

Inspection of Twickenham School

Percy Road, Twickenham, Middlesex TW2 6JW

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 July 2021

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel happy at this school. They make any pupil who joins the school feel welcome, such as through the buddy system. Pupils are respectful towards each other and staff. Everyone is accepting of others, no matter what their personal characteristics and traits.

Pupils display positive attitudes to learning. Teachers expect them to work hard and try their best. When pupils get stuck, teachers help them, including at breaktimes or after school. However, in some subjects, leaders have not planned the curriculum with enough rigour. On occasions, this means that some pupils do not learn and remember as much as they could.

Pupils feel safe at school. Bullying is rare. When it does occur, staff deal with it effectively. Pupils said that staff are good at listening to them. Pupils trust the members of the safeguarding team. They know staff will help them when they feel upset or worried.

Leaders and staff take good care of pupils' welfare needs and those of their families. During the national lockdowns, for example, staff helped families to access services that they needed. Leaders also made sure that all pupils had the necessary equipment for online learning. A high proportion of pupils attended virtual lessons.

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

Since the last inspection, leaders have prioritised improving pupils' attendance, behaviours and aspirations. Attendance rates have gone up considerably. In lessons, pupils pay attention. They follow their teachers' instructions and get on with their work in a diligent manner.

Pupils learn well and study a range of subjects that matches the ambition of the national curriculum. To date, much of leaders' work to improve the quality of education has focused on developing staff's general teaching skills. Leaders have now turned their attention to improving the design and organisation of the curriculum. In some subjects, such as mathematics, this has been very successful. In others, leaders' work is beginning but already making a difference.

In mathematics, leaders have planned in detail what knowledge to teach and when. They identify precisely the building blocks of knowledge pupils need to master. In doing so, pupils learn the tools to tackle complex mathematical problems. Teachers check whether all pupils have grasped essential knowledge within each topic. They then adapt their teaching to address pupils' misconceptions.

Across other subjects, such as English and geography, leaders have started to organise the curriculum so that pupils learn new subject content in a logical order. This includes identifying what pupils need to know securely before they study more

complex concepts and ideas. Nevertheless, leaders know that more work is needed to develop the curriculum. In music, for example, subject plans do not support pupils' progression enough, or, in turn, enable them to gain a deep knowledge of music.

In some subjects, teaching does not fully check how well pupils are developing their knowledge of subject content. In a few instances, assessments focus on checking pupils' generic writing skills or readiness to answer a GCSE examination-type question. This limits teachers' ability to fully understand gaps in pupils' knowledge that need to be addressed.

The proportion of pupils who study the subjects required to qualify for the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) accreditation is low. Over time, though, there has been a steady upward trend as leaders raise pupils' ambitions.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) take part in all subjects across the curriculum. Leaders train staff and give them guidance on how to meet pupils' needs. Pupils with SEND, therefore, learn the same knowledge as their peers.

Pupils benefit from a comprehensive, impartial careers guidance programme. In the past two years, every Year 11 pupil has continued into post-16 education or training.

The school's personal development and citizenship curriculum covers a range of suitable topics, including consent and healthy relationships. The programme helps to prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain. For example, pupils had an assembly on the scientist, Alan Turing. They learned about his achievements, as well as how he faced discrimination and prejudice.

Leaders treat staff fairly. They are considerate and find ways to relieve staff of unnecessary workloads.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know the pupils and their families well. They are alert to any changes to pupils' behaviours, appearance or circumstances. They report these to the safeguarding team. Safeguarding leaders check staff alerts daily. They take prompt action to investigate matters, even if they may not appear significant at first.

Leaders work well with internal specialists, a range of external agencies and voluntary organisations to support pupils' safety, welfare and mental health.

Through the curriculum, pupils learn about risk and how to stay safe. This includes online safety and how to be alert to potential grooming, for example.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, leaders have not planned a sufficiently coherent and well-sequenced curriculum. As a result, some pupils are not gaining deep knowledge and remembering more. Sometimes, they are unable to apply their knowledge to learn more complex subject content or make links across subjects. However, it is clear from the actions that leaders have already taken that the curriculum is improving quickly and that leaders are bringing about the necessary changes. There is expertise in the school that other subject leaders can draw upon to build on their planning for next year's curriculum and to train staff in how to deliver it. For this reason, the transition arrangements have been applied in this case. Leaders should ensure that they plan every subject in a way that follows a logical order. They should identify exactly what they want pupils to know and remember and ensure that pupils develop their knowledge incrementally.
- Sometimes, assessment is not as helpful as it could be in checking how well pupils are learning and remembering all essential subject-specific knowledge. Assessments should check on how well pupils have grasped the subject content identified in curriculum planning. Teachers should use the information gleaned to adapt their teaching to address gaps in learning so that pupils gain deep subject knowledge.

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 [here](#).

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

Unique reference number	143420
Local authority	Richmond upon Thames
Inspection number	10198896
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	516
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Claire Little
Headteacher	Assal Ruse
Website	www.twickenhamschool.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	22 and 23 May 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Richmond West Schools Trust. In September 2021, the school will be leaving this trust and joining the Bourne Education Trust.
- The school is currently not using any alternative education.

Information about this inspection

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

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- This section 5 inspection was brought forward at the school's request to Her Majesty's Chief Inspector.
- Inspectors did deep dives in these subjects: English, science, music and geography. This involved discussions with leaders and teachers, visits to lessons,

looking at examples of pupils' work and discussions with pupils. Inspectors also considered other subjects as part of the inspection.

- Inspectors spoke with trustees, the chair and other members of the local governing body as well as a representative of the new multi-academy trust that the school is joining. The inspection team also spoke with the chief executive officer of the trust, the headteacher and deputy headteachers and the special educational needs coordinator. Inspectors had telephone conversations with the local authority and the school's former school improvement partner. The inspection team held an open meeting for all teachers, support and administrative members of staff.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding and the checks carried out before the appointment of staff. Inspectors also looked at records of pupils' attendance and behaviour.
- Inspectors took account of the 141 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, which included 56 written comments. They also considered the 46 responses to the staff survey and 106 responses to the pupil survey.
- Most Year 11 pupils were not attending school during the inspection.

Inspection team

David Radomsky, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Mark Phillips

Her Majesty's Inspector

Alice Clay

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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