



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Reports

Redmaids' High School

February 2022

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School's Details

School	Redmaids' High School			
DfE number	801/6015			
Registered charity number	1105017			
Address	Redmaids' High School Westbury Road Westbury-on-Trym Bristol BS9 3AW			
Telephone number	0117 962 2641			
Email address	seniors@redmaidshigh.co.uk			
Headteacher of Senior School	Mr Paul Dwyer			
Headteacher of Junior School	Mrs Lisa Brown			
Chair of governors	Mr Andrew Hillman			
Age range	7 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	731			
	Junior School	118	Senior School	481
	Sixth Form	132		
Inspection dates	8 to 11 February 2022			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Redmaids' High School is an independent day school for female pupils, located in a green site in Westbury on Trym. The school can trace its roots back to 1634. It was formed by a merger between The Red Maids' School and Redland High School in 2016 and is overseen by a governing body. The school comprises a junior school, a senior school and the sixth form. The junior and senior schools each have their own head, but the two work very closely together.
- 1.2 The current senior school headteacher was appointed in 2020.
- 1.3 During the period March to August 2020, the whole school remained open only for children of key workers.
- 1.4 During this period of closure the school provided remote learning materials for all pupils.
- 1.5 In the interests of infection control during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, inspection evidence was gathered partly remotely and partly on-site to reduce contact within the school setting.
- 1.6 In line with the direction given by the Department for Education (DfE) at the time, no evaluation has been made of the nature or effectiveness of any provision made during the period March to August 2020, including its impact on pupils' learning, achievement or personal development. Any concerns relating to pupils' welfare during this period which directly relate to measures implemented by the school have been considered.
- 1.7 During the lockdown period of January to March 2021, all pupils other than the children of key workers or vulnerable pupils received remote learning provision at home.
- 1.8 In 2020 and 2021, public examinations were not held. For pupils who would have been expected to take these examinations, centre-assessed and teacher-assessed grades were awarded.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.9 The school aims to ensure that every pupil feels empowered in achieving success, however they might define it. It wants them to feel confident as they go into the wider world knowing that they are able to contribute to it in meaningful ways. The school fosters a culture of high aspirations and close collaboration, so that students feel it possible to aim high in each of their endeavours, but that they will be well supported along the way.

About the pupils

- 1.10 Most pupils come from professional families in the local area. The school has identified 121 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), such as dyslexia and other conditions, of whom 89 receive additional specialist help. There are no pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 27 pupils, who receive additional support for their English.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is approved by the Secretary of State to inspect schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and report on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Additionally, inspections report on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. Inspections also comment on the progress made to meet any compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

ISI inspections are also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

This is a FOCUSED COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY. The FOCUSED COMPLIANCE inspection reports only on the school's compliance with the standards. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report and the school is required to take the actions specified. In this focused compliance inspection, key standards have been inspected in detail. These are the standards on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety; arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information; the handling of parents' complaints; and other related aspects of leadership and management. The remaining standards and requirements are deemed to continue to be met unless evidence to the contrary has been found.

Inspections do not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as: an exhaustive health and safety audit; compliance with data protection requirements; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; contractual arrangements with parents; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to specifically in published reports in this document but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

Links to the standards and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#).

COVID-19: Inspection judgements do not cover the period March to August 2020 inclusive.

Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, and associated requirements and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.**

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 In the junior school, the school's own framework for assessment confirms that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.3 At GCSE in the years 2019 to 2021, performance has confirmed that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.4 In the sixth form, A-level and IB results in the years 2019 to 2021 have confirmed that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.5 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place.
- 2.6 Pupils receive relationships education in the junior school and relationships and sex education in the senior school, except in so far as they are lawfully excused. The school has consulted parents and published a written statement of its policy which has regard to the relevant statutory guidance.
- 2.7 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 2.8 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.
- 2.9 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.10 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance; good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.11 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met.**

PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 2.12 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required.
- 2.13 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

2.14 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play.

2.15 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.16 A range of information is published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. This includes details about the proprietor, the ethos of the school and the curriculum, and of the school's arrangements for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, details of the complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, and the provision for any with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. It also includes particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, inspection reports and (for parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website.

2.17 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.18 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful.

2.19 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.20 The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils.

2.21 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is met.

3. Educational Quality Inspection

Preface

The **EDUCATIONAL QUALITY** inspection reports on the quality of the school's work. It focuses on the two key outcomes:

- The achievement of the pupils, including their academic development, and
- The personal development of the pupils.

The headline judgements apply one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory'.

Where necessary, National Curriculum nomenclature is used to refer to year groups in the school.

Key findings

3.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.

