need for improvement, there is:

- not enough challenge for more able pupils;
- an over-reliance on worksheets that limits pupils' opportunities to extend their writing; and
- too little direction for older pupils in the Foundation Phase to ensure that they are engaged purposefully in the task.

The school collects a wide range of assessment data to monitor pupils' progress. This data is analysed well and the findings are shared with staff, but it is not clear how the information impacts on planning.

There is a clear marking policy. However, teachers' marking varies too much and does not always give pupils enough information about how they can improve their work. Pupils have appropriate opportunities to assess their own and each other's work.

The school maintains thorough records of each pupil's achievements and progress. Parents receive detailed written reports on their child's performance and have good opportunities to discuss any issues.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school provides successfully for the health and welfare of pupils. There are a range of effective schemes and initiatives that support pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development well. These include links with local churches. Regular assemblies provide worthwhile opportunities for reflection and collective worship.

Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and promote a caring attitude. The level of care, support and guidance for individual pupils is a particular strength of the school. Biannually, pupils complete a questionnaire about their personal sense of wellbeing. Staff use the information to identify pupils who may need extra personal support. They respond appropriately to issues raised. Pupils value having targets regarding their personal and social development.

The school uses professional agencies well to provide activities that help improve pupils' wellbeing. These include visits from the police and fire service, and participation in cycling proficiency and first-aid courses.

The school collects a wide range of useful assessment data that it uses well to identify pupils' individual learning needs. Pupils with additional learning needs have detailed individual education plans that identify clear targets for improvement. These are shared and reviewed with teachers, and appropriate arrangements are made to provide pupils with targeted support in and outside the classroom. Tracking systems show that these pupils are making good progress. The school takes appropriate advice from professional specialist services to ensure that it can address pupils' learning needs.

The school deals appropriately with any incidents of bullying. There are appropriate ways for pupils to express any concerns, for example via 'worry boxes'. The school's

arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Learning environment: Excellent

The school has established an inclusive ethos where values such as courtesy and kindness are firmly embedded. It encourages pupils to initiate activities independently to promote equality and understand diversity, such as the wellbeing day and dyslexia workshop. This ethos permeates the day-to-day life of the school and is a particularly strong feature. Each pupil has equal access to the curriculum and all aspects of the school's provision. Pupils show respect for each other, which creates a friendly and mutually supportive environment.

The accommodation and school grounds are attractive and well maintained. Overall, they provide a very good learning environment. The Foundation Phase is catered for particularly well with designated garden areas and outdoor resources. The tepee is a particularly unique feature of the school's outdoor environment and the area is used well for several worthwhile activities that build upon pupils' positive attitudes towards learning. The on-site forest school is another notable aspect. Parents and pupils play an active role in the upkeep of the grounds and this promotes pride in the school.

There are sufficient resources that staff use well to promote learning. The library is small but well stocked with books that are suited to pupils' high standards in reading. However, the school's technology network is sometimes unreliable.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?	Good
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Leadership: Excellent

The leadership of the school is particularly strong. It is based on the mutually beneficial and very effective working relationship between the principal and the headteacher. The principal and headteacher give a strong strategic lead to the school. They have a clear vision for the school, leading all members of the school community by example. This is a major contributor to the school's success. The individual roles and responsibilities of the principal and headteacher are well-defined. They work extremely hard to ensure that the needs of staff, pupils and parents are identified and addressed quickly. They place the importance of pupils' wellbeing at the heart of the school's work and are extremely effective in promoting initiatives that ensure pupils' sense of self-worth, regardless of their ability. As a result, pupils make at least good progress as they move through the school and most achieve very good standards by the end of key stage 2.

Both the principal and headteacher have a strong commitment to providing pupils with opportunities for learning in a well-resourced and attractive environment. They conduct the annual self-evaluation and formulate the school development plan together very effectively. This commitment and the effective planning have led to good improvements in the school's outdoor facilities. These contribute significantly to the pupils' strong sense of wellbeing.

