

Southampton School Improvement Officer Annual Visit Report

School	Redbridge Community School	
Head teacher / email	Jason Ashley / head@redbridge.southampton.sch.uk	
Chair of Governors / email	David Whalley / davidwhalley_2000@yahoo.co.uk	
School Improvement Officer	Alan Taylor-Bennett	Date of visit: 18 October 2017
Other attendees	n/a	
Last Ofsted inspection grade / date	S5 January 2016: overall judgement of RI but with good leadership and management and good PDB&W	
Last SMG category/date	C in Autumn 2016	
Information about the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is an average-size secondary with 984 students on roll. • The proportion of disadvantaged students is nearly twice the national average. • The proportions of students from minority ethnic heritages, and of those who have English as an additional language, are below average. • The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above average. • The school hosts the LA's Hearing Impaired Resource for KS3&4 • The school serves a community in which there is significant disadvantage and a high degree of social challenge. • There have been no significant changes to the school's senior leadership team, governing body or high-level organisation/structure since the last annual review. 	
The schools' judgement of its overall effectiveness against the Ofsted framework:	Good.	

Main findings

The 2017 outcomes are the best academic results the school has achieved. They come as no surprise: this is the first cohort to emerge from the influence of a curriculum regime some years ago that was incompatible with both pupils' academic needs and current national performance measures. This year is when the underlying strengths in the quality of learning of pupils here finally begin to be reflected in published end of key stage 4 performance data. Leaders are well placed to continue to improve end of KS4 outcomes for subsequent cohorts and, at the same time, ensure their good progress, and the highest standards of care and support for them and their families, throughout their time here.

Key challenges for / barriers to further improvement

Good quality systems exist to secure at least good progress for all groups of pupils and to ensure that all children are safe and well cared for. These good systems, and the strong leadership at all levels in the school, give it a good capacity to continue to improve.

Specific areas of focus this year are the progress:

- pupils make by the end of key stage 4 in the EBacc element
- of boys, and specifically middle ability boys, in English and in mathematics
- of previously higher attaining pupils, particularly as they move through key stage 4.

Agreed actions to take / SIO-led Reviews / school-to school support and monitoring required		
Agreed actions	Owner	Deadline and intended impact
Drive even faster improvements in pupil's achievements in Ebacc-element subjects	HT and SLT line managers	Positive P8 in the EBacc element for all groups in 2018
Monitor and intervene when necessary to secure the rapid progress of middle ability boys in English and in mathematics.	HT and HODs	Positive progress indicators for this group emerging in maths and English in current tracking analyses, and at the end of KS4 in 2018
Ensure that the currently better progress of higher ability pupils in key stage 3 is seen throughout key stage 4.	HT and SLT	Positive P8 outcomes for this group in 2018
Ensure that the website is fully compliant	HT	As soon as possible

1a. The Effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school.

School self-evaluation grade against Ofsted framework: 2

SIO agrees on basis of evidence presented? Yes

- The headteacher continues to provide high quality and strongly value-driven leadership. His fascination with, and commitment to, responding to the diverse and complex needs of this community drives him, and by his example his senior team and staff, to adopt imaginative and entirely well-suited responses to the challenge of driving up outcomes and ensuring the highest standard of welfare provision for all pupils.
- Leaders' self-evaluation is accurate and perceptive. Below the surface of the self-evaluation summary document lies strong evidence and detailed analysis. This is because leaders gather a range of good information about the impact of their work. This supports well-focused development planning. Close and thoughtful monitoring and evaluation provide good feedback about the on-going impact of their work; leaders use this to continually adjust priorities and adapt provision.
- Leaders' knowledge and grip on the current achievements of pupils is impressive. Their KS3 analyses based on pupils' knowledge and skills in every subject are accurate and useful. They use their 'heat maps' to highlight where they can celebrate strengths and where they need to drive improvement faster and more securely.
- At the time of the last annual visit leaders and governors were keen to secure better levels of parental engagement with the school. Since then they have widened the range of strategies used to engage with the local community, from small scale but significant improvements in day-to-day communications and dealings with parents, to opening the site in the mornings, evenings and weekends to be a venue for community activities. A recent parental survey, based on the Ofsted Parent View, yielded an impressive 394 responses. It revealed very high levels of satisfaction with nearly all aspects of the school's work. For example less than 6% of parents have concerns around bullying and only around 10% are unconvinced of the school's success in ensuring that pupils are well behaved outside of school. Only 1.3% of parents would not recommend the school. Particular strengths were in parents' perceptions of their children's happiness, safety and progress and the quality of the teaching they receive.
- The views of pupils are also keenly sought and shown value. A wide range of ways of doing this, including 'blind referrals', exit questionnaires and subject questionnaires, provides valuable management information.
- The school is currently fully staffed and classes are delivered by subject specialists. Morale is high; staff feel a great sense of loyalty to Redbridge.
- Significant adjustments to the curriculum made a few years ago are beginning to produce outcomes that reflect the good quality of teaching and learning here. Over 90% of pupils now take two science GCSEs and 2.9 EBacc slots are filled compared to last year's 46% and 2.2

slots. Leaders are aware, however, that more remains to be done to secure good outcomes especially in the EBacc and English slots.

- There is good knowledge and understanding of recent curriculum changes in KS2. Good links already exist between staff here in English, mathematics and PE, and primary colleagues, and they are developing in science. Because of this, leaders are aware that Year 7 pupils' shortfalls in reading skills are currently a priority and this is leading to adjustments in the literacy strategy responses.
- Leaders are aware that the website is not currently compliant. The issues are the absence of the pupil premium strategy for 2017/18, details of the desired outcomes of the catch-up premium for 2017/18, information about governors' business and financial interests and any governance roles they may have in other schools, the dates on some required policies, and the omission of the name of the SENCo.
- Leaders forecast a balanced budget for the foreseeable future. Reserves that were built up over recent years have now been spent on resources to promote pupils' learning including science equipment, general teaching and learning resources and a minibus.

1b. The effectiveness of governance

School self-evaluation grade against Ofsted framework: 2

SIO agrees on basis of evidence presented? Yes

- Governors exercise close and appropriate oversight of senior leaders' work to drive improvements. They receive good quality information about progress against the key priorities identified in the development plan from the headteacher, and they carefully triangulate it against other sources of information they obtain directly. Governors use this information to scrutinise and probe leaders' self evaluations and the security of their judgements in a rigorous manner. The headteacher feels that governors play a significant part in the life of the school and don't simply give him and other senior staff 'an easy ride'.
- Governors are proud of the quality of their oversight of the school's work. They maintain a 'challenge sheet' as a record of their challenge, interventions and impact.
- Governors meet with leaders of departments that perform relatively less well and require reassurance about the steps being taken to address any shortfalls. For example, they took a keen interest in mathematics last year; this oversight played a part in the significant improvements in pupils' outcomes in this subject in 2017. Governors are keen for geography to be a focus this year.
- Governors' visits to the school are regular and include a whole-day learning walk when drop-ins to departments are made in proportion to need.
- Governors carry out their statutory responsibilities with care and attention. For example, the operation of the pay policy is scrutinised closely.

2. Quality of teaching, learning and assessment at the school

School self-evaluation grade against Ofsted framework: 2

SIO agrees on basis of evidence presented? Yes

- The seven lessons visited briefly were representative of the teaching and learning in the school. In nearly every classroom pupils were seen to be focused on their learning, working quietly and studiously and showing respect for each other's views and for the authority of their teacher. While a few books were untidy the great majority contained well-organised work.
- The intellectual demand of lesson content was obvious: pupils in a middle set Year 9 in English were studying The Prelude and gaining sophisticated insights into the poem under the close guidance of their teacher; Year 9 pupils were predicting the arrangements of electrons in a Potassium atom in science and pupils in the EduK8 facility were exploring ideas around animal sacrifice and burnt offerings having read part of Deuteronomy.
- The school's external consultant graded teaching and learning in all of the lessons observed as good or better in a visit earlier this year. The school's own judgments of the QofTLA are that 92% is G2+ and none is inadequate. Nothing was seen to cast doubt on these judgments. The rapid and secure improvements evident in pupils' outcomes are an indication of the securely

good teaching throughout the school.

- Teachers are keen to learn about the success of their work from the well-structured assessment scheme in place. For example, detailed question-level analysis in all subjects has identified the need to clarify the demands of 'describe', 'discuss' and 'explain' openings to questions in science; strengths identified in this practice in PE are being used to support this. Line management meetings are monitored for evidence of follow-up and improvements are tracked in lesson drop-ins.

3. Personal development, behaviour and welfare of students at the school

School self-evaluation grade against Ofsted framework: 2

SIO agrees on basis of evidence presented? Yes

- Pupils' attendance is stable and near the national average, despite the significant social challenges that a large proportion of the community faces. According to the school, attendance over 2016/17 was 94.3%. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils was 92.7% but is improving, and the attendance of those with SEN was 91.9% and is also improving. Persistent absence remains slightly above the national average at around 14.5%.
- Pupils' conduct in the lessons visited was very good; their active involvement and good levels of interest promoted good learning. Around the site pupils are friendly, cooperative and respectful of each other and of staff. The vast majority respond to reminders from staff about behavioural expectations quickly and happily.
- Exclusions last year were down 1.1% from 2015/16, at 5.9% and are therefore now below the national average. There has been only one half-day exclusion so far this term. This is impressive given the complex needs of pupils here and the challenges that many have in their lives outside of school. The number of incidents leading to the use of the exclusion room fell from 397 in 2015/16 to 287 last year. The number of senior staff callouts to lessons has halved over the last few years. Edu-K8 continues to serve the needs of pupils who may otherwise have been permanently excluded.
- All aspects of safeguarding and child protection procedures, including the single central record, were found to be compliant. Many staff are DSL trained and safeguarding has a high profile in the school. We discussed some ways in which the culture of safeguarding could be further strengthened.
- Leaders pride themselves on being an 'outward-facing institution'. They work with a wide range of external partners including both local universities, The Saints Foundation, No Limits, Into University (this school's attendance is the highest in the LA), and this is a lead school for promoting sexual health.

4. Outcomes for children and learners at the school

School self-evaluation grade against Ofsted framework: 2

SIO agrees on basis of evidence presented? Yes

- In 2017 provisional outcomes for pupils improved significantly from a P8 of -0.62, and therefore below the floor standard, to a P8 of -0.12 which is in line with national expectations.
- This much better progress is reflected in this cohort's higher A8 score - an increase of 1.35 from the 2016 outcome, to 41.6. The basics measure increased significantly from 36% to 49%, exceeding leaders' projections of a 10% improvement.
- Achievement in mathematics was highlighted as a key challenge area at the last annual visit; here, progress improved from -0.5 to -0.25.
- However, within this overall picture of improvement, the overall progress made by pupils in English slipped from -0.3 last year to be -0.43 in 2017. Leaders are well aware of the cause being a disappointing overall performance by boys, specifically middle-ability boys. Despite this around 40% of pupils achieved at G5+, 63% at G4+. There have been significant changes to the organisation of teaching and learning in the department, including single-sex grouping throughout key stage 4 from this year. Current progress indicators in English are much more in line with expectations.
- Previously lower-attaining pupils made very good progress: the P8 score for LAPs was +0.26.

This was not the case for previously middle and higher attainers, with P8 scores of -0.24 and -0.21 respectively. Leaders are keen for their higher expectations of the more able to translate into strong progress by the end of key stage 4; analyses of the current achievement of this group in KS3&4 are reassuring but there are indications that leaders' continued vigilance around the progress of the more able and 'shine' pupils is appropriate.

- The progress made by disadvantaged pupils by the end of KS4 in 2017 has been a key area of focus for leaders over recent years. 2017 outcomes were significantly better than previously. While there is still more to do with a P8 for this sizeable group of -0.23 this is a significant improvement from last year's -0.9. Both the %basics gap and the A8 gap were much smaller than projected. On average, this group made significantly better progress in the open element compared with the mathematics, English and open elements where the real work remains to be done. Pupil achievement tracking in KS3 shows very few gaps in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and others here across subjects, demonstrating the good impact of leaders' work in this important area.
- Pupils with SEN made quite poor progress by the end of KS4 in 2015/16, with a P8 of -0.7. The 2017 cohort did better and the 2017 P8 for this group is expected to be around -0.32. Analyses of the progress of pupils with SEN in Years 7-11 show that their achievement is now in line with the good progress being made by all other groups of pupils here.
- The main issue for the school has been to translate improvements in the quality of pupils' learning over the last few years into tangible improvements in key performance indicators by the end of key stage 4. The proportion of pupils entered for the EBacc improved to be 36% in 2017, slightly above the England average for the first time. However progress in the EBacc element was significantly lower than in the open element (-0.53 cf +0.58). This is reflected in the low (17%) proportion of pupils achieving EBacc at grade 4/C or above.
- Typically around 80%+ of pupils have reading ages below their chronological age on entry to the school. For the current Year 7 it is 87%. This issue continues to be tackled successfully via the school's own high-profile and successful iSpell, iWrite and Read2 initiatives. The success of the strategies has been demonstrated in improvements in the marks gained by pupils in high-tariff extended-response questions in external examinations, iMultiply has been added to this suite of responses.
- At the last annual visit leaders were keen to address what they found to be significant skills and knowledge deficits in pupils on entry to the school. The iKnow programme, delivered in tutor time, is helping to address the low levels of cultural capital that pupils have.