

Inspection of Riddlesdown Collegiate

Honister Heights, Purley, Surrey CR8 1EX

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 March 2023

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

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders ensure that all pupils receive an exceptional education. The focus on academic rigour, creative and cultural learning enables pupils to excel. Leaders ensure that pupils have opportunities to contribute positively to society. Pupils are extremely hardworking, polite and proud of their school.

Staff have very high expectations for pupils in all aspects of school life. They encourage pupils to take ownership of their learning. There is a thriving student leadership group and many highly successful student-led societies in the sixth form.

Leaders have created a calm and orderly environment. Staff and pupils build extremely positive relationships. The 'collegiate system' ensures that pupils all have trusted adults in the school. This enables leaders of each college to know their pupils very well and ensure they are safe.

Behaviour in the school is exemplary. Pupils are kind and caring towards each other. Leaders address any concerns, including bullying, effectively on the rare occasion they may occur.

Pupils take part in an extensive range of outings and attend talks from both external and internal speakers. Staff and student leaders deliver talks on a range of subjects. Recent topics have included forensic psychology and stoicism.

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

Leaders' curricular thinking is highly developed and ambitious. Subject leaders have developed the curriculum progressively. This helps to build pupils' knowledge considerably over time. Teachers help pupils to deepen their subject-specific knowledge and skills expertly.

Leaders consider how to broaden pupils' academic opportunities very carefully. For example, pupils in Year 7 study the 'excellence curriculum'. This gives pupils an in-depth insight into philosophy and enquiry. Pupils excel at building key knowledge and skills in humanities and personal, social, health and economic education. As a result, they are highly prepared for the rigours of the rest of their secondary education.

Teachers have expert subject knowledge and present information clearly. They check for pupils' understanding systematically and address any misconceptions quickly. This helps pupils to produce work of extremely high quality.

Leaders identify pupils who may struggle with reading swiftly. They identify pupils' individual needs and put in place bespoke support. This ensures that pupils make rapid improvements to their reading fluency and confidence. All pupils read widely and often in school. Teachers help pupils to develop a great love for reading.

Leaders identify and meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) highly effectively. Staff receive extensive training and use a range of strategies to ensure pupils with SEND achieve exceptionally well.

Leaders have developed a thoughtful, well-planned personal development programme. This ensures that pupils can revisit key knowledge sequentially over time. Teachers support pupils to build extensive understanding of relationships in an age-appropriate manner. Pupils access a broad range of wider opportunities in the school. They take part in school concerts, inter-collegiate sports competitions and various community activities. Pupils enjoyed being part of chess and a creative technology club.

Pupils have access to a range of leadership opportunities. For instance, they work with local primary schools to deliver a computer science master class session. An active student leadership group coordinates work with charities in the local community.

Leaders provide pupils with purposeful careers advice and guidance. Pupils take part in a range of activities, including mock interviews, careers fairs and a variety of work-based opportunities. Students in the sixth form receive a great deal of support to future education and employment. This includes completing applications for university and apprenticeships.

Leaders are considerate of staff workload and take their well-being seriously. Staff feel valued and are highly motivated. Leaders have developed an exceptional professional development programme. This provides bespoke training for staff. Leaders check the quality of teaching and implementation of the curriculum with granular detail. This leads to sustained and continuous improvement in the quality of education.

The governing body understands the strengths and priorities of the school and carries out its role effectively. It has a clear strategic vision and provides appropriate challenge and support to leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. Staff are well trained and vigilant in identifying and reporting concerns. Leaders work effectively with external agencies to provide pupils with specialist support. They ensure that any help for pupils is conducted in a timely way.

Pupils are taught how to keep safe and how to report any concerns. Leaders understand local risks and respond appropriately when any pupils may be at risk.

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	138178
Local authority	Croydon
Inspection number	10240572
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy Converter
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	2062
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	422
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Vernon Rapley
Principal	Katie Turner
Website	www.riddlesdown.org
Date of previous inspection	9 and 10 November 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first graded 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 met with the principal, school leaders, pupils and a range of staff. They also met with the chair of the local governing body and the chief executive officer of the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: English, science, geography, modern foreign languages, music and art. For each deep dive, inspectors spoke to subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning, and considered samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors spoke with the designated safeguarding leads, along with pupils and staff. Inspectors reviewed the record of pre-employment checks and other relevant documentation.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents, pupils and staff, including through responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

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