

Inspection of Riverside School

Renwick Road, Barking, Essex IG11 0FU

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 October 2022

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Sixth-form provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

The school's motto, 'Excellence for All', reflects the ambition that leaders have for the whole school community. A very strong culture of high expectations across the school means that pupils here are encouraged to succeed. Pupils benefit from a rich curriculum that is taught expertly by very well-trained staff. The ambition for all to do well includes those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), who follow the same carefully considered curriculum as their peers.

Pupils work hard and achieve well. Very clearly established routines ensure that pupils are engaged in their learning and that their work is of a consistently high quality. Standards of behaviour are very high. Lessons are not disrupted by poor behaviour, and cases of bullying are rare. When bullying does happen, pupils are confident that it will be dealt with. Pupils feel safe in the school.

Pupils enjoy school and appreciate the wide range of additional opportunities that they have. This includes a range of high-profile visiting guest speakers and a variety of after-school clubs and sporting activities. Pupils are active in supporting community projects.

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

Leaders have established a highly effective and balanced curriculum. Ambition is at the heart of curriculum design. In Years 7, 8 and 9 pupils study a broad range of subjects. As pupils progress through the school the curriculum retains its breadth. The vast majority of pupils continue to study a language and a humanities subject to GCSE level. In the sixth form leaders have chosen courses which they know will give pupils opportunities to continue their education at university and beyond. Across all subjects, leaders have made sure that content is sequenced so that pupils learn things that will prepare them for more complex ideas in later years.

Teachers consistently follow an established set of classroom routines. This ensures that they are constantly checking pupils' understanding and addressing any misconceptions. These routines help to ensure that pupils remain focused on their learning in lessons, and that they regularly revisit earlier work so that they can remember more. Pupils with SEND benefit from appropriate support and adaptations so that they can study the same content as other pupils. This includes carefully considered support for those pupils who need more help with reading. Students in the sixth form are also very well supported to achieve well. In addition to benefiting from the expertise of their teachers, they are taught to develop effective independent study skills which prepare them well for their next steps in education.

Teachers have very strong subject knowledge. This is supplemented by a continual training programme which helps teachers refine their practice. The emphasis on training and development for staff has also resulted in very effective use of

assessment so that teachers know how well pupils are doing, and pupils know what they need to do to improve their work.

Leaders have very high expectations of behaviour. In lessons pupils settle to their work quickly and show high levels of respect to their teachers and to other pupils. Corridors, play spaces and social areas are calm and safe. Pupils know that discriminatory language or bullying is not tolerated in the school.

Leaders have prioritised pupils' wider development. Pupils are taught how to look after their physical and mental health, and they are taught sensitive issues in an age-appropriate way. Careers education and guidance is comprehensive. This includes individual support for older pupils, and work experience for students in the sixth form. Leaders ensure that pupils enjoy a rich set of experiences beyond the classroom. As well as many sporting activities, pupils can go to clubs for cooking, chess, debating and a range of other interests. Leaders ensure that pupils from all backgrounds and of all abilities take up these enrichment opportunities. In the sixth form, every student takes part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. Leaders encourage pupils to be active in the wider community. For example, pupils have established and look after a community garden, and they have successfully campaigned for improved bus services in the area.

Leaders' vision for the school is shared by a committed governing body and by the trust. Governors provide support and challenge to leaders, and they know the school well. Staff are dedicated and proud to work at the school, which has become an integral part of the community which it serves.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders prioritise safeguarding across the school. A well-established and experienced safeguarding team together with very clear systems for reporting mean that any concerns are communicated and acted upon very quickly. All members of staff are trained and are vigilant. Leaders make sure that vulnerable pupils receive appropriate and timely support. This includes working with a variety of agencies outside of the school.

Pupils feel safe in school. They know how to report any concerns and they trust adults in the school. They have been taught how to keep themselves safe, including how to stay safe online.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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.

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

Unique reference number	139791
Local authority	Barking and Dagenham
Inspection number	10240869
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,385
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	120
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Saadat Mubashar
Headteacher	Andrew Roberts
Website	http://secondary.riversidecampus.com/
Date of previous inspection	24 January 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The number of pupils at Riverside School has increased significantly since the last graded inspection.
- On occasion, the school makes use of registered alternative provision for a very small number of pupils. Currently there are a few pupils attending Mayesbrook Park School.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Year 8 and above with information about approved education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in mathematics, English, history, music and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, they discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and talked to teachers and pupils. Inspectors also visited a range of lessons in other subjects and looked at pupils' work and curriculum documents.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, and with members of staff, as well as a range of pupils.
- Inspectors looked at the school's policies and procedures for safeguarding and supporting pupils' welfare and well-being. This included looking at case studies and reviewing the school's single central record of pre-employment checks.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for SEND, curriculum development, careers education, reading, behaviour and attendance, the sixth form, and pupils' wider development.
- The lead inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors, and with the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust.

Inspection team

Bob Hamlyn, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Una Buckley	His Majesty's Inspector
Stephen Adcock	Ofsted Inspector
Bruce Goddard	Ofsted Inspector
Andrew Webster	Ofsted Inspector

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