

# Inspection of Rivington and Blackrod High School

Rivington Lane, Horwich, Bolton, Lancashire BL6 7RU

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Inspection dates: 14 and 15 June 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Sixth-form provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

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

Pupils feel safe and well supported at this warm and welcoming school. They are polite and well mannered. Pupils respond well to the high expectations that leaders have of their behaviour and achievement. They treat each other with dignity and respect.

Pupils appreciate the positive relationships that they have with their teachers. Any rare incidents of bullying are dealt with swiftly and effectively by leaders. Pupils enjoy school and most pupils attend school regularly.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities. For instance, pupils enjoy taking part in clubs like yoga, drone design, strategy gaming and creative writing.

Students in the sixth form inspire younger pupils through an impressive range of leadership opportunities. They take pride in leading school performances, events and clubs.

Pupils relish the trips that help them to build on their knowledge of and interest in different subjects. This includes learning about glaciation in Iceland, the Holocaust in Poland and developing their spoken French in Paris. Pupils develop their wider understanding of the world through visits to the theatre to watch performances such as Othello, Wicked, A Christmas Carol and The Inspector Calls.

Many pupils participate in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. They also enjoy their skiing trip to Italy. Such activities expand pupils' interests and talents.

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

The curriculum offer is ambitious for all pupils, including those with SEND and those who attend the specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND (specially resourced provision). Leaders have improved their curriculum thinking. This has helped to widen the range of subjects that pupils study. Students in key stage 5 have access to a range of high-quality subject curriculums. This sets them up for success in the next stage of their education, employment or training.

In 2022, pupils' attainment and progress in the English Baccalaureate suite of subjects was lower than the national average. In part, this was due to the gaps that had emerged in pupils' learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Leaders have taken successful steps to help current pupils overcome their gaps in learning. They have crafted rich and meaningful subject curriculums, which deepen pupils' understanding well over time. As a result, current pupils are achieving well.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They use their expertise well to foster a culture of respect and intellectual curiosity in the classroom. Teachers design

activities which enable pupils, including students in the sixth form, to make connections with earlier learning. Teachers routinely check what pupils know and remember. If pupils have misconceptions, teachers deal with these effectively and swiftly.

Leaders have made significant improvements to their approach to helping struggling readers gain reading fluency and confidence. For instance, they have invested in ensuring that staff have the knowledge and the resources that they need to quickly identify pupils who have gaps in their reading knowledge. While pupils have access to a range of reading texts, the strategies that are being used to help foster pupils' enjoyment of reading are not as effective as they could be. Some pupils, especially those in key stage 4, do not read widely and often.

The needs of pupils with SEND are identified and managed well. Staff are trained to screen pupils and diagnose their needs as quickly as possible. This enables leaders to put support into place swiftly so that pupils with SEND access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. Pupils with SEND, including those who access the specially resourced provision, achieve well.

Teachers and pupils have a shared understanding of the new behaviour policy. This contributes to a culture of purposeful learning in the classroom. Learning is rarely disrupted by poor behaviour. Pupils, including students in the sixth form, are focused and keen to learn.

Pupils, including those who access the specially resourced provision, benefit from an extensive programme that promotes their personal development. Pupils develop an appreciation of the virtues of serving others, for example through raising money for the sick and painting murals at a hospice.

The personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum is designed carefully to cover a range of contemporary issues. However, this curriculum is not delivered consistently well. This means that some pupils are not as well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Pupils, including students in the sixth form, receive a wide range of opportunities to build readiness for their next steps. For instance, they take part in work experience in Years 10 and 12. They receive ample guidance from visiting speakers and impartial careers advisers, as well as through trips to universities. Consequently, pupils are well informed when making choices about their careers.

Governors and trustees hold leaders to account for the school's performance. They support leaders to address any areas of development. Leaders are proactive in supporting the well-being of staff. For instance, they have set up a well-being staff committee and engage with staff on decisions made in school. Staff feel their workload is managed well and feel proud members of the school community.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a school environment that is safe and secure. Appropriate measures are in place to protect the welfare of pupils. Staff receive relevant training. This ensures that they have the knowledge that they need to identify and report concerns about pupils' welfare promptly.

Leaders maintain positive relationships with external agencies, including the local authority and health services. Through these collaborations, pupils' needs are met well.

Most pupils know how to keep safe online and in the wider world. For instance, they have learned about keeping safe near rivers and when attending community festivals. Pupils also learn about the impact of drug misuse and toxic relationships.

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

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

- The strategies that are used to help foster pupils' enjoyment of reading are not as effective as they could be. Some pupils do not enjoy reading and are not reading widely or often. Leaders should ensure that effective strategies are in place to help promote reading for pleasure across all stages.
- The PSHE curriculum is not delivered as well as intended. This means that some pupils do not secure a meaningful understanding of how to keep healthy or be ready for life in modern Britain. Leaders should ensure that teachers are equipped with the appropriate time and training so that pupils receive a well-delivered PSHE curriculum.

## 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>	143773
<b>Local authority</b>	Bolton
<b>Inspection number</b>	10286283
<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>	1542
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	228
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Sarah Horan
<b>Executive Headteacher</b>	Paul Roach
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.rbhs.co.uk">www.rbhs.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	21 and 22 January 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is a Church of England school in the Diocese of Manchester. The most recent section 48 inspection took place in May 2023.
- The school is part of the Leverhulme Academy Church of England and Community multi-academy trust.
- Leaders make use of one unregistered and five registered alternative providers.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND. This provision caters for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder and speech, language and communication needs.
- Leaders provide before- and after-school care for pupils.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and

engagement about approved technical 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 held meetings with the headteacher, senior leader and subject leads. Inspectors also met with a range of other staff and leaders during the inspection.
- Inspectors spoke to representatives of the local governing body and board of trustees, including the chair of trustees and governors. Inspectors also spoke to a representative of the local authority and the diocese.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils and observed behaviour during social times and during movement in school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, science, English, French, design and technology and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders and teachers, visited a sample of lessons, reviewed samples of pupils' work and spoke with some pupils.
- Inspectors also met with subject leaders to review other areas of the curriculum.
- The inspection team analysed safeguarding documentation, including the single central record. Inspectors spoke with a range of pupils, staff and leaders to evaluate the culture of safeguarding in the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the leaders responsible for personal development, pupil premium, behaviour, early careers teachers, sixth form, careers, SEND and the specially resourced provision, and reading.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including leaders' self-evaluation and attendance and behaviour records, and the minutes from meetings between trustees and governors.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. There were no responses to the pupil survey.

## Inspection team

Amina Modan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jackie Cahalin

Ofsted Inspector

Philip Wood

Ofsted Inspector

Paul Rigby

Ofsted Inspector

Sanjay Patel

Ofsted Inspector



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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

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