

Red Gates School – Context

Red Gates School provides education for pupils aged 4-11 who have a Severe Learning Difficulty and complex behaviour. 67% also have a diagnosis of Autism. We have 160 pupils on role (66% boys 33% girls). Pupils are in classes of 8 with a teacher and a range of skilled teaching assistants, depending on the class’ needs and abilities. The percentage of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is 47% compared to 24.6% nationally. All pupils at Red Gates have an Education Health Care Plan.

In February 2023 Ofsted determined that there was enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that Red Gates could be judged outstanding if Ofsted had carried out a graded inspection at time. Ofsted will be returning for a graded inspection between February 2024 and February 2025. In June Red Gates was a finalist in the ‘specialist provision of the year at the TES awards.

Areas for development from last inspection

No areas for development identified from last Ofsted inspection.

As a school we recognise that our next steps to ensure we maintain a high standard of Teaching and Learning are:

- To further develop the use of signing to support the development of pupil’s communication skills.
- To further develop the teaching and learning of PE across school.
- To further enhance our staff wellbeing offer.
- To further develop the use of specialist rooms and areas.
- To extend our outdoor learning offer.
- To provide a broader range of activities and strategies to further support the development of life skills.

Outcomes of performance data 2023/24

- HT to work with core subject leads to ensure they fully understand the data and what it means for their subjects. Subject Leader action plans to address any gaps.
- Maths lead to review the successes following ongoing training and development and continue to review and monitor curriculum and assessment framework to ensure it is most effective.
- Following the successes in the development of Reading across the school, Reading subject leads to continue to support teachers in the delivery of the curriculum.
- LMT to support PE lead in a whole school focus to develop pupil progress in PE. This will include updating the SoW, introducing new activities and further developing physical skills.
- Half termly monitoring of SOLAR by DH to ensure all class staff are uploading and recording evidence of progress.
- Following the successes in the development of ICT across the school, ICT subject lead to continue to support teachers in the delivery of the curriculum.
- AHTs to ensure home packs go home weekly with pupils to support generalisation of skills.
- Behaviour team and DH to continue to work with therapy teams to ensure targeted and appropriate support is in place where needed.
- DH to work with SaLT to ensure consistency in support across all pathways.
- LMT to push parent involvement in assessment and lead teachers to direct parents to login to SOLAR regularly to develop their understanding of their child’s progress and ability.
- LMT to review pupils that have changed pathway this year to ensure they are in the most appropriate learning environment.
- LMT to continue to monitor how community visits support pupils to generalise and consolidate learnt skills, ensuring progress.

Leadership and Management. Current Judgement: Outstanding

Evidence for judgement

- There is a strong culture of outstanding and effective practice in the school. Senior leaders including governors are passionate about securing continuous improvement to provide the best education they can to meet the needs of the pupils.
- There is a strong collaborative approach with all stakeholders and all are given the opportunity to reflect and contribute to future initiatives.
- Leaders have drawn from the expertise of a range of professionals and families to craft a coherently planned and highly personalised curriculum.
- The leadership team are supported by an enthusiastic, present and knowledgeable governing body.
- Leaders are outward thinking and work with the Local Authority on a number of initiatives including providing a robust and well respected outreach programme for mainstream schools and contributing to the new SEND strategy 2023-2026.
- Teaching and Learning in Summer 2024 was at least Good from all Teachers and TA4's. This is attributable to the school's robust appraisal process, support plan, CPD, mentoring & coaching, which encompasses all aspect of the Teachers' Standards and quickly tackles under-performance.
- Committed and passionate leadership results in a powerful ethos that places personalised learning at the heart of what the school does. School leaders have a clear vision and strong core learning values that permeate through and are owned by the school. This captures Pupil Voice and enhances pupils' experiences of school.
- The progress made by disadvantaged pupils is as good as other pupils. Pupil Premium funding is used effectively. Due to the nature of the school cohort all pupils are deemed socially disadvantaged and the additional funding is targeted at improving access to the curriculum and other therapeutic provisions, e.g., music therapy. Those students entitled to the Pupil Premium achieve at least as well as their peers who are not entitled and there are no significant gaps.
- All pupils' EHCPs show a purposeful Golden Thread between aspirations, needs, outcomes and provision.
- Partnership working and communication with families is highly effective and there is a broad range of training and support in place for families.
- The school has clear and robust safeguarding procedures, acknowledged by Ofsted and the LA, that identify when pupils may be at risk, neglect, abuse or exploitation. School staff have up-to-date understanding of safeguarding issues, including radicalisation, extremism, sexual exploitation and the Prevent Strategy. This means pupils are as safe as practicably possible. Staff go beyond the expected to ensure all pupils are safe and families are supported.
- There is a clear and well publicised structure for reporting Safeguarding concerns, there are trained DSLs leading each Pathway, supported by the Head, Deputy, Behaviour and Learning Specialist and FLO.
- DSL supervision session completed half-termly alongside other special schools in Croydon and an Ed Psych.
- CPOMS is embedded in school practise and is closely monitored by Pathway DSLs, FLO and whole school DSL ensuring trends and concerns are picked up and actioned quickly and efficiently.
- Leaders work in a regional special schools cluster group (Specialist Learning Partnership – SLP) and check and moderate pupils' curriculum and achievement with that of other schools. This provides additional confirmation that Red Gates pupils are making good progress.
- Leaders are always striving to provide varied and exciting opportunities for our pupils which may otherwise be unavailable to them e.g. hair cut provision.