The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Ancillary staff provide appropriate support.

The school has an established staff appraisal system that includes regular lesson observations by the headteacher. The staff work very well together as a team. Subject and department co-ordinators lead regular formal meetings that focus on developing their subjects and planning for improvement. These managers provide staff with good support, although their roles do not focus enough overall on ensuring that the curriculum is implemented well.

School leaders' commitment to listen to pupils is considerable and leads to a school culture and ethos that develops most effectively a modest self-confidence amongst the pupils.

The school's leadership team has worked particularly effectively to address issues raised during the last inspection.

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

Improving quality: Good

The strong leadership provided by the headteacher and principal sets an effective agenda for improvement. They have established effective self-evaluation arrangements that include contributions from a broad range of stakeholders. Leaders are clear about what the school does well and what it needs to do to improve. They take good account of the responses from regular surveys of parents' and pupils' views.

The self-evaluation process at a whole-school level is rigorous and comprehensive. It feeds appropriately into the school's development plan. This plan includes a range of actions that the school will carry out over the next three years with effective monitoring arrangements and suitable success criteria. However, overall, the staff do not contribute enough in identifying priorities and planning for improvement. There is an effective, well-established culture where senior leaders listen attentively and act responsively to the views of pupils. This has led to a number of developments in the curriculum and teaching practices, which have enhanced the quality of pupils' learning experiences. For example, the regular use of the outdoor area in key stage 2 mathematics contributes most effectively to the pupils' engagement with and enjoyment of this subject.

There are good opportunities for staff to attend professional development courses. Recent investment in staff training for the school's Montessori classes has increased teachers' confidence significantly and facilitated the sharing of good practice in the department. Staff carry out regular peer observations to share good practice but the system is at an early stage of development and does not have enough impact.

Partnership working: Good

The school has well-established and useful links with external organisations and other partners, including a very supportive parental body. These partnerships extend pupils' learning experiences, support their personal and social development and impact positively on their wellbeing. These links also contribute effectively to delivery of aspects of the curriculum. For example, a national Christian organisation and a local church assist in the teaching of religious education and the school uses facilities at the church and also the local college for its school performances. Outside organisations provide effective extra-curricular activities such as cycling proficiency and road safety awareness. Individual parents support the school's work well, particularly by assisting with extra-curricular activities and whole-school events.

The school has worked well with two local charities in the last academic year with much of the support being initiated effectively by the pupils themselves.

The Foundation Phase classes in the school have a strong partnership with the on-site Montessori Nursery unit. This has resulted in greater staff participation in a support network which has increased their understanding of professional practice and improved motivation for staff in both teams.

The headteacher oversees transition arrangements for pupils leaving Year 6 to both local maintained and independent schools very effectively. She gives very good support to parents to help them choose the most suitable school for their children. Pupils are prepared well for scholarships and entry to other independent schools in Wales and England. In the last academic year, all pupils gained places at their first choice of secondary school.

The school recognises a need to improve links with other independent schools in order to promote good practice. The headteacher and principal are working proactively to develop this area of the school's work.

Resource management: Good

The school is resourced well. There are enough suitably qualified and experienced staff. They are deployed well, particularly in the younger classes where there is a high level of supervision and support for pupils.

There are good opportunities for staff to attend professional development courses. For example, all Foundation Phase staff have received training in Montessori methods and the school is supporting the headteacher in enabling her to gain modules towards a Masters degree. This commitment to supporting staff professional development has led to successful improvements in practice that have had a significant impact on pupils' standards and wellbeing.

The school makes good use of its available resources. The principal responds appropriately to teachers' requests for resources and allocates them effectively to meet the school's priorities. Investment in Foundation Phase resources and the school's outdoor area is particularly notable. The school recognises the need to enhance the ICT provision in the school.