- Pupils demonstrate an excellent level of knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Pupils across the school make excellent progress in their learning.
- Pupils are highly effective in the way they work, both as independent and collaborative learners.
- Pupils' excellent skills in information and communication technology (ICT) are embedded seamlessly in their work.
- Pupils are very articulate communicators both orally and in their written work.

3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.

- Pupils display excellent levels of self-confidence and self-discipline.
- Pupils exhibit a very high degree of personal responsibility and support for each other.
- Pupils show a strong understanding of the importance of leading healthy lives, both physically and emotionally.
- Pupils have a clear moral code and show an exemplary self-regulating attitude in their behaviour.
- Pupils engage fully with life at school, contributing positively to their community.

Recommendation

3.3 In the context of the excellent outcomes, the school might wish to consider the following improvement:

- Enable pupils to gain a stronger understanding of their role in the world and how they can contribute to the wider community.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

3.4 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.

3.5 Pupils at the school achieve a high standard of results, exceeding the predictions from standardised assessments. At A level during the years 2017–2019, pupils achieved an average 44% of entries graded A* or A. At GCSE in the same period, 66% of grades were awarded 7–9 or A*/A. The average IB score over the same years was 36.4. This strong level of achievement has been continued with the centre-assessed and teacher-assessed grades of 2020 and 2021. Pupils with SEND or EAL achieve the same

level of success as other pupils. Pupils across the whole school make excellent progress and reach a high standard of achievement in their work. The vast majority of Year 13 leavers go onto higher education with most going to Russell Group universities, including some of the most competitive institutions. The success of the pupils reflects their high aspirations as individuals which is a key aim of the school. Pupils are supported in their learning by focused teaching which represents an understanding of pupils' strengths and how to help them achieve their potential.

- 3.6 Pupils display excellent knowledge and understanding across all subjects. They are eager to learn and contribute to class discussion, facilitated by their teachers stretching and challenging their ideas. In a sixth-form psychology lesson, pupils discussed perceptively the role of prison in reducing re-offending. Pupils are confident in applying their skills across the curriculum. Their progress is underpinned by teaching which frequently requires pupils to think beyond the obvious answer to a question and probes pupils' understanding of the reasons why they have chosen a particular solution or method. Pupils in the junior school explored thoughtfully the impact of deforestation and posed a thoughtful solution of creating genetically-modified trees. Pupils of all ages have very strong creative skills which they bring to all their subjects. These were especially noticeable in their work in art, music and drama.
- 3.7 Pupils are highly articulate and communicate very effectively both inside and outside of the classroom with the vast majority very comfortable talking and presenting in front of their peers. They benefit also from developing these skills in clubs and activities. They listen well to each other and to their teachers, they deliver their ideas and knowledge effectively in discussion and they write cogently and fully. Pupils contribute to discussions in lessons with eagerness, but also with respect for each other. This was seen with junior pupils when reading out their poems in class and with senior pupils explaining clearly to each other how they intended preparing for a practical experiment in science. Pupils are able both to respond confidently to questions put to them and ask well-judged questions of their own. They are fluent readers and their books reveal a very high standard of written work. Pupils are supported by detailed and useful feedback, which enables further progress.
- 3.8 Pupils are highly competent in their use of ICT, which is embedded fully in the way pupils work. They make full use of their tablets for taking notes, annotating work given them by their teachers, researching independently and producing creative results from their learning, as seen in a sixth-form textiles lesson. Pupils tailor their tablets to suit their own personal work habits. The youngest pupils demonstrate highly competent ICT skills, logging on as soon as they arrive in school and working on the early morning challenge. Pupils in the junior school developed their skills through the challenges of coding and robotics and learning new skills. Pupils in an economics lesson were confident in using their laptops to research information for their task. They also made excellent use of software to share information and useful sites with each other. Pupils' learning is enhanced by the school's management of ICT which is growing rapidly thanks to the support of the governors.
- 3.9 Pupils have excellent numeracy skills. Their outstanding application of mathematical knowledge and skills into other areas of learning was observed in lessons such as science, business studies and geography. Sixth-form pupils in geography used complex graphical representations of spatial and numeric data in producing their coursework. These pupils were able to articulate a high level of understanding about how to manipulate the data for the purposes of their projects. Pupils in the junior school effectively considered how to change miles to kilometres and were able to accurately construct graphs using squared paper and rulers and construct a table for this conversion.
- 3.10 The study skills of pupils throughout the school are very strong in every respect, helped by the provision of specific lessons in how to study purposefully. Pupils demonstrate highly effective skills which are underpinned by their outstanding commitment to their work and their desire to do well. Pupils are encouraged to work independently and collaboratively and do so efficiently and with relish. They show excellent independence in being able to research, using a wide range of sources. Pupils demonstrate advanced thinking during lessons and many teachers are adept at teasing out hypotheses from pupils and challenging them. The strength of their skills is reflected in the quality of the independent work for both the higher project qualification and the extended project qualification,

undertaken in Year 10 and the sixth form respectively. Pupils in the senior school, carried out good research during a lesson on geotextiles. This led them on to consider strengths and weaknesses of fabric design and identifying potential uses of the material in a variety of situations from airports to medical uniforms. In another lesson pupils used their historical understanding to analyse and explain their comparison of key figures in Elizabethan England in a very perceptive manner. The factors they considered to determine their relative importance brought out some excellent understanding of wider issues.