Next steps identified in our School Development Plan priorities:

KP2 and KP3

Quality of Teaching. Current Judgement: Outstanding
Evidence for Judgement
INTENT

- Pupils will leave Red Gates as lifelong learners, with the skills, knowledge and interests to access the next stage of their education.
- In order to provide pupils at Red Gates with experiences that are relevant, interesting and challenging, while identifying opportunities for progression, we have created a curriculum structure which encompasses 4 pathways.
- Red Gates curriculum is responsive to individual pupils, building on strengths, interests and learning styles. The curriculum is ambitious and ensures all pupils reach their potential regardless of barriers they may face.
- Each pathway provides an individualised and creative curriculum that inspires pupils to develop skills to be effective communicators with knowledge of how to self-regulate in order to maintain a calm and alert state where pupils are supported to reach their potential both academically and holistically.
- Our thematic curriculums supports a balance of stimulating contexts to ensure breadth and coverage. We are continually developing our learning environments outside the confines of the classroom, promoting learning through positive outdoor experiences and play.
- Targets are set by teachers taking account of EHCP and Personalised Plan targets and moderated with previous progress, teacher assessment and evaluation of individual pupils needs. Rigour is demonstrated by examples of how teachers set targets, strong moderation, and by formulating a rich evidence of progress. There is a weekly staff led CPD training programme to ensure that excellent teaching is the pre-requisite for learning. Feedback from staff is very positive about the benefits. The overarching CPD program addresses the training needs of all staff, including training routes into teaching.
- The curriculum is personalised to meet the learning needs, behaviour, self-regulation, special interests and cognitive levels of each pupil.
- Teachers have high expectations for all pupils. They use well-judged and imaginative teaching strategies that together with interventions, match individual needs accurately.

IMPLIMENTATION

- Regular and relentless evaluation of teaching reveals that the majority of lessons are good and outstanding. This means that pupils make substantial improvement in their progress.
- Staff are skilled in reflective practice and it is embedded across staff CPD sessions.
- In the last rounds of observations in Summer 2024 Teachers and TA4's obtained 48% Good, 52% Outstanding
- Developing pupils' communication underpins all the work of the school. The teaching of reading, writing, communication and maths is good or better, with due regard to meaningful learning in real life contexts.
- Teachers promote pupils' high levels of resilience, confidence and independence when they tackle challenging activities.
- Teachers work closely with speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, school nursing team, canine therapist and music therapist to ensure that all the needs of pupils are met.
- A strong community outreach programme supports local organisations to develop their understanding of Red Gates and how to best support our pupils on visits.

- A full carefully planned programme of parent workshops and family learning is in place to provide families with the knowledge, skill and understanding to support their children to consolidate and generalise skills outside of school.
- There is a thorough assessment and recording process (SOLAR) which provides clear information about how well pupils are making progress in English, Maths, Science, ICT and PSHE as well as personal development. Subject leaders have rewritten schemes of work that identify which core subjects the foundation subjects are assessed and recorded against, providing generalisation of skills.
- Improving teaching, learning and assessment and accurate areas being targeted for individuals is supported by the specialised assessment tools devised for each pathway and the use of SOLAR software to ensure easy access to recording and monitoring of progress.
- Thus pupils' assessment is finely tuned according to their specified needs.