In light of the good standards achieved by pupils and the high levels of wellbeing, the school offers value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to learner questionnaires

A total of 35 pupils completed the questionnaire. Overall, their responses are very positive when compared with those of pupils in other independent schools across Wales.

All pupils say that they feel safe in school and are doing well. They all think that teachers and other adults in the school help them to learn and make progress.

Nearly all pupils say that the school deals well with any bullying, that they know whom to talk to if they are worried or upset, and that they know what to do and whom to ask if they find their work hard. Nearly all pupils believe that the school teaches them to be healthy and there are lots of chances at school for them to get regular exercise.

Most pupils think that other children behave well at playtime and lunchtime. Most of them also say that they have enough books, equipment and computers to do their work. Many pupils feel that other children behave well so they can get their work done. Many of them also say that their homework helps them to understand and improve their work.

Responses to parent questionnaires

Estyn received 46 responses to the parent questionnaires. All parents gave positive responses to each question. A high proportion of parents agree strongly with the statements. Overall, parents' responses are more positive than national benchmarks for independent schools in Wales.

Almost all parents strongly agree that their child likes school and that the school encourages them to become more mature and take on responsibility.

Most parents also strongly agree that:

- overall they are satisfied with the school and think it is well run;
- their child is safe and was helped to settle in well at the start;
- their child receives appropriate support in relation to their particular needs;
- they feel comfortable to approach the school with questions, suggestions or a problem; and
- their child is well prepared for moving on to the next school.

Many parents strongly agree that:

- their child is making good progress at school;
- teaching is good and staff expect their child to work hard and do his or her best;

- pupils behave well in school and staff treat all children fairly and with respect;
- homework builds on what their child learns in school;
- their child is encouraged to be healthy and take regular exercise;
- they understand the school's procedure for dealing with complaints; and
- there is a good range of activities including trips or visits.

Appendix 2

The inspection team

Rosemary Lait	Reporting Inspector
Kenneth William Underhill	Team Inspector
Adrian Michael Thomas	Peer Inspector
Paul Scudamore	Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003: 3 and 5
Jane Stevens	School Nominee

Copies of the report

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

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.

Year groups, the Foundation Phase and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years of age. This system emphasises the importance of continuity and eases communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and local authorities.

The following table sets out the age ranges relevant to each year group. For example, Year 1 refers to the group of pupils who reach the age of six and Year 13 is the year group who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	N	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	3-4	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The Foundation Phase and key stages cover the following year groups:

Foundation Phase	Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2
Key stage 2	Year 3 to Year 6
Key stage 3	Year 7 to Year 9
Key stage 4	Year 10 and Year 11

Glossary of terms

Core subject indicator (CSI)	This relates to the expected performance in English or Welsh, mathematics and science, the core subjects of the National Curriculum.
Level 1	This represents the equivalent of a GCSE at grade D to G.
Level 1 threshold	This represents a volume of learning equivalent to five GCSEs at grade D to G.
Level 2	This represents the equivalent of a GCSE at grade A* to C.
Level 2 threshold including English or Welsh first language and mathematics	This represents a volume of learning equivalent to five GCSEs at grade A* to C including English or Welsh first language and mathematics
Level 2 threshold	This represents a volume of learning equivalent to five GCSEs at grade A* to C.
Level 3	This represents the equivalent of an A level at grade A*-E.
Level 3 threshold	This represents a volume of learning equivalent to two A levels at grade A* to E.
Average wider points score	This includes all qualifications approved for use in Wales at the relevant age, for example at aged 16 or at aged 18.
Capped wider points score	This includes the best eight results from all qualifications approved for use in Wales at aged 16.
Proprietor	The term 'proprietor', as defined in the Education Act 1996, means the person or people responsible for managing an independent school and can include a sole proprietor, governing bodies, trustees or directors. The ways that independent schools are governed and owned varies a great deal. A proprietor or trust may own a school or the school may have a governing body that appoints a headteacher. Some schools have a combination of these.