

From the time of the previous Ofsted inspection in June 22 at which we raised significant concerns regarding the misconduct of the Lead inspector and inaccuracies of the report, we faced relentless pressure from both Ofsted and the DfE.

On a very small school this pressure was excessive, with three further inspections taking place within twenty months, and requirement for Action Plans in-between.

Our complaint, like that of many other schools, failed to overturn the injustice. Sadly, it took the death of a headteacher, Ruth Perry, devastated by her school's Ofsted inspection, to open a floodgate of complaints and a government Inquiry into Ofsted. We gained a sense of validation when this Inquiry uncovered considerable flaws in Ofsted's procedures including its handling of complaints. The Inquiry reported '*worryingly low*,' confidence in Ofsted and its inspection process.

A prominent education leader stated, '*...there is a sensible degree of scepticism in many quarters over the usefulness of an Ofsted report.*'

Ofsted's response to the Inquiry is slowly underway, but our unfortunate experience of Ofsted's processes left us sceptical and with low confidence that our latest inspection team in January 24, would make requested changes to mis-leading information in the report. Our concerns were correct.

The current style of inspection reporting misrepresents many schools, in particular small, specialist schools such as ours. This was uncovered in the Inquiry into Ofsted's practices, highlighting the fundamental changes needed in the organisation's operation. To date, the inspection process is relatively unchanged.

For our inspection, we valued the inspectors' understanding of the priority we place on our students' well-being. This was recognised in the happy, settled and calm conduct of pupils in our school. It is fundamental for us to enable our young people to feel settled and valued for their individual qualities and in doing this, nurturing their potential to learn.

This positive insight came from inspectors who were familiar with specialist schools -rather than the mainstream approach of the 2022 inspection. Despite this however, the inspectors' small window of time in school meant they relied heavily on data that provides records of the curriculum and measures the progress of pupils. In Ofsted's framework for judging '*quality of education*' there is little recognition of less-measurable but important evidence of progress for pupils who, for example, have overcome considerable personal challenges in learning a valuable life skill.

In judging the '*quality of education*,' inspectors saw a range of subjects and breadth of study options suited to the differing abilities of our pupils. They were satisfied with the personalised provision for pupils who needed this, but felt the assessment data tracking this progress had less clarity. Therefore although two out of three areas, 'intent' and 'implementation,' met the 'good' grading for quality of education, the third area 'Impact' was graded as 'requires improvement'. Under the current Ofsted process, this led to downgrading the whole '*quality of education*' to the lower judgement.

Although inspectors saw and commented on '*assessment going on all the time*,' the limitations of the inspection for specific, measurable data impacted the overall grading for the school. This information was only unpacked by the inspector on the final evening, with little time or opportunity for us to provide an evidence-based response showing assessment processes that are rigorous and consistent across the school and curriculum.

In a letter to the Lead inspector, the Headteacher described the disadvantage this process had placed on her, and provided detailed evidence of assessment that should have been judged as at least 'good'. Consideration was not given to this as the inspection process allows only for evidence seen during the inspection time-frame.

It is of great concern that despite the failings noted from the Inquiry, the Ofsted framework continues to misrepresent schools through its processes. In our inspection, despite a majority of areas meeting the 'good' criteria for quality of education, the whole element was downgraded based on data for assessment. Under the inspection procedure this has then automatically -and unfairly- downgraded 'Leadership and Management to a similar judgement.

The considerable flaws in the Ofsted processes are rightly under national scrutiny.

However our values and integrity are upheld within the separate framework that is beyond Ofsted. This is **the Independent School Standards (ISS), the statutory framework of requirements governing all independent schools. We have met all the ISS and the indication that despite the Ofsted framework, we have passed the national essential standards for quality of education, health and safety, pupil welfare and school management.**

We are grateful to our school community, parents, guardians and students for responding so positively to Ofsted's 'Parent view'. The feedback was commended by the inspector and has been such an encouragement to all of us working to provide the very best support for our students to succeed.

Yours sincerely,

Colin Lannen, Proprietor

Gill Makinson, Headteacher

Inspection of Red Rose School

28-30 North Promenade, St Annes on Sea, Lytham St Annes, Lancashire FY8 2NQ

Inspection dates: 31 January to 2 February 2024

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Inadequate

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel welcome, safe and happy at this school. Most of them have experienced disruption to their education in the past. Once here, they settle in quickly and make new friends. Staff are warm and caring. This enables pupils to feel secure.