- 3.11 Pupils are fully involved in the wide range of activities on offer throughout the school and many gain considerable success in these areas. In sport, there are both individual and team successes in local and regional competitions on an annual basis. Recently some players have been selected for England hockey teams and the national badminton squad. From the junior school, 16 teams took part in a film challenge organised in Bristol. The many orchestras, choirs and other groups, perform to a very high standard, as heard in a rehearsal of Finzi's clarinet concerto. Several pupils have gained diplomas in speech, drama and music. Pupils throughout the school have achieved gold awards in the UK Maths Challenge. Pupils have been winners in national linguistics competitions. The musicals performed by the pupils and seen on video during inspection, are of an excellent standard and reflect their commitment and level of talent. The art rooms and corridors throughout the school are full of outstanding work produced by the pupils. This level of achievement is supported by the provision of resources from the school's leadership and governors and the commitment of staff in using their expertise.
- 3.12 Pupils' attitude to learning is outstanding. Pupils take their learning seriously but also clearly enjoy the process. They contribute to the learning of others whilst taking ownership of their own progress. They are open and receptive, eager to learn, enthusiastic to contribute, and proud of their achievements. They support each other excellently and with sensitivity. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors stated that they appreciate being assessed by their peers and it clearly engenders an excellent atmosphere of mutual support, respect and kindness. They are highly motivated and have a genuine appetite for learning, showing independence and initiative of a very high level. This enthusiasm was witnessed in the Year 8 activity day on Pompeii, where pupils worked together very effectively to produce short films. Pupils in an English lesson were enthused and excited about the creative writing exercise and discussing their alternative endings. Pupils explained the ending should be based on the Moscow show trials which was an excellent example of application of understanding across different subjects. Pupils are highly engaged and show a determination to work hard and a desire to achieve the best of which they are capable.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils show extremely high levels of self-discipline and move from task to task seamlessly, with maturity and confidence. Pupils display a very high level of personal motivation and discipline. They evidence a clear desire to be responsible for their own progress and development and are prepared to take the initiative to further their development. Pupils recognise the strong link between effort and outcomes and show a willingness to seek support, or do extra work, in order to optimise their personal outcomes. They feel secure at the school: this enables them to explore, experiment and take risks to improve and develop their resilience and self-knowledge. This was exemplified in the hustings process for electing the next head pupil where the candidates confidently presented their arguments for being the one chosen. Pupils of all ages develop good self-knowledge, self-esteem, self-confidence, self-discipline and resilience. Pupils in the junior school add information weekly to their learning journals, making sensitive responses and showing a growing responsibility for their own learning and analysis of progress. This excellent self-understanding is promoted through the high level of care and support from their first entry into the school, creating a safe place for pupils in which they can get to know

themselves, reflected in the questionnaires where almost all parents say that the school helped their children to be confident and independent.

- 3.15 Pupils have an excellent understanding of how they can help their own progress through school. Pupils learn to make decisions through their lessons and the expectation is that these choices are based on knowledge and understanding, thus informing their learning and progress. Pupils show an ability to make good judgements with regards to their well-being and development. This was evident in conversations with pupils when describing how they managed their busy schedules. Pupils demonstrated tactical decision-making in a session of touch rugby, where they reflected on the relative success or failure of their chosen approach and were able to refine their strategies accordingly. Pupils show thoughtful reasoning in the selection of options at GCSE and into the sixth form and then for what will happen next in their lives. Pupils make decisions constantly while learning, as witnessed in a drama lesson where they had to decide who was going to play which character and why. The way the school involves pupils in making choices and decisions as a normal part of working, enables them to develop further a sense of individual responsibility for their lives.
- 3.16 Pupils have a strong understanding of those elements of life that are beyond the material and involve beliefs and values of varying kinds. They show a deep appreciation of the aesthetic elements in music and art, reflecting their ability to feel an emotional response, thus broadening their characters. When studying how to represent natural features in an art club, pupils used fine liners and watercolour on a collage background to produce a misty landscape with real depth and the final wall displays conveyed an excellent sense of perspective and distance. Pupils have set up multi-faith groups and a culture club, which meet regularly to explore the broader elements in life. They show a deep appreciation of environmental issues and have fully engaged in ways that they can support these initiatives, such as the current use of plastic in school. Pupils explore a range of spiritual and non-material issues and ask searching questions, as in a sixth-form music lesson, exploring how music is often able to produce intense emotional responses.
- 3.17 Pupils display an excellent understanding of the importance of rules and laws. Pupils in the junior school produced a thoughtful project on the removal of the statue of Colston in Bristol. They argued whether the destruction should have happened or not, reflecting a deep level of thinking. Pupils throughout the school, accept responsibility for their own behaviour, including towards others, and are willing to challenge misbehaviour and unkindness in a sensitive way. This became very clear with junior pupils talking about how the school discipline system works effectively. They explained that the school is right to sanction pupils when they make the wrong decisions, but that everyone deserves a second chance. In the senior school pupils expect each other to display good behaviour and spoke about it being their own responsibility towards themselves as well as others to behave. This self-regulating approach indicates a strong personal sense of duty.
- 3.18 The collaborative atmosphere at the school is outstanding. Pupils engage in many enterprises and activities both inside and outside the classroom, which require them to work together successfully to achieve a result. This they do very effectively, showing a genuine appreciation of the value of teamwork and how this contributes to their own individual achievements. Pupils take responsibility for their academic work and broader lives at the school, and their success is recognised and celebrated by all. Pupils display a real pride in the school and their combined achievements. It is deeply ingrained in the culture of the school that pupils work together for their mutual benefit. Learning is a collaborative exercise and many lessons reflect this, enhancing the learning experience for all. Pupils in younger years worked together respectfully and empathetically. They were able to move from independent work to group work with minimal fuss. This atmosphere of mutual respect, support and kindness pervades the whole school community. This strength of teamwork can be seen in the pupils' music and drama, in the successes of the sports teams throughout the school as well as in events such as the Model United Nations or with the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme.
- 3.19 Pupils are very committed to supporting each other in school. They do this quite naturally because they genuinely care for their peers. This was seen in the way that senior pupils write letters to the

younger years, giving advice on what is to come, telling them not to be worried because they will cope well. Senior pupils spoke eloquently about wishing to give something back to the community in recognition of all that it had done for them. Pupils are proud of the school's charitable work. They talk enthusiastically of the funds that have been raised and are able to recognise there are people around who are less fortunate than themselves, showing a strong sense of empathy. Pupils known as 'almoners' take leadership in supporting charities. They demonstrate some sense of responsibility through providing assistance to communities in places such as Moldova and Cambodia. However, pupils' understanding of their role in the world and how they can contribute is not as strong as possible.

- 3.20 Pupils identify strongly with all their peers and celebrate a variety of cultural experiences giving them further insight on the world around them. They demonstrate their appreciation of diversity through the creation of groups representing specific attitudes and beliefs. Pupils demonstrate highly respectful, tolerant, inclusive and positive attitudes, seen in sixth-form pupils discussing problems in the Middle East with a genuine appreciation of all sides of the argument. Pupils do not accept discrimination in any form. In interviews, they conveyed a sense of shock that intolerance on any grounds would be acceptable. Pupils initiate discussions and presentations around different diversity issues and are proud of their community. In discussion, they communicated a wish to celebrate every difference as a positive benefit. Pupils exhibit a mature understanding of the importance of relating well to all people to make a success of life.
- 3.21 Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep safe online and the school supports them in this by their strong pastoral care, confirmed in the questionnaires where almost all pupils declared the school to be a safe place. Pupils understand the crucial importance of leading healthy lives, both in terms of their physical health but also in terms of their emotional strength. This was seen in their positive engagement in the various activities during mental health week and in their participation in the different sporting activities on offer. Pupils also express strong appreciation for the support they have been given for their mental health and how this has helped them considerably. Senior pupils willingly take on the role of well-being ambassadors with responsibility for different years. They spoke about working with groups facing examinations, on coping with the stress and challenges of these. Pupils understand the value of a sensible diet and the need to follow a balanced lifestyle to help them fulfil their potential. In all this, the school fully meets its aims of pupils learning to understand themselves and their strengths and seeking to be an inclusive community of happy and aspirational individuals.

4. Inspection Evidence

4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with a group of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings and assemblies. Inspectors visited the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Gareth Price	Reporting inspector
Mr Russell Slatford	Compliance team inspector (Head, SofH school)
Mr John Cox	Team inspector (Senior leader, HMC school)
Mrs Diane Durrant	Team inspector (Former deputy head, SofH school)
Mr Colin Haddon	Team inspector (Former deputy head, ISA school)
Dr Emily McGhee	Team inspector (SENCO, HMC school)
Mr Bart Wielenga	Team inspector (Head, HMC school)