

# Rivers Academy West London

Tachbrook Road, Feltham, Middlesex TW14 9PE

## Inspection dates

29–30 January 2019

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
16 to 19 study programmes	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Leaders and governors have established a culture of high expectations and aspirations for pupils and staff. Governors hold leaders to account for the work of the school effectively.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They know what to do to improve the school and have introduced development plans that are having an impact.
- Staff are well supported by leaders and enjoy working at the school. They receive high-quality training which helps them to become more effective in their work.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good overall. However, there is some variability in quality between subjects.
- In 2018, pupils' outcomes at the end of Year 11 were in line with national averages. In some subjects, such as English and art, pupils made stronger progress.
- Outcomes in the sixth form are good. There is an improving picture across most subjects. In 2018, students' outcomes were stronger for vocational subjects than academic.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They receive high-quality careers advice and guidance.
- Pupils demonstrate good attitudes towards learning. Their behaviour is good. Pupils attend school regularly and are very rarely late. They conduct themselves well in lessons and around the school. On rare occasions, pupils become distracted in lessons. This is typically when they are not being challenged in their learning.
- Leaders have introduced a range of initiatives this year to improve the quality of teaching and to manage pupils' behaviour more effectively. However, leaders' expectations are not fully understood by all staff. As a result, some policies that leaders have introduced are not fully embedded.
- In 2018, disadvantaged pupils in Year 11 did not achieve well as other pupils nationally. Leaders have effective plans in place to support disadvantaged pupils currently in the school. As a result, this group of pupils is making stronger progress.
- In 2018, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) did not make the progress of which they were capable, given their starting points. Leaders have been quick to address this and pupils with SEND are now making faster progress.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by:
  - ensuring that leaders' expectations are clearly understood by all staff so that policies are followed consistently
  - ensuring that new strategies are embedded so that disadvantaged pupils make stronger progress.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
  - ensuring that assessment information is used to provide appropriate challenge for all pupils
  - ensuring that teachers have high expectations of pupils in lessons, so that all are fully engaged and making strong progress.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Senior leaders understand the school's strengths and weaknesses accurately. Leaders continually evaluate the school's effectiveness and they respond with precision and speed to address any underperformance.
- Leaders have high expectations of pupils and staff. They promote a strong and clear ethos which has high aspirations for pupils at its heart. This ambition is understood and supported by pupils and staff.
- Leaders manage change effectively. For example, leaders ensure that a comprehensive induction and training programme is in place for new staff, including newly qualified teachers. As a result, new staff feel very well supported.
- Leaders have designed a broad curriculum that is appropriate for all pupils. Staff provide pupils with good-quality advice and guidance at relevant points. This ensures that pupils choose courses wisely for key stage 4 and in the sixth form.
- Leaders ensure that high-quality staff training is aligned with the school's priorities and initiatives. Leaders prioritise improving the quality of teaching and learning. For example, staff have recently received training on how to best support disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND.
- The principal has constructed a team of leaders who are committed and ambitious for all pupils. Several senior and middle leaders are new in post this year. This new team of leaders have been well trained and are now well placed to lead their areas of responsibility.
- Leaders demonstrate an accurate understanding of what needs to be done to improve the school. They have implemented thoughtful strategies to secure this improvement. For example, they have introduced a range of new policies, including for checking and reporting how well pupils are doing and for managing behaviour. There are early signs these plans are beginning to have an impact.
- Middle leaders are held to account robustly. They are positive about the support and challenge they receive from senior leaders.
- Leaders track pupils' destinations when they leave the school mid-year, keeping accurate correspondence records. At the end of Year 9, a significant minority of pupils transfer to a neighbouring studio school which is part of the same academy trust.
- Leaders promote equality through all aspects of their work. The school is a diverse community where pupils feel valued and equal. Teachers ensure that pupils are kind and respectful to each other.
- Leaders prioritise the well-being of staff. Leaders recognise when staff are under pressure and seek to alleviate this where they can. The staff who spoke to inspectors were complimentary about leaders' actions to make workload manageable.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils engage in charitable work within the local community and partake in a range of trips. There is an annual ski trip to Europe, and every year a small group of students benefit from a

trip to the NASA space centre in the United States of America.