IMPACT

- Teachers' feedback to pupils contributes to effective improvements to pupils' learning using appropriate, verbal, non-verbal, written and pictorial communication to acknowledge pupils' successes and signpost next steps.
- Pupils' attainment on entry is always well below that expected for their age. From these very low starting points pupils from all groups, make good progress in line with their abilities.
- Leaders track the progress of all groups and there is no significant difference in progress of groups. This is a result of the highly individualised plans for each pupil to meet their learning needs.
- The development of highly effective, usable communication underpins all learning in the school. Many pupils are non-verbal. Teachers and support staff are innovative in the resources they produce and as a result pupils can begin to make sense of their world and express themselves more effectively through a range of AAC.
- Communication Support Assistants support class teams, individual pupils and class teachers in developing resources, supporting strategy development and modelling good practice for communication.
- The provision of speech and language therapists, occupational therapists and music therapist helps pupils overcome barriers to their learning and complements the innovative, holistic and pupil-centred work of the school. There is a disseminated approach to SaLT and OT, with therapists leading staff teams to deliver effective strategies.
- There is good and outstanding teaching which builds on the school's focus on individual pupils' success. Staff successfully show pupils how to apply their skills in practical situations such as community-related activities and this prepares them well for transition and later life.
- Learners have excellent attitudes to their learning because they are motivated by their learning activities set.
- The class staff have a wide knowledge base and work together to give the children the best opportunities they can. The diversity of the staff also allow different ideas to come together to give the children a broader education.

Next steps identified in our School Development Plan priorities:

KP1, KP2, KP4, KP5 and KP6

Behaviour and Attitudes. Current Judgement: Outstanding
Evidence for Judgement

- Pupils enjoy their lessons. They are given high quality support in the more unstructured times of day and engage with play and extra-curricular activities to the best of their abilities.
- Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning and can be observed taking pride in their work and other accomplishments. Pupils are supported to positively interact with each other.
- School Council meet regularly with representation from each pathway. Pupils express choices and views in meaningful ways to the best of their ability. Their involvement is never regarded as tokenistic and requests are always fed back to LMT meetings and acknowledged. School council runs a weekly tuck shop selling baked goods made by pupils the previous day.
- Where appropriate, pupils have begun to contribute their views to their EHCP using Talking Mats.
- Pupils are invited, where appropriate to provide their views in the Croydon Wellbeing Survey using Talking Mats.
- Our school's family liaison officer works closely with SLT to review persistent absence and is actioned accordingly.
- Withdrawal of home-school transport arising from transport staff sickness and recruitment issues impact on pupil attendance and continues to need rigorous challenge by senior leaders and governors. HT had led special school heads in penning a letter to the LA highlighting the impact of cancelled transport.
- Behaviour and Communication leads provide annual training for positive behaviour strategies and communication for all transport staff. Incident reports from transport are sent to the Behaviour Lead to action and provide support where appropriate.
- The behaviour of pupils is mostly good and can be outstanding relative to their individual challenges. Where challenging behaviour occurs, this is expertly managed by staff, led by our fulltime, Behaviour and Learning Support Practitioner with behaviour support assistant. Staff are exceptional role models and understand the link between behaviour and communication. Each pupil has one of three types of Behaviour Support Document, depending on the degree of their needs, to develop their self-management and self-regulation techniques, e.g. signalling to opt out when anxious.
- Our pupils do not understand the concept of bullying, but staff recognise outcomes for individual pupils may be the same. As a result all behaviour is closely monitored by our high staff ratios and personalised interventions. Staff training on what Child on Child abuse looks like at Red Gates takes place annually.
- Zones of Regulation is embedded practice across school and used at different levels depending on cognitive understanding. Pupils are supported to express how they are feeling using their preferred ACC and what they need.
- Exclusion is not used as a behaviour tool and there are no pupils on reduced timetables.
- Redeveloped play areas and specific play training for staff has promoted engagement and decreased incidents of challenging behaviour during playtimes.
- Pupils are encouraged to be autonomous learners through having opportunities to engage in a wide range of activities, supporting them to develop a love for learning with a goal to be motivated, curious and independent learners.
- Staff at Red Gates have a wealth of expertise and experience that enable us to understand how our pupils function and learn. This allows us to provide the right level of challenge to ensure pupils can reach their potential.

