

# Inspection of a good school: Richmond Park Academy

Park Avenue, London SW14 8RG

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Inspection dates:

7 and 8 December 2022

## **Outcome**

Richmond Park Academy continues to be a good school.

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

Pupils feel happy and safe from the time they join. Respect and kindness are embraced by all. Pupils are confident that if they have any worries they would speak to an adult. Strong, trusting relationships exist across the school.

Leaders set high expectations for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils have a positive attitude towards their learning, because they want to do well. They appreciate the support they receive from staff in class. Pupils take pride in their work.

Pupils' behaviour is a positive feature of the school. Bullying is not tolerated here. If it does occur, it is dealt with quickly by leaders. Pupils show respect to each other and to adults.

Pupils value the many opportunities available to them. For instance, they enjoyed a sponsored walk around Richmond Park, which involved the community. Pupils typically share that the school is a caring place, where they are all a team.

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

Leaders ensure that the curriculum is ambitious for all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND. The curriculum is logically planned so that pupils gain knowledge and skills over time. In the sixth form, teachers build on pupils' knowledge to deepen their understanding. For example, when learning about cells, students use their prior knowledge about the human body.

Pupils have a secure knowledge and understanding across different subjects. Typically, teachers check that pupils' misconceptions are addressed in a timely way. Sometimes, pupils do not remember what they have previously learned in depth. This is because teaching does not ensure that they check precisely that all pupils fully grasp key concepts.

Reading is promoted well across the school. Leaders identify early on if pupils are having difficulties with their reading. There is a programme in place for those pupils who are still learning to decode words. Other programmes support pupils to be fluent with their reading. This helps pupils to become confident readers. Students in the sixth form enjoy supporting younger pupils in their reading.

Pupils with SEND access the same curriculum as everyone else. They are positive about the support they receive. Pupils appreciate their positive relationships with staff. Leaders provide staff with effective training and support. This helps staff to generally use strategies and support to meet pupils' specific needs well. Sometimes, pupils with SEND do not fully understand the work they are given. This is because staff do not ensure that they make work manageable for them.

Pupils behave in a calm and orderly way. They consistently follow the instructions of teachers. The classroom environment is a place where pupils focus and get on with their learning without interruptions. Pupils' discussions in lessons are focused on learning. Sixth-form students are positive role models.

Leaders provide a range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils take on responsibilities and contribute to school improvement. Pupils on the school council discuss improvement areas and share these with leaders. Sixth-form students play a key role on the 'student voice' committee. They also lead the junior leadership team. Pupils are very well prepared for life in modern Britain. They receive sound careers advice and guidance. Pupils learn about issues such as consent, relationships and respecting difference through a well-planned curriculum.

Teachers, including early careers teachers, are supported to develop the knowledge they need to teach the curriculum well. Staff value the professional development opportunities provided by leaders. They also appreciate the support from leaders to reduce their workload.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff across the school take responsibility for safeguarding. This is supported with training and regular updates about issues that may pose a risk to pupils. Staff identify quickly any signs of concern and know how to report these.

Leaders have created a culture of support. Pupils share any concerns they have because they know staff will help. Leaders work closely with external agencies to provide pupils with any extra help they need. Leaders and staff keep in close contact with families to provide all-round support.

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

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

- At times, some pupils do not remember what they have previously learned in depth. This is because, sometimes, teaching does not precisely check pupils' prior understanding. Leaders should ensure that all teaching consistently checks that pupils have fully grasped previously learned content.
- Sometimes, pupils with SEND do not understand their work. This is because some staff do not break down learning for pupils as carefully as they should. Leaders should ensure that all staff have the expertise to make tasks manageable for all pupils with SEND.

## 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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually, this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour, or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in 7–8 December 2017.

## 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

|                                                   |                                                                              |
|---------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b>                    | 136208                                                                       |
| <b>Local authority</b>                            | Richmond Upon Thames                                                         |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                          | 10240687                                                                     |
| <b>Type of school</b>                             | Secondary<br>Comprehensive                                                   |
| <b>School category</b>                            | Academy sponsor-led                                                          |
| <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>        | 996                                                                          |
| <b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b> | 127                                                                          |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>                      | Board of trustees                                                            |
| <b>Chair of trust</b>                             | David Hall                                                                   |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                                | Nabila Jiwa                                                                  |
| <b>Website</b>                                    | <a href="http://www.richmondparkacademy.org">www.richmondparkacademy.org</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>                | 7 and 8 December 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005             |

## Information about this school

- The school is part of Academies Enterprise Trust.
- The school makes use of one registered alternative provider.

## Information about this inspection

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

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteachers, the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) and other members of the senior team. An inspector also had a conversation with trustees.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, history, physical education and science. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- The lead inspector carried out learning visits with the SENCo and contacted an alternative provision provider.
- Inspectors observed behaviour during lessons, breaktimes and throughout the school day. Inspectors spoke to a range of staff about their views on pupils' behaviour, their workload and well-being.
- Through conversations with leaders, pupils and staff, inspectors examined the effectiveness of safeguarding. Inspectors looked at records relating to safeguarding, including pre-employment checks and records of work with external agencies.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents, staff and pupils, including through Ofsted's online surveys.

## **Inspection team**

Janice Howkins, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Alison Moore

Ofsted Inspector

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