- Leaders identify that some teachers do not challenge pupils sufficiently in lessons. Leaders recognise that this is a priority for the school and are addressing this through their staff training programme.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors are experienced and committed. They set and promote the school's vision and ethos clearly and effectively.
- Governors are knowledgeable about the school. They have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Governors use this knowledge to hold leaders to account effectively and provide an appropriate level of support and challenge.
- Governors monitor how well the additional pupil premium funding is spent. However, they recognise that more needs to be done to ensure that disadvantaged pupils make stronger progress.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders take their responsibility to safeguard pupils seriously. When appointing new staff, leaders conduct rigorous checks to ensure that the staff working in the school are suitable to work with children.
- Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding are well trained. They have a good knowledge of factors that could pose a risk to the pupils in the school. Staff are vigilant and know the warning signs that could indicate that a pupil is at risk from harm. Staff know what to do if they are concerned and they act with appropriate speed.
- The procedures for reporting and recording concerns within school are robust. Leaders maintain comprehensive and accurate safeguarding records. They are quick to report concerns to the relevant agencies, and access early help when it is required.
- Leaders are proactive in their work to keep pupils safe. All staff, including those who join mid-year, receive appropriate safeguarding training.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, including when they are online. They receive helpful safety advice and guidance, and this helps them to make appropriate and sensible choices about their health and well-being. The pupils who spoke to inspectors said that they feel safe in school.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school is good. Leaders and teachers promote an environment where pupils are happy to have a go and make mistakes. Pupils have high expectations of themselves. One reason for this is that their teachers model the same high expectations.
- Leaders evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment accurately. They know the areas of strength and those that need improving.

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is particularly high in English, Spanish, art and mathematics. In these subjects, teachers engage and challenge pupils very effectively. As a result, pupils make strong progress.
- Teachers typically provide pupils with written feedback in line with the school's assessment policy. They check pupils' understanding effectively and provide support and intervention when pupils fall behind and need to catch up. However, this policy was introduced recently and is not yet used consistently across all subjects.
- Teachers are provided with information that helps them plan to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. As a result, pupils with SEND are now making stronger progress across a range of subjects.
- In the best lessons, teachers use their good subject knowledge and precise questioning to check and develop pupils' understanding. This was most notable in English. However, in other lessons, teachers' use of questioning is used less effectively. In these lessons, teachers do not always check that lower-attaining pupils have understood their work before moving on.
- In a range of subjects, including English, art and mathematics, teachers use their strong knowledge of the GCSE course specifications to prepare pupils well for their examinations.
- There is some variability between subjects. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is weaker in humanities and French. In these subjects, teachers do not challenge pupils sufficiently. Inspectors noted that in some lessons, teachers' expectations are too low, and pupils' work is too easy. In lessons where teachers do not challenge pupils sufficiently, pupils become distracted and take less pride in their work.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders place a high value on pupils' personal development and welfare. They provide a broad range of opportunities to ensure that pupils develop well, socially and emotionally. As a result, pupils demonstrate the values that are at the heart of the school's ethos, including respect and self-discipline. Pupils told inspectors that they value leaders' work to support them and to help them develop.
- Pupils are taught how to stay safe and healthy through a comprehensive personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme. Teachers provide pupils with age-appropriate information about relationships which helps them to make sensible choices about their health and well-being.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They are given opportunities to discuss and debate current affairs in lessons and spoke enthusiastically to inspectors about current political issues. The pupils who spoke to inspectors also said that the school promotes equality and celebrates diversity.
- Leaders monitor pupils' well-being carefully. They are quick to provide support when it is needed. The students in the sixth form who spoke to inspectors were complimentary

about leaders' work this year to support them with their emotional well-being.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils attend school regularly and are very rarely late. They conduct themselves well in lessons and around the school. Teachers deal effectively with the rare occasions when pupils become distracted or distract others in lessons.
- Pupils respect themselves and others. They enjoy positive relationships with each other. Derogatory language is very rarely used. When it is used, pupils are quick to challenge it, and teachers are swift to tackle it.
- Pupils look smart in their uniforms, and they wear them with pride. They arrive to lessons with the correct equipment and are eager to learn.
- Pupils typically take pride in their work. Most pupils are keen to produce work that is well presented and accurate. However, the work in some pupils' books is disorganised, unfinished and poorly presented.
- Attendance is in line with the national average and is improving, including for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school is below the national average. However, leaders recognise that there has been a slight increase in the number of pupils who are persistently absent from school this year. Leaders are addressing this effectively by working closely with the parents and carers of pupils with low attendance.
- In the previous academic year, the number of permanent exclusions from school was above the national average. Leaders have worked successfully to reduce the number of permanent and fixed-term exclusions from school this year by providing additional support to the pupils who need it most.