Next steps identified in our School Development Plan priorities:

KP1, KP4 and KP6

Personal Development. Current Judgement: Outstanding

Evidence for Judgement

- Leaders at all levels have shared ambition and enthusiasm and are very effective in their work to support learners’ holistic development, enabling them to develop and discover interests and talents. They frequently and accurately track pupils’ progress in a range of subjects including life skills.
- Staff work closely with parents and agencies to ensure the wellbeing of pupils. Our DSL team has 7 members, led by our Deputy Head. Our Family Liaison Officer is part of the team.
- As far as practicable, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including an appreciation of their vulnerability on the internet. Staff help them to understand dangers.
- Staff work to establish a sense of community within and outside the school. Learning outside the classroom is valued and trips to encourage independence and learn life skills give pupils a strong sense of belonging that enables them to participate as members of a wider community.
- There is a strong emphasis on teaching independence skills in a functional curriculum. This enables pupils to generalise their learning in the community.
- The school provides regular Parents Workshops. These are of high quality and are greatly appreciated by parents. This supports pupils’ personal development and welfare and helps families become more resilient.
- Engagement with SEEABILITY to test sight of pupils to support their access to sight tests, vision aids as required and to support families.
- Staff look carefully into reasons for any pupil’s lack of progress. Additional support is provided which might be academic or pastoral or both.
- Support packages are personalised to meet individual need.
- The school provides a wide variety of extra-curricular activities and gives pupils an opportunity to develop their talents and interests including the school rock band, school choir and over 20 lunch time clubs.
- Pupils regularly engage and participate in creative events such as our Christmas production, We are Red Gates festival of arts and our Winter Wonderland. All allow pupils to thrive and demonstrate their strengths and skills to our wider community.
- Strong transition programmes are in place to fully prepare pupils for the next stage of their education.
- The calm and positive approaches modelled by the behaviour team get used across the school and allow the children to enjoy an education that suits their own needs.
- Extensive thought and consideration is given to ensure pupils and families are supported both in and out of the classroom. This includes our commitment to community based learning and the community outreach we offer.
- Red Gates celebrates diversity and strives to ensure that everyone feels that they are a valued member of our community.
- Staff at Red Gates endeavour to educate ‘the whole child’, including their physical and mental wellbeing. All areas of learning are personalised for everyone.
- An exceptional community outreach programme is in place where external organisations are provided with training on understanding our pupils needs and how to communicate with them.

Next steps identified in our School Development Plan priorities:

KP1, KP4 and KP6

EYFS. Current Judgement: Outstanding

Evidence for Judgement

- Pupils enter reception with levels of development that are well below those of their peers, particularly in social and communication development.
- Pupils settle quickly and begin to flourish in a well-organised environment with outstanding support from highly skilled and dedicated staff.
- Parents are included in the induction process and all parents receive a home visit by the teacher to assess needs and welcome the family to the school.
- A detailed starter programme is available to all parents and families that includes support with transition into school and starts in the Summer term before pupils start.
- All parents have a meeting with their teacher in the first term to look at the context of EHCP outcomes and begin planning personalised plans.
- Teaching is highly personalised and focuses on developing pupils' early learning skills particularly social and communication in free flow and structured sessions.
- The leadership and management of Early Years provision, including the small team of staff, is highly effective. As a result, adults work very effectively with individual learners and ensure they continue to make excellent progress.
- Robust and user-friendly assessment systems are utilised to involve everyone, including parents, in celebrating small steps of progress, e.g., SOLAR. The updated EYFS profile has been adapted to meet the needs of our pupils.
- Teaching, learning and assessment is well-established in early years. There are high expectations for what pupils can achieve in literacy and numeracy.
- Staff are vigilant in ensuring pupils' safety and well-being to support them to develop good behaviour and social skills.
- Outdoor learning is embedded in the EYFS curriculum.
- Zones of regulation is put in place from EYFS at levels appropriate to the needs of pupils and as a result pupils are able to self-regulate more effectively.
- The use of mirror play, intensive interaction and role play within EYFS allow children to experience a range of emotions within a safe space and encourages them to communicate how they are feeling.
- The use of free flow in EYFS allows the children to follow their own interest and start their education in a calm and positive manner. The children are encouraged to socialise within the whole pathway allowing the children to experience a wide diversity of peers and staff and learn through their play.
- They will vary from focused small groups to whole class carousel choosing sessions which can embed positive behaviour and communication leading to greater learning with numeracy and technology.
- The use of attention building activities such as Drama games and Attention Autism increase the childrens ability to focus again allowing them to grow as individuals.
- EYFS staff endeavour to provide pupils with the best possible start. Pupils in EYFS are engaged through child led learning with communication, self-regulation and independence at the core.

Next steps identified in our School Development Plan priorities:

KP1, KP2 and KP5