

# Inspection of Rivington and Blackrod High School

Rivington Lane, Horwich, Bolton, Lancashire BL6 7RU

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Inspection dates:

21–22 January 2020

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Good**

Sixth-form provision

**Good**

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are safe in this school. They said that there is always somebody who they can talk to if they have an issue. Most pupils are punctual and attend school regularly. However, a small group of pupils often miss school.

Most pupils are happy in school. This is particularly true for Year 7 pupils who enjoy their year in a separate building. Pupils said that behaviour is usually good. Sometimes learning is interrupted but most teachers deal with this quickly. Pupils do not think that bullying happens often in school. When it does happen, they think that teachers sort it out.

Most pupils said that they enjoy their learning. Teachers usually have high expectations of pupils' learning. They are given help when they find learning difficult. Pupils, particularly in Year 7, enjoy learning about the 'word of the week'. However, in some subjects, the curriculum at key stage 3 does not cover the depth and breadth of the national curriculum.

Pupils talked enthusiastically about some of the books that they read in their English lessons. They also enjoy the lessons that are put aside for them to read books of their own choice.

Pupils have a range of clubs and activities that they can enjoy at lunchtime and after school. Pupils said that they really like some of the sports clubs. For example, they like trampolining and table tennis.

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

The executive headteacher has brought about considerable improvement across the school since his arrival. There are stronger links with other local schools. Teachers work with staff in these schools to strengthen the curriculum.

Leaders have developed a well sequenced curriculum across all key stages, including the sixth form. Teachers help pupils and students to remember more by making links between the knowledge they already have and new learning. Although most subjects cover the depth and breadth of the key stage 3 national curriculum, there are still some subjects that do not. As a result, pupils are not fully prepared for their learning at key stage 4 and beyond.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have not been supported well enough. The special educational needs coordinator has trained teachers so that they know how to help these pupils with their learning. The new curriculum has helped teachers to raise their expectations of these pupils. However, these pupils continue to perform well below other pupils nationally in their GCSE examinations. Very few of these pupils move into the school sixth form.

The library provides a place for pupils to study outside of lesson time. However, it does not provide a comfortable space to sit and read. Regular reading lessons take place in the library. However, there are few pupils who read outside of their lessons. Those that do read, often do not read a range of different types of books.

The proportion of pupils who take all of the subjects that make up the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) is below the national average. This is not improving. Few pupils take a modern foreign language at key stage 4. It is unlikely that the proportion of pupils who take the EBacc will improve. Very few students take a modern foreign language in the sixth form.

Leaders have taken action to improve pupils' attainment in the GCSE examinations. Over the last three years progress has steadily improved for all pupils. Despite this, the progress that pupils make by the end of Year 11 remains well below the national average in many subjects. This is particularly the case for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND.

The below average standards at GCSE over the last few years have impacted on the performance of students in the sixth form. Leaders have made changes to the courses that they offer to students. As a result, students in the sixth form enjoy their studies. Very few leave before completing their courses. Almost all move on to appropriate further education, training or employment when they leave.

The personal development curriculum is well developed across all key stages, including the sixth form. The curriculum details the dangers of the internet. It gives good advice on staying healthy both physically and mentally. All pupils and students learn about healthy relationships in a way that is appropriate for their age. This is supplemented by a wide range of extra-curricular trips and activities. For example, a significant cohort of pupils gain The Duke of Edinburgh's Bronze and Silver Award. In the sixth form, many complete The Duke of Edinburgh's Gold Award.

Pupils' behaviour has improved steadily over the last couple of years. The proportion of pupils who are temporarily excluded from school has decreased. Despite this, there remains a small group of pupils who still have difficulty in controlling their own behaviour. Sometimes these pupils disrupt pupils' learning.

Leaders have taken several actions to help pupils to attend school more regularly. Attendance has increased steadily over the last three years as a result. Overall attendance is now close to the national average. Attendance in the sixth form is high. Even so, there are some pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils and pupils in Year 11, that are regularly absent from school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that all relevant checks are undertaken so that only adults who are safe to work with pupils are employed by the school. Annual training, together with updates when necessary, ensure that staff know how to recognise the signs of a pupil in need. Staff report concerns promptly. Leaders act quickly to provide appropriate help and support for pupils, students and their families.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Currently, the curriculum for some subjects at key stage 3 does not have the depth and breadth of the national curriculum. As a result, pupils are not properly prepared for learning to GCSE and beyond. Leaders should continue with the plans that they have to improve the curriculum at key stage 3. Pupils should have access to a curriculum that has the appropriate depth and breadth.
- In English, and in their reading lessons, pupils do not read books with the breadth and challenge expected by the national curriculum. Few pupils read outside of their lessons. As a result, pupils do not read as widely as they should. They often only read books that they already know they enjoy. Leaders should continue to develop the library and introduce strategies to encourage pupils to read more widely and independently. Reading more widely will help pupils to develop culturally, intellectually and socially so that they are prepared for life-long learning.
- The progress that pupils make by the time that they leave school has improved over the last three years. However, the progress that pupils with SEND make remains well below the national average. This is because teachers do not always provide effective support to help these pupils keep up with their learning. Leaders must ensure that teachers provide effective support for these pupils to access the curriculum so that pupils with SEND make stronger progress through their learning.
- Some pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and pupils in Year 11, are regularly absent from school. These pupils do not access the full curriculum, because of their absence. Leaders must continue to take action to overcome the barriers that prevent these pupils from attending school. This will help these pupils to make better progress and attain good GCSE qualifications.
- A small group of pupils persistently fail to control their own behaviour. This sometimes causes disruption to pupils' learning. Leaders must continue to support these pupils to improve their behaviour. This will help pupils to learn more.

## **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 the school and 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	143773
<b>Local authority</b>	Bolton
<b>Inspection number</b>	10122026
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1684
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	237
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Sarah Horan
<b>Principal</b>	Paul Roach
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.rbhs.co.uk">www.rbhs.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school has become part of the Leverhulme Academy Church of England and Community Trust since the last inspection.
- The school currently uses alternative provision at Red Box Training centre to contribute to the education of a small number of pupils.
- The school last had a section 48 inspection on 9 October 2015.

## Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- During the inspection, we spoke with pupils about their work and school life. We held meetings with senior leaders, governors, subject leaders and the school improvement partner from the local authority.

- We reviewed documentation, which included leaders' evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for improvement, and the school development plan. We scrutinised information about attendance and behaviour.
- We considered the views expressed by parents and carers in the 123 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, as well as parents' comments received via the free-text facility on Parent View. We considered the 89 responses to a questionnaire for staff. We also considered the 131 responses to the questionnaire for pupils.
- We reviewed a range of documentation about the school. This included information about safeguarding, including the school's record of checks undertaken on newly appointed staff and support for pupils. We also spoke to representatives of the alternative provision used by the school.
- We looked closely at English, mathematics, modern foreign languages, history and art during the inspection. We met with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with pupils, met with teaching staff and looked at pupils' work. We also considered other subjects as part of the inspection.

## Inspection team

Erica Sharman, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Craig Yates	Ofsted Inspector
Ruth Bradbury	Ofsted Inspector
Dympna Woods	Ofsted Inspector
Colin Bell	Ofsted Inspector

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