

Inspection of a good school: Rodillian Academy

Longthorpe Lane, Lofthouse, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF3 3PS

Inspection dates:

2–3 October 2019

Outcome

Rodillian Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders and teachers expect the best of all pupils. They make sure that pupils study a range of different subjects. Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics and science. This is not at the expense of other subjects such as art, physical education and history. Pupils are very well prepared for their next steps.

Leaders also focus on pupils' personal development. Pupils take part in a wide range of experiences to develop their resilience, team work and self-esteem. These include water sports, skiing, horse riding and moviemaking. Pupils enjoy these opportunities.

Pupils behave well. Pupils know who to go to if they need help. Leaders take bullying seriously and pupils agree. Staff create an orderly environment based on clear routines. Staff encourage pupils to share their views in class. Relationships between pupils and staff are positive and respectful.

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

Pupils benefit from a carefully planned curriculum and high-quality teaching in English and mathematics. Leaders and staff also expect pupils to think and work hard in science. More pupils follow separate courses in biology, chemistry and physics at Rodillian than is the case nationally. This curriculum is designed to benefit all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils.

Pupils' effective learning in English, mathematics and science does not come at the expense of other subjects. Pupils study a wide variety of subjects at key stage 4. Leaders' thorough planning of what pupils will learn in English and science is also evident in history. Subject directors are improving the quality of the curriculum across a wide variety of subjects. Teachers often plan together to map out what pupils will need to know and remember. In some cases, the curriculum is not mapped out as thoroughly at key stage 3.

Leaders have recently decided that all pupils in Years 9 and 10 will study French. They

have appointed new staff to deliver this. Leaders want the majority of pupils to follow French to GCSE. This initiative reflects leaders' aim that all pupils will study as broad a range of subjects as possible up until they leave school.

Pupils also take part in a wide range of additional experiences and courses. For example, at an annual arts festival, they perform alongside musicians and choirs. Year 7 pupils recently completed outdoor activities at a residential centre to build their resilience. Pupils also develop their sporting prowess through the rugby and netball academies. Pupils develop their self-confidence through these experiences.

Leaders ensure that pupils learn in a calm and supportive environment. Teachers do not accept disruptions to learning. Leaders make sure that pupils follow and complete courses that prepare them for future education and employment. They have made sure that what the school teaches supports pupils' personal, social and emotional development.

Leaders are developing their support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They are putting new training in place. Teachers make sure that pupils with SEND can take part in lessons and activities. Pupils with SEND achieve well and value the extra support they get with their reading. They would like similar support in other subjects, such as French.

Leaders support their staff with practical steps to manage workload. They make sure that staff can teach with little disruption. Staff are able to share their expertise and enthusiasm with pupils. It also helps pupils to learn and achieve well.

In the sixth form, teachers have good subject expertise. Inspectors saw this in geography and science, where teachers explained challenging material effectively. Teachers build on the knowledge and skills that students gain at GCSE. In the past, study programmes have not enabled all pupils to learn as well as they did at key stage 4. The new head of sixth form is reviewing the study programmes. He is also improving the guidance that students receive. Increasing proportions of students are completing their study programmes and progressing to higher education and employment.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders make sure that staff training is up to date. They keep staff and pupils aware of safeguarding issues. The safeguarding team work with staff to raise awareness of pupils' welfare. Staff and pupils know who to talk to if they have concerns. Leaders follow up any concerns quickly. They record these concerns appropriately. The safeguarding team builds links with other professionals to check and support pupils' welfare. Leaders teach pupils about safety in assemblies and in tutor time. Leaders carry out thorough checks on the suitability of adults working at school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

- Leaders have carefully planned the English, mathematics and science curriculum so that it is clear what pupils should learn and remember. This is not the case for some other subjects, particularly at key stage 3. Leaders should refine the planned curriculum for Years 7 to 9 so that pupils acquire knowledge and skills of equal depth across all subjects.
- Leaders are aware that pupils do not make the same strong progress in the sixth form as they do in key stage 4. The new head of sixth form should continue to improve the 16 to 19 study programmes and the guidance that students receive. This will help all pupils to achieve well and complete their programmes of study.
- There have been recent changes to the team supporting pupils with SEND. Leaders should enhance the expertise of this team to enable teachers to better support pupils with SEND across all subjects.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged Rodillian Academy to be good on 27 January 2016.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil

premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 138336 |
| Local authority | Leeds |
| Inspection number | 10087647 |
| Type of school | Secondary |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 11 to 18 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 1567 |
| Of which, number on roll in the sixth form | 184 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Janice Bennett |
| Executive Headteacher | Andy Goulty |
| Website | www.rodillianacademy.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 26–27 January 2016 |

Information about this school

- The number of pupils on roll has increased since the previous inspection. The school is much larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- The school provides alternative provision for a small number of pupils at Southway. Southway is a subsidiary company of The Rodillian Multi-Academy Trust.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors held several discussions with the executive headteacher, the head of school and senior leaders. The lead inspector also talked to the chair of the local governing body.
- Inspectors talked to pupils during lesson visits and at breaktimes and lunchtimes to find out their views on behaviour and safety.
- Inspectors looked in detail into the curriculum in English, geography, history and

science. Inspectors talked to leaders and teachers about their curriculum plans. They also talked to pupils about their learning and what they knew and remembered in these subjects. Inspectors looked at pupils' work.

- Inspectors checked safeguarding arrangements. They looked at the school's work to make staff and pupils' aware of safeguarding issues. They also looked at safeguarding records to see how concerns over pupils' safety were recorded and followed up. Inspectors also explored how leaders checked the suitability of adults working on-site.

Inspection team

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