## **Outcomes for pupils**

## **Good**

- In 2018, pupils' achievement in Year 11 was in line with the national average. However, in a range of subjects, including English, Spanish and art, pupils made stronger progress.
- The school's recent assessment information indicates that pupils currently in the school make good progress in most subjects. Pupils' work in lessons and in their books shows that pupils make good progress in a range of subjects.
- The most able pupils currently in the school are making strong progress across key stages 3 and 4. This is particularly notable when teachers use their strong subject knowledge to challenge pupils to think deeply.
- Leaders' value literacy and want all pupils to become fluent readers. Leaders' work to improve reading has been effective. For example, most pupils in Year 8, including the lower-attaining pupils, have significantly improved their reading age since September.
- In 2018, pupils with SEND in Year 11 did not make the progress of which they were capable, given their starting points. Leaders rightly identified this as an area for improvement and are taking effective action. As a result of extra training, leaders have

increased teachers' awareness of pupils' needs so that pupils with SEND receive the right support to achieve their potential. Current assessment information indicates an improving picture so that pupils with SEND are making stronger progress over time, particularly in English.

- In 2018, disadvantaged pupils in Year 11 did not achieve as well as other pupils nationally. Leaders and teachers have taken effective action to address this by providing additional support. As a result, the school's current assessment information shows that disadvantaged pupils are making better progress across a range of subjects, including English and mathematics. This is especially the case where teachers have high expectations and take assessment information into account when planning lessons.
- Students resitting GCSE English and mathematics in the sixth form make good progress. Almost all of those resitting GCSE English, and over a third of those resitting GCSE mathematics, improved their grade.
- Leaders ensure that the careers guidance received is effective and allows pupils to make informed choices regarding their future pathways. Last year, the number of pupils who went on to further education, employment or training was high.

### **16 to 19 study programmes**

**Good**

- The 16 to 19 study programmes are good. Leaders, including the newly appointed sixth form leader, have maintained and developed the good quality of education in the sixth form since the last inspection.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the sixth form is good. Teachers have high expectations of what students can achieve. They use their good subject knowledge to plan lessons that engage and challenge students. As a result, students are highly motivated.
- Students demonstrate very positive attitudes towards learning. They are very rarely absent or late to school. Students are smart and fully equipped to learn. They maintain well-presented folders and ensure that they complete all of the work they are given.
- Students in the sixth form achieve well in a range of subjects, including English and business studies. In 2018, students studying vocational courses in Year 13 made stronger progress than those studying for academic qualifications. Inspectors noted that the work in students' books indicates an improving picture for those currently in the sixth form. The students who spoke to inspectors said that they were making good progress and knew what they had to do to ensure that they achieved their target grades. Moreover, the school's own assessment information indicates that students are now making stronger progress in most of the academic subjects offered in Year 13.
- However, there is still some variability between subjects. For example, in computer science and history, progress is weaker. Leaders recognise that there is more to be done to ensure that students make consistently strong progress across all subjects.
- Leaders ensure that students are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Students told inspectors that they were given helpful personalised guidance on their subject choices, relevant to their career aspirations, at the end of year 11. This has ensured that they are studying appropriate courses in the sixth form.

- The 16 to 19 study programmes meet requirements. Students value the opportunities they are given to work alongside local and national businesses. Students told inspectors that this provides them with a valuable insight into the world of work and develops their independence and social skills.
- Leaders ensure that students are provided with strong emotional support. Students know where to go in school for help and are confident that staff will give them the time, support and advice they need.
- Students are keen to make a valuable contribution to society and are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They spoke positively about a recent charity tea for a large group of elderly local residents.



## School details

Unique reference number	137009
Local authority	Hounslow
Inspection number	10058998

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,024
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	110
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mandy Lancy
Principal	Andria Singlehurst
Telephone number	020 8890 0245
Website	<a href="http://www.rivers-aspirations.org/">www.rivers-aspirations.org/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:general@rivers-aspirations.org">general@rivers-aspirations.org</a>
Date of previous inspection	18–19 March 2015

## Information about this school

- Rivers Academy West London is slightly larger than the average-sized secondary academy. It is part of the Aspirations Academies Trust.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above that of other schools.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care (EHC) plan is similar to that of other

schools.

- There are no pupils currently attending alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited lessons to observe teaching and learning across a range of subjects. Most of these observations were undertaken jointly with school leaders.
- Inspectors reviewed pupils' learning over time through scrutiny of pupils' books during visits to classrooms. Inspectors also spoke with pupils in key stages 3 and 4 and students in the sixth form about their experiences at the school.
- Meetings were held with leaders to discuss their evaluation of the school's effectiveness and the impact of their work. Discussions were held with members of staff, including middle leaders and those at the early stages of their teaching career.
- Inspectors discussed aspects of the school's work with leaders from within the multi-academy trust.
- The inspection team reviewed a range of documentation, including information about pupils' progress and attainment, the curriculum, teaching and learning, safeguarding records and procedures, behaviour records and attendance information.
- Inspectors took account of the 20 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey for parents.

## Inspection team

Niall Gallagher, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Yvonne Chisholm	Ofsted Inspector
Jennifer Bax	Ofsted Inspector
Amanda Carter-Fraser	Her Majesty's Inspector

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