Pupils typically try their best and complete their tasks. They know that staff will help them if they find work difficult. Since the last inspection, the school has raised its expectations for pupils' achievement. However, the quality of education that pupils receive requires further improvement. This hinders how well pupils learn.

The school is calm and orderly. Pupils demonstrate sensible behaviour as they move around school. Pupils are sensitively reminded of the school rules should they ever forget them. They enjoy the rewards that the school provides for positive behaviour such as trips to the local zoo.

Pupils learn about a range of faiths and cultures. They take part in activities that help them to understand fundamental British values such as democracy and the rule of law. Pupils have opportunities to take on responsibilities in school such as becoming members of the school council. These experiences contribute well to pupils' wider development.

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

Since the last inspection, the school has made some progress on its journey towards improvement. Older pupils are now offered a wider range of qualifications. Moreover, the school has set out the knowledge that pupils need to learn and the order in which this should be taught across the subject curriculums. Staff follow these curriculums to design their lessons for pupils. However, the school's work to develop an understanding of the impact of its curriculum is at a very early stage. This limits the extent to which the school can identify and make any further improvements.

In lessons, staff check that pupils understand the learning provided. Staff typically take appropriate steps to correct any misconceptions that pupils may have. However, the school has not given enough thought to the range of information that staff should use to check pupils' progress through the curriculum. This prevents staff from knowing precisely how well pupils have learned and remembered the important knowledge that they have been taught.

Reading has a high priority in the curriculum. The school has ensured that pupils encounter a wide range of literature to help bring their learning to life. Pupils enjoy visiting the school's well-stocked library to select books for themselves. Older pupils value their weekly visits to the local community library. Pupils at the early stage of learning to read receive effective support to ensure that they catch up on any missed phonics knowledge. Pupils typically enjoy reading and achieve well from their starting points.

Most pupils have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan) that includes education outcomes. When pupils join the school, leaders and staff break down these outcomes into smaller, achievable steps. However, the school does not provide staff with guidance about how to record these small steps of learning or about when these should be reviewed. This makes it more difficult for staff to ensure that pupils are making the progress that they should towards the achievement of their long-term goals.

The majority of pupils attend school regularly. Staff set clear and consistent expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils usually listen carefully to their teachers. Disruption in lessons is rare. This ensures that everyone can get on with their work.

Since the last inspection, the school has improved its provision for careers advice and guidance. Pupils follow an appropriate programme so that they are well informed about the education, employment and training choices and options open to them.

Through the curriculum for personal, social, health and economic education, pupils develop a range of skills in readiness for adult life. For example, they learn to manage finances, cook meals and plan journeys. They find out about a range of faiths and cultures when they visit places of worship. Pupils learn about difference and diversity and gain an understanding of the protected characteristics. Pupils benefit from a range of trips and visits that support their learning and contribute to their personal development.

The proprietor has put in place a suitable policy for relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education. This policy has been developed in consultation with parents and carers. It is published on the school's website. The programme for RSE follows current statutory guidance. Pupils of primary age receive age-appropriate relationships and health education.

When the school was inspected in June 2022, a wide range of independent school standards (the standards) were found to be unmet. The proprietor has taken effective steps to ensure that all of the standards are now met. A number of repairs and improvements have been made to the premises. For example, pupils benefit from a new kitchen in which to learn about food technology. Pupils can study music in the new music room and recording studio. Classrooms are clean, tidy and well lit. Pupils have two suitable areas for outdoor play and recreation. The proprietor has put in place a relevant health and safety policy. The school complies with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Staff at the school appreciate the concern that leaders show for their well-being. Leaders take account of the impact on staff workload when they make decisions about teaching and learning. The school engages positively with parents and professionals in ways that support pupils' experiences at school.

The proprietor asks questions of leaders about their work to address the school's priorities for improvement. However, some of these questions, and the information provided in response, are not clearly recorded. This limits the proprietor's capacity to check that the school is making sufficient progress on its journey towards improvement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Staff have received insufficient guidance about the school's expectations for how pupils' learning should be assessed. On occasions, this prevents staff from making use of all of the information available to understand the progress that pupils are making and to adjust their teaching where necessary. The school should ensure that all staff know how to make the most effective use of assessment information to ensure that pupils learn as well as they should.
- The school's work to develop an overview of the impact of the curriculum is at an early stage. This limits its capacity to make any further improvements that might be needed. The school should now ensure that leaders and staff have a clear understanding of the impact of the curriculum on pupils' achievement.
- The school does not ensure that there are clear timescales for the small steps of progress that some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make. This makes it difficult for staff to check that pupils are achieving these small steps as quickly and as securely as they should. The school should ensure that timescales are clearly identified so that pupils are supported to make strong progress towards long-term goals.
- The school does not ensure that clear records are kept of the questions that the proprietor asks leaders about their work to improve the curriculum. This prevents the proprietor from being able to check on the impact of this work. The school should ensure that sufficient information is recorded to enable the proprietor to check that the school continues to improve the quality of education provided to pupils.

How can I feed back my views?

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

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

School details

Unique reference number	131163
DfE registration number	888/6032
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10299177
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 17
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	35
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Colin Lannen
Headteacher	Gill Makinson
Annual fees (day pupils)	£19,698 to £32,790
Telephone number	01253 720570
Website	www.redroseschool.co.uk
Email address	office@redroseschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 to 23 June 2022

Information about this school

- The school's previous standard inspection was 21 to 23 June 2022. The school received a progress monitoring inspection on 11 May 2023.
- The school is located in premises at 28-30 North Promenade, St Annes on Sea, Lytham St Annes, Lancashire FY8 2NQ.
- The school has a Christian ethos.
- Almost all pupils attending the school have an EHC plan. Most pupils have specific learning difficulties. The school also caters for pupils who have dyslexia, dyspraxia and autism.
- There are currently no key stage 1 pupils on roll at the school.
- The school makes use of one unregistered alternative provision.
- The school is registered to admit up to 47 pupils.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other school leaders.
- The lead inspector met with the proprietor and one of the directors.
- The lead inspector spoke on the telephone with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, science and art and design. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with subject leaders, discussed the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to staff, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also observed some pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- The inspectors discussed the curriculum in some other subjects with leaders.
- A very small number of sixth-form students were on the school roll at the time of the inspection. Consequently, no judgement for the sixth form has been made.

However, inspectors considered the education and welfare of these students when judging other aspects of the school.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The lead inspector made a tour of the school. Inspectors also reviewed documentation to check the school's compliance with the standards.
- The inspectors considered the views expressed by parents in their responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included free-text comments.
- The inspectors spoke with some pupils about school life. They took account of the responses to the pupil survey.
- The inspectors spoke with staff to discuss leaders' support for their workload and well-being. Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

The school's progress in meeting previously failed standards

During the inspection we checked whether the school now meets the independent school standards that it was judged to have failed at its previous progress monitoring inspection on 11 May 2023.

- The outcome of this part of the inspection is: **the school now meets the previously failed standards.**
- The school has now put in place a suitably structured programme of careers advice and guidance. Pupils from Year 7 onwards learn, in ways appropriate to their age, about a range of careers and the pathways they might need to take in order to realise their career ambitions.
- The school has now consolidated its work to offer older, most-able pupils a wider range of subjects to study to a greater level of depth. These pupils now have opportunities to enter for qualifications, such as GCSEs, in these subjects.
- The school has secured external, professional support to gain a better understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. The proprietor has ensured that sufficient resources have been made available to secure and embed the school's leadership arrangements. There are plans in place to strengthen this capacity even further.

The school now meets the following standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 2(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if-
 - 2(1)(a) the proprietor ensures that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, which provides for the matters specified in sub-paragraph (2) is drawn up and implemented effectively; and
 - 2(1)(b) the written policy, plans and schemes of work-
 - 2(1)(b)(i) take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan.

- 2(2) For the purposes of paragraph 2(1)(a), the matters are-
 - 2(2)(e) for pupils receiving secondary education, access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that-
 - 2(2)(e)(i) is presented in an impartial manner
 - 2(2)(e)(ii) enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options; and
 - 2(2)(e)(iii) helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential.

- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school-
 - 3(d) shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school-
 - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently.

Inspection team

Mavis Smith, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lindy Griffiths

